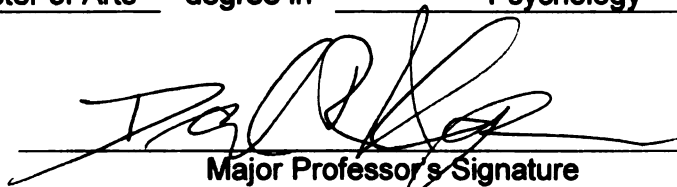This is to certify that the
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SAVORING SUCCESS:
EFFECTS OF BASKING AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF OTHERS
IN RESPONSE TO ACHIEVEMENT

By

Jessica Keeney

A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

SAVORING SUCCESS: EFFECTS OF BASKING AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF OTHERS IN RESPONSE TO ACHIEVEMENT

By

Jessica Keeney

Only recently have social scientists begun to seek a full understanding of how individuals react to positive events. Savoring consists of the thoughts or behaviors experienced or enacted when mindfully attending to and appreciating an outcome or event that is perceived as positive. Much as a diner savors a good meal or a traveler a beautiful sunset, people can savor a variety of positive experiences, including those that take place at school or work. The present study examined whether savoring a personal success was related to intrapersonal benefits. Two forms of savoring success were examined—basking and acknowledgment of others. Students who were accepted to a four-year university participated in an intervention in which savoring was manipulated. Participants were randomly assigned to bask in the success of their admission, to acknowledge others' contributions to their success, or to perform a control task. Students who savored their admission experienced higher positive affect and gratitude and, under certain circumstances, pride. Counter to expectations, the effects of savoring did not extend to more stable components of subjective well-being (life satisfaction), to motivational constructs (self-efficacy, performance goals), or to perceived relations to others. Also unexpectedly, narcissism did not appear to be as detrimental to savoring as initially hypothesized. Although more evidence is needed, the results seem to suggest that self-esteem plays a facilitative role in savoring success.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Individuals differ from one another in the extent to which they are happy and satisfied with their lives. Factors that we might expect to account for such differences, such as age, personality, and life events, actually explain only a small amount of the variance across people in well-being (e.g., Headey & Wearing, 1989). Most surprisingly, the occurrence of good events does not necessarily translate into improved well-being. For example, lottery winners are not necessarily happier than the rest of the population (Brickman, Coates, & Janoff-Bulman, 1978) and people sometimes purposely dampen a good mood (Wood, Heimpel, & Michela, 2003). Thus, people are not passive recipients of the desirable effects of positive events. Instead, the extent to which individuals derive pleasure from positive events may depend on their actions in response to those events.

There is a great deal of information about affective and cognitive reactions to negative life events in the psychological literature, whereas reactions to positive events have received comparatively less attention. A focus on alleviating the effects of stressors has been justifiable given their relationship to important outcomes including depression and physical illness (Karasek, 1979). However, positive events, to the extent that they result in positive emotions, can also play a role in "undoing" the consequences of negative emotions (Fredrickson, Mancuso, Branigan, & Tugade, 2000). Most importantly, research findings demonstrate that overall well-being is determined not only by the absence of the negative, but also by the presence of the positive (Zautra and Simons, 1979). Positive affect is one indicator of well-being and it is predicted by positive events, but not negative events (Zautra, Affleck, Tennen, Reich, & Davis, 2005).

The manner by which individuals alleviate stressors has been studied under the framework of coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). We know that individuals choose different coping strategies partly dependent on their stylistic ways of thinking, and that the effectiveness of such strategies is gauged by the reduction of outcomes like stress or depression. Hence, our knowledge of peoples' reactions to negative events has advanced over the past several decades. Whereas coping can shorten or lessen the severity of the negative effects of stressors, recent research suggests that there is a parallel process whereby the desirable influences of positive experiences can be prolonged or intensified. This basic process has been labeled savoring by Bryant and colleagues (Bryant, 1989; Bryant, 2003; Bryant, Smart, & King, 2005; Bryant & Veroff, 2007). Much as a diner savors a good meal or a traveler a beautiful sunset, people can savor a variety of positive experiences, including those that take place at school or work. Take for instance, an employee who receives compliments from his or her supervisor. This employee may let the experience go or instead think about how he or she deserved the comments and let the positive feelings carry on through the rest of the day.

Savoring consists of the thoughts or behaviors experienced or enacted when mindfully attending to and appreciating an outcome or event that is perceived as positive (Bryant & Veroff, 2007, p. 13). There are several methods by which a person can savor a positive event. For example, individuals may share the event with others, reflect on how indebted they are to others for its occurrence, or engage in cognitive basking during which they praise themselves for the outcome. The latter two methods are forms of intrapersonal savoring, and are of focal interest to the present study.

The present study will establish two forms of intrapersonal savoring as valid constructs representative of the more general construct of savoring, and manipulate them in a field intervention. Theoretical work explains how savoring results in unique increments in positive affect (Bryant & Veroff, 2007). The *first aim* of the research is to provide firmer evidence for the effects of intrapersonal savoring on positive affect, above and beyond the effects produced solely by the occurrence of the positive event.

The basic mechanism of savoring is presumed to operate similarly across different settings or domains of life (e.g., school, home, work). In general, savoring should result in greater positive affect and satisfaction. Depending on the type of event and the dominant concerns in the setting in which it occurs, however, other outcomes may be relevant and deserve to be examined. The *second aim* of the present study is to examine savoring within a clearly defined context. An achievement setting was chosen because it is a domain in which savoring could have practical implications.

The *third aim* of the present study is to expand the outcomes that are investigated in the context of savoring. Nezlek (2005) noted that research on positive events has been dominated by the examination of *affective* reactions (i.e., SWB) and argued that there is a need for increased research on *non-affective* reactions. Prior research on savoring has been narrowly focused on positive affect (e.g., Wood, Heimpel, & Michela, 2003), but the nature of the construct suggests that its effects are much broader. When savoring is viewed as pure mood regulation, it makes sense to look at affect as an outcome, but here it is proposed that savoring is a broader regulatory response to a positive event. Positive events have implications not only for how individuals feel, but also for how they think about themselves (Nezlek & Plesko, 2001; Nezlo & Plesko, 2003). The thoughts and

behaviors of which savoring is composed are therefore consequential in regards other than emotions and mood. In particular, when the event being savored is an accomplishment, a host of self- or other-relevant thoughts are likely to arise. A personal success is likely to engender positive self-focused thoughts or thoughts about others involved (Bryant & Veroff, 2007). It is for this reason that the present study examines the impact of intrapersonal savoring on a person's self-beliefs and perceived relations with others.

In sum, the purpose for conducting this research is to investigate the active intrapersonal processes by which individuals savor their achievements. The three aims for the present research are to (1) replicate the effects of savoring on positive affect and satisfaction, (2) apply the concept of savoring to an achievement setting, and (3) demonstrate the effects of savoring with respect to a broadened set of outcomes.

Before the methods of the present study are described, a review of the pertinent literature is presented. The review begins with theory and research concerning positive events, as well as the benefits to be gained by studying savoring. Then, the construct of savoring including its definition, origins, and forms is discussed. Previous research evidence that supports theoretical predictions about savoring is reviewed. The hypotheses for the present research are proposed, followed by a discussion of individual differences that may affect one's capacity to savor.

Why Savoring is an Important Concept

Positive Events and the Assessment of Well-Being

Early studies investigating the effects of positive events were motivated by a desire to complement the study of negative events and were very basic in their research

aims. For instance, it was not known whether positive events had an effect on well-being. The then current concept of well-being proved to be rough and insufficient. Zautra and Simons (1979) found that whereas positive events were not related to psychological distress, they were related to measures of positive affect and perceived quality of life. Hence, a complete picture of well-being involves both positive and negative aspects. This notion has since been well-corroborated. Positive and negative affect have been established as independent constructs that occupy different continua (Watson & Tellegen, 1985). Furthermore, these two aspects of affective well-being are differentially predicted; positive events predict positive but not negative affect, whereas negative events predict negative but not positive affect (e.g., Gable, Reis, & Elliot, 2000).

Subjective well-being (SWB) is now conceptualized as having both positive and negative affective components and a cognitive component (i.e., life satisfaction). Researchers may focus on one or all of these components as indicators of subjective well-being (Lucas, Diener & Suh, 1996). A number of research studies have supported the relationship between positive events and SWB (e.g., David, Green, Martin, & Suls, 1997; Gable, Reis, & Elliot, 2000; Nezlek and Plesko, 2003, Suh, Diener, & Fujita, 1996).

Two seemingly discouraging assessments have been offered with respect to positive events and SWB. First (like with negative events), the effects of positive events do not persist. Individuals eventually return to their previous levels of contentment. Second, findings have shown that people do not pay as much attention to positive events as they do to negative events (Rozin & Royzman, 2001). This has led many researchers to assume that there is no adaptive function in attending to positive events. The following

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section suggests how a theory of savoring can address these two limitations in thinking regarding the role of positive events in SWB.

Slowing Hedonic Adaptation

A research study on lottery winners sparked the debate on whether people can achieve sustainable increases in happiness (Brickman et al., 1978). In short, lottery winners were not significantly happier than nonwinners. In effect, individuals are assumed to have a set level of affect that is somewhat genetically determined (Lykken & Tellegen, 1996) or at least quite stable to which they return after happy or sad events. Although there has been wide support for what has been termed the hedonic treadmill (for a review, see Frederick & Loewenstein, 1999), there are nonetheless contradictions. For example, research has shown that levels of happiness do change over long periods of time and that rates of change vary across individuals (Fujita & Diener, 2005). The question is why? Diener, Lucas, and Scollon (2006, p. 313) state that "adaptation is a powerful force, but it is not so complete and automatic that it will defeat all efforts to change well-being. The exciting research challenge is to discover the factors that control the adaptation process."

One possibility is that instead of a set point of happiness, individuals may have a set range of happiness within which there is freedom to move (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005). Several authors have suggested that individuals are capable of countering the effects of hedonic adaptation to positive events. Savoring is a likely candidate in the quest for factors that control the adaptation process. The concept of savoring was proposed as a means by which individuals control their responses to positive events (Bryant, 1989). One avenue through which savoring operates is keeping

the positive event in memory longer (Langston, 1994; Gable, Reis, Impett, & Asher, 2004). Savoring may also work to slow adaptation by extracting the full meaning of a positive event thus creating more long-lasting changes within a person.

The Adaptiveness of Attending to Positive Events

A negativity bias refers to the fact that people tend to weigh negative events and information more heavily than their positive counterparts. Positive experiences are thought to occupy low priority on our day-to-day radar. In fact, the majority of our time is spent in a mildly positive mood (Watson, 2000). A positive event indicates a benign state (Schwarz, 2001) in which no immediate and clear course of action is required. It is for this reason that Taylor (1991, p. 80) suggested that "positive events and information may take care of themselves." Not being required to attend to positive events may serve an adaptive function in that energy is reserved to deal with negative, high-arousal situations.

The problem with this viewpoint, however, is similar to that presented by a negative feedback loop. If one is only concerned with reducing discrepancies, then when does one create improvements? A science of savoring challenges the idea that positive events are undeserving of attention and highlights the function served by attending to them. Martin and Tesser (1988) noted that although recurrent positive thoughts (such as those that constitute savoring) "do not directly address a discrepancy, they aid in reaffirming the lack of one" (p. 10). Whereas individuals are often focused on pursuing short-term mood management, savoring reaffirms the existence of a positive state allowing individuals to pursue other goals, such as self-evaluation and self-improvement (Aspinwall, 1998). In effect, one needs to 'build' the resources necessary for goal pursuit (Fredrickson, 1998) and even stockpile them for future use in negative situations

(Aspinwall, 1998). Savoring should free attention from energy-draining negative occurrences, replenish psychological resources, and build self-regard.

Origins and Definition of Savoring

Bryant (1989) first advanced the concept of savoring in a study of perceived control over one's environment. In a two-process control model, primary control is associated with manipulating the actual occurrence or nonoccurrence of events, whereas secondary control is associated with regulating responses to those events (Rothbaum, Weisz, & Snyder, 1982). Bryant (1989) found support for a four-factor model wherein people are thought to have beliefs about their control of (a) obtaining positive events, (b) avoiding negative events, (c) amplifying or prolonging enjoyment of positive events, and (d) coping with negative events. People presumably have strategies to deal with each component of this model. Savoring is associated with the third factor—the manner by which people control the benefits to be derived from positive events.

A similar framework from which to view savoring is the two-stage theory of emotional response processes (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). Initially proposed to explain individuals' reactions to negative events, it extends quite readily to reactions to positive events. According to the model, a person first appraises a situation, which results in an emotion. Second, the person determines how to respond. In the case of coping, an individual can choose to manage his or her response to the negative event through a variety of mechanisms (e.g., dealing with the problem or engaging in mood repair). In parallel, a person has a choice of how to respond to a pleasant experience. Instead of coping, individuals capitalize on positive occurrences (Langston, 1994) via the cognitive and behavioral strategies we call savoring.

Savoring is a broad term used to denote any process whereby individuals *"actively derive pleasure and fulfillment in relation to positive experience"* (Bryant & Veroff, 2007, p. xiii). As can be gleaned from the above definition of savoring, individuals may engage in a variety of thoughts and behaviors to savor. Various research studies in positive psychology provide some insight into potential cognitive strategies of deriving pleasure from positive aspects of life. For example, Emmons and McCullough (2003) conducted an intervention to stimulate thoughts of gratitude. Adler and Fagley (2005) collected self-reports of appreciative thinking (Adler & Fagley, 2005). Lyubomirsky and Tucker (1998) studied endorsement of various thinking styles in response to pleasant occurrences (e.g., "I imagined [the event] vividly, thought about how it happened," p. 162).

Forms of Savoring

Bryant and Veroff (2007) undertook an exploratory study of the strategies people use to savor positive events. These authors asked college students, in reference to a recent pleasant occurrence, "Are you aware of anything you thought or did when you were experiencing this positive event that might have influenced your enjoyment?" (p. 88). From initial free-responses and existing theory on emotional regulation, a close-ended instrument was developed, called the Ways of Savoring Checklist (WOSC), from which the following ways of savoring were identified: sharing with others, memory-building, self-congratulation, sensory-perceptual sharpening, comparing, absorption, behavioral expression, temporal awareness, and counting blessings.

In addition to identifying the concrete savoring behaviors in which individuals engage, Bryant and Veroff (2007) advanced a broad integrative framework for

categorizing savoring processes based on two dimensions. First, forms of savoring can differ based on time orientation. A person can savor while they are absorbed in the experience or they can engage in cognitive reflection outside the timeframe of the event. Savoring during an experience seems most applicable to leisurely pursuits (e.g., marveling at mountainous landscapes or luxuriating in a bubble bath), whereas cognitive reflection is applicable to a wide range of experiences. Consistent with this notion, students reported greater use of the present-focused ways of savoring (e.g., sensory-perceptual sharpening) for vacations and greater use of cognitive reflective ways of savoring (e.g., self-congratulation) for earning a good grade. In an achievement context, in which the significance of the event is not often realized until it has already occurred, cognitive reflection is most relevant.

Second, the nature of savoring can differ based on its direction of focus. Savoring can be focused inward (i.e., on the self) or can be focused on more outward concerns (i.e., people or the world more generally). When the focus is the self savoring resembles basking and when the focus is outward savoring resembles what Bryant and Veroff labeled thanksgiving, and what will hereafter be referred to as acknowledgement of others. Basking and acknowledgement of others are the forms of savoring that will be investigated in the present study.

Basking is a form of self-focused savoring that involves an "appreciation of the way we are or what we have done" (Bryant & Veroff, 2007). Similar to the way that football fans bask in the glory of their team's successes (e.g., Cialdini et al., 1976) individuals can bask in the glory of their own successes. Bryant and Veroff found that self-congratulation was correlated with the sense of responsibility a person had for the

event. This suggests that basking is associated with an internal locus of causality for a positive event.

Acknowledgement of others is a more outward-focused form of savoring. It involves the recognition that there is a reason why good things happen. Although acknowledgement of others does not preclude the focal person from assuming primary responsibility for a positive event (Watkins, Woodward, Stone, & Kolts, 2003), there is an acknowledgment that factors outside oneself were in one's favor. Acknowledgment of others is similar to what some researchers have labeled gratitude, but different terminology is used here to emphasize that it is defined primarily by its constituent attributional beliefs and not by its resulting emotion. The distinction between knowledge of what has been done for us and grateful emotion at first blush is blurry in the English language but the distinction is more apparent in other languages. For example, in the Indian language of Pali the word "katannuta" means knowing or reminiscing about what has been done for us and has a more intellectual, less emotional connotation. Gratitude researchers have suggested that a person who is grateful identifies a benefactor (Emmons & Crumpler, 2000). The benefactor who is credited is likely to vary from situation to situation and from person to person. Because of the emotional and instrumental support that parents, friends, and other members of one's close social network provide (House, Umberson, & Landis, 1988), they are likely to be perceived as causal agents in positive life outcomes. Alternatively, spiritual individuals may choose to credit a higher being for positive occurrences (McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002).

Similarities between Basking and Acknowledgement of Others

It is clear from the above discussion that basking and acknowledgement of others are distinct in terms of the relative dominance of internal versus external attribution. Basking is largely composed of self-credit, whereas acknowledgement of others entails giving credit to external sources. Despite their apparent differences, they are both forms of savoring and, as such, it is instructive to highlight their similarities. One feature that Bryant and Veroff (2007) argue cuts across all forms of savoring is a meta-awareness of one's pleasure. Savoring involves a second-order awareness of one's cognitive-emotional response to a positive event. Frijda and Sundararajan (2007) explain that one dwells not only on the primary experience (e.g., acing an exam), but also on the experience it generates (e.g., one's sense of accomplishment and positive affect). One implication of this common basis for savoring is that when operationalizing different forms of savoring, one should include these general components of pleasure awareness (e.g., "I am enjoying this" and "This is a success").

In addition to containing overlapping components, different forms of savoring are likely to co-occur. That is, individuals are likely to savor in more than one way in response to the same event. Therefore, it is no surprise that self-reports of the use of different savoring strategies for the same event display moderate intercorrelations. Self-congratulation and counting blessings in response to a good grade in school were found to correlate .59 (Bryant & Veroff, 2007). The authors of this study speculated that the relationship is at least partly due to engaging in different forms of savoring at different points in time for the same event. Also, they concede that any particular experience of savoring may be an impure form of savoring in that it contains both self- and world-

focused elements. One desirable characteristic of the present study is that the relative degree of self- and other-focus can be manipulated.

Hypothesis Development

The following section reviews theoretical and empirical work in support of the study's hypotheses. The first set of hypotheses concerns the effects of savoring on subjective well-being. Second, predictions are made about the locus of causality that should be dominant depending on the type of savoring (i.e., basking or acknowledgement of others). Then, differential predictions are made for the effect of basking and acknowledgement of others on outcomes including emotions, self-efficacy, and positive relations with others. The last set of hypotheses concerns the role of individual differences in moderating the efficacy of basking and acknowledgement of others interventions.

Subjective Well-Being

As previously explained, SWB is indicated by high positive affect (PA), low negative affect (NA), and high life satisfaction. Positive affect is an emotional state that is associated with feeling in control (Mandler, 1975); it signals the presence of a safe base from which to explore one's environment. Fredrickson's broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions suggests that unlike negative affect, which serves to narrow attentional focus to deal with a problem at hand, positive affect broadens a person's possible array of thoughts and actions. In this mood state, a person is less likely to cling to old thought and behavior patterns and more likely to pursue new and creative routes (Fredrickson, 1998). Positive affect has been associated with an increase in a wide range of outcomes in achievement settings: performance (e.g., George, 1991; Staw & Barsade, 1993),

creativity (e.g., Isen, Daubman, & Nowicki, 1987), organizational spontaneity (e.g., George & Brief, 1992), and group functioning (George, 1990).

Life satisfaction is the judgment that is formed by comparing one's own life circumstances with self-standards (Pavot & Diener, 1993). The psychological state of satisfaction (e.g., job, life, or academic satisfaction) is moderately related to performance in work and at school (Bean & Bradley, 1986; Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001). There is some debate about direction of causality (e.g., Organ, 1977), and the present study (i.e., savoring one's successes) would suggest that there is some reciprocality between satisfaction and performance. Satisfaction is also closely related to other affective evaluations and behavioral intentions, such as institutional commitment and intentions to quit school or work (Tett & Meyer, 1993; Tinto, 1975). Apart from these benefits to organizations, satisfaction with life is often considered a valuable individual-level outcome in its own right.

Bryant and Veroff's (2007) theory specifically predicts that savoring increases PA and they provided indirect evidence of this effect. People's self-reported use of the ways of savoring an event was related to their self-reported duration of enjoyment of the event (Bryant & Veroff, 2007). Also, people who perceive themselves as capable of savoring, in general, report higher levels of happiness (Bryant, 2003).

Prior research on *interpersonal* savoring provides direct support for the effects of savoring on both PA and life satisfaction. Positive events often prompt individuals to seek out others with whom to share good news (Rime, Mesquita, Philippot, & Boca, 1991). Celebrating or seeking social contact after something good happens is related to higher subjective well-being (Gable, Reis, Impett, & Asher, 2004; Langston, 1994).

Langston (1994) asked college students to record daily instances of celebrating their

positive experiences and sharing them with others, as well as record their PA levels five

times throughout the course of each day. Langston found that sharing positive events

made unique contributions to subsequent PA, although the effects for life satisfaction

were not significant. Gable et al. (2004) found that, on average, students shared their

most positive daily experience with others at least three days out of the five-day study.

Interpersonal savoring was found to relate positively to PA and life satisfaction

controlling for the importance of the event.

There is also empirical support for a host of intrapersonal responses to positive

occurrences. Research supports the general notion that thinking about positive events

from one's past increases subjective well-being. For example, reminiscence has been

found to be a strong factor in elder adults' well-being (Bohlmeijer, Smit, & Cuijpers,

2003). Reminiscence can help people form narratives, generate a sense of purpose in life,

and enhance a sense of mastery (Bohlmeijer, Valenkamp, Westerhof, Smit, & Cuijpers,

2005). In a study of positive reminiscence, participants were instructed to either think

about a pleasant memory using cognitive imagery or while looking at memorabilia

(Bryant, Smart, & King, 2005). Participants in both conditions reported greater happiness

than a control group who instead thought about current concerns. Writing about one's

happiest experiences in life (e.g., falling in love, success experiences) has also been

found to increase levels of PA relative to control groups (Burton & King, 2004; Kloss &

Lisman, 2002; Marlo & Wagner, 1999). Lyubomirsky, Sousa, and Dickerhoof (2006)

obtained mixed findings regarding the effects of writing or thinking about one's happiest

life experience. In one study, Lyubormirsky et al. failed to find significant effects against

a control condition and, in a follow-up study, there was no control condition to be able to make firm conclusions.

Whereas the above studies speak primarily to intensely positive experiences, one study provides evidence that people can successfully savor smaller scale events. Seligman and colleagues obtained impressive results in a one-week intervention in which participants wrote daily about three things that went well and why they thought they went as well as they did (Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005). Although the increase in happiness immediately following the exercise was no greater than that of the control group, there was a significant difference one month later, an effect that was sustained for six months.

To better understand how savoring works, it is useful to concentrate on specific types of savoring. This allows us to delve into the underlying thought processes that are linked to outcomes. One specific form of savoring that has been empirically investigated is acknowledgement of others, which has been primarily studied under the rubric of gratitude[1]. Grateful thought typically focuses on a benefit received and on other people (Bono & McCullough, 2006). A grateful disposition has been reliably associated with higher positive affectivity and life satisfaction (Adler & Fagley, 2005; McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002; Watkins, Woodward, Stone, & Kolts, 2003). Several studies have examined the impact of gratitude interventions on subjective well-being. In one study students who listed summer activities for which they were grateful exhibited significant increases in PA (Watkins, Woodward, Stone, & Kolts, 2003). Emmons & McCullough (2003) conducted three studies, taking place over 10- to 13-week periods, in

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[1] The manner in which gratitude has been conceptualized by researchers is broader than an emotion and consistent with what we call acknowledgement of others and, hence, the gratitude literature will be consulted to inform the present discussion.

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which participants kept records of things in their life for which they were grateful. They found that the writing exercise resulted in increases in PA, life satisfaction, and expectations for the future (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). The same results for happiness were found in a similar six-week intervention, in which participants were instructed to contemplate the things for which they were grateful either once or three times per week (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005). Surprisingly, in this study only the participants who reflected once per week, and not those individuals who reflected three times per week, exhibited significant increases in happiness compared to the control group.

Why does savoring a positive event increase SWB? The exact route through which savoring enhances SWB may depend on the form of savoring. For instance, interpersonal savoring probably involves some aspects of social verification (Hardin & Higgins, 1996) or social interaction that increase happiness. Alternatively, there may be a purely cognitive process that underlies most forms of savoring. Gable et al. (2004) reasoned that sharing an event instigates cognitive rehearsal and elaboration that, in turn, increases the event's salience and accessibility in memory. To the extent that a positive event is available in memory, it should affect one's mood and life satisfaction judgments. In support of their theory, these authors found that out of all the events experienced over a 10-day period, the ones that were shared with others were more successfully recalled in a surprise memory task. In a similar vein, people may actively recall an event in their minds (i.e., without interacting with other people) making it more influential in their present mood and judgments. Hence, the construct of positive cognitive rumination may offer a viable explanation for the effects of savoring. Typically, rumination has been

studied in the context of negative events finding that it is linked to longer and more severe depression (Just & Alloy, 1997). However, positive rumination has recently been introduced as a separate construct that also has implications for psychological health (Feldman, Joormann, & Johnson, 2008). Positive rumination is conceived as an emotion regulation strategy that people use to maintain PA. Its two components are self-focused and emotion-focused thoughts. Although positive rumination is very similar to savoring, one primary distinction of savoring is that it is with respect to a specific event or experience.

As can be seen from the above review, there is clear support for the effects of savoring on the subjective well-being outcomes of positive affect and life satisfaction. However, Bryant and Veroff's (2007) study did not directly measure such variables, and other empirical work has not clearly delineated the form of savoring being investigated. Furthermore, the effects of interventions to induce acknowledgment of others have been demonstrated, but not specifically with respect to a discrete event. One central question is whether individuals who savor a positive event will experience greater positive affect— the hallmark of savoring—than people who also experience a positive event but do not savor. In the present study savoring is manipulated via a writing task. It is hypothesized that positive affect, as well as life satisfaction, will be greater for individuals who write about a personal success than for those individuals in a control group. This effect is expected to occur regardless of the savoring strategy (i.e., whether individuals bask in their success or acknowledge the contributions of others).

H1: Positive affect will be higher for individuals who write about a personal

success compared to individuals in a control group.

H2: Life satisfaction will be higher for individuals who write about a personal

success compared to individuals in a control group.

Savoring and Locus of Causality

In the majority of the research reviewed above, there was no direct knowledge of

the extent to which people considered their own versus others' causal roles when thinking

about a positive event. According to attribution theory (Weiner, 1985), different types of

causal attributions vary along the dimensions of locus, stability, and controllability

(Russell & McAuley, 1986). For example, ability is perceived as an internal, stable, and

uncontrollable cause. Effort is also internal, but is considered an unstable and controllable

cause. The actions of others are external and can vary in controllability and stability.

Because basking in success involves reflecting on one's own ability or effort, it

should be associated with an internal locus of causality. In contrast, acknowledgment of

others by definition involves recognizing the benevolence and good intentions of others

and should be related to external attributions of causality (Emmons & Crumpler, 2000). It

is important to note that in the present study, these forms of savoring are induced and

attributions should be simultaneously manipulated. However, in their natural occurrence,

it is also possible and likely that forms of savoring follow from attributions (i.e., a

different causal order).

H3: Basking in a personal success will be positively related to internal attributions

of causality, relative to acknowledgement of others in response to the success.

H4: Acknowledgement of others in response to a personal success will be

positively related to external attributions of causality, relative to basking in the

success.

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Assessing emotions is important because they can be significant predictors of behavior. Experiencing pride in response to an accomplishment may improve performance on later tasks (Tracy & Robins, 2007a). Fredrickson (2000) proposed that gratitude, because of its relation to feelings of indebtedness, motivates behavior meant to benefit others including organizational citizenship behavior.

Achievement emotions can be categorized as outcome-dependent or attribution-dependent (Weiner, 1985). Outcome-dependent emotions like happiness and joy result based simply on the fact that one has attained a goal, whereas attribution-dependent emotions vary according to the perceived cause of goal attainment. Self-relevant emotions (e.g., shame, guilt, pride) occur to the extent that the event is seen as internally caused. In contrast, if an external source of the event is recognized, other-focused beliefs and emotions (e.g., anger, gratitude) will be evoked (Weiner, 2000). Accordingly, Weiner, Russell, and Lerman (1978) found that success perceived as due to ability results in feelings of competence, confidence and pride, and success due to the actions of others results in feelings of gratitude and thankfulness. Therefore, it is predicted that acknowledging others in response to a success, because it induces external attributions of causality, should be associated with the other-focused emotion of gratitude.

H5: Acknowledgement of others in response to a personal success will be associated with higher gratitude than will basking in success.

H5a: The relationship between acknowledgement of others and gratitude will be mediated by external attributions for success.

In contrast, to the extent that basking in a success induces internal attributions of causality, this form of savoring should be associated with more self-conscious positive emotions, such as pride. According to Tracy and Robins (2007), there are two aspects of pride, authentic and hubristic, the former which is associated with effort attributions and the latter which is associated with ability attributions for an achievement. Authentic pride is thought to reflect accomplishments whereas hubristic pride is a form of boasting about one's abilities (Tracy & Robins, 2007a). Basking is likely to involve some of both types of attributions and, hence, be related to both types of pride. According to the findings of Tracy & Robins (2007a), however, basking should relate to each facet of pride through distinct paths.

H6: Basking in a personal success will be associated with higher authentic and hubristic pride than will acknowledgement of others in response to a success.

H6a: The relationship between basking and authentic pride will be mediated by effort attributions.

H6b: The relationship between basking and hubristic pride will be mediated by ability attributions.

Savoring, Self-efficacy and Goal-setting

The above discussion centered on the hedonic benefits of experiences. Bryant and Veroff's (2007) conceptualization of savoring is largely concerned with pleasure and a natural inclination is to measure people's positive affect. Although as a first step, the effect of savoring should be examined with respect to positive affect and other components of SWB, by no means should an investigation of savoring outcomes be limited to affective constructs. The present research will also consider the implications of

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savoring success for motivation. It has been suggested that reminiscence and basking play a central role in the maintenance of self-esteem and confidence (Martin & Tesser, 1996). Particularly when a positive event is a success for which one feels *personally responsible*, savoring is likely to be closely intertwined with *self-beliefs* in addition to self-conscious emotions. Accordingly, self-esteem has been found to increase in response to a success when it is attributed to ability, but not when it is attributed to characteristics of the task (McFarland & Ross, 1982). One self-belief that is particularly relevant to the experience of success and that has clear implications for performance in an achievement setting is self-efficacy.

Perceived self-efficacy has been defined as "judgments of how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations" (Bandura, 1982, p. 122). Self-efficacy creates incentives to exert goal-directed effort and leads to greater persistence in the face of obstacles (Bandura, 1997). Meta-analysis indicates a moderately significant relationship between self-efficacy and performance in both academic settings (Brown, et al., in press; Multon, Brown, & Lent, 1991; Robbins, Lauver, Le, Davis, & Langely, 2004) and employment settings (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). Self-efficacy is a relatively malleable assessment of future capabilities (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003). People adjust their beliefs based on past performance but, more importantly, on their interpretation of past performance (Bandura, 1977). Two people who experience the same objective success may come to different conclusions about their ability to perform a similar task in the future. One factor that could influence a person's interpretations of success is savoring.

Savoring should be related to higher self-efficacy to the extent that it helps a person understand how to reproduce a similar outcome. Paying conscious attention to positive events should be an integral aspect of self-regulation towards personal goals. Bandura stated that "People cannot influence their own motivation and actions very well if they do not pay adequate attention to their own performances, the conditions under which they occur, and the immediate and distal effects they produce" (1991, p. 250). The form of savoring that has the most potential to give people self-insight into their own ability to produce successful outcomes is basking. Reaffirming one's own strengths and abilities should increase confidence in the ability to perform in the future. Therefore, it is expected that basking in success, relative to being grateful, or not savoring at all, should be associated with higher self-efficacy.

In addition to influencing self-beliefs, basking in success may actually influence the level at which goals are set. Research suggests that people set goals higher than their best previous performance (Locke & Latham, 2006). Basking in success is likely to enhance perception of past performance and, therefore, may lead individuals to set higher subsequent goals. The effect of basking on goal setting should be partially mediated by self-efficacy, because past performance influences self-efficacy, and self-efficacious individuals set higher goals (Wood & Locke, 1987).

H7: Basking in a personal success will be associated with higher self-efficacy than will acknowledgement of others in response to a success.

H8: Basking in a personal success will be associated with higher performance goals than will acknowledgement of others in response to a success.

H8a: The relationship between basking and performance goals will be partially mediated by self-efficacy.

Positive Relations with Others

If basking enhances self-focused beliefs, then what are the consequences of acknowledging others? Recognizing how the benevolence of others helped one succeed should influence perceptions of oneself in relation to others. Acknowledgement of others should enhance perceived relationship quality. "Positive relations with others" is a facet of psychological well-being that concerns whether a person is concerned with others' welfare and perceives him or herself has having warm and trusting relationships (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Like self-efficacy, perceived positive relations with others is a non-affective indicator of well-being. It promotes overall psychological functioning that is socially adaptive and somewhat independent of positive mood and emotions (Ryff, 1989).

Quality relationships with others are robustly related to physical health (Ryff & Singer, 2000). The construct of positive relations with others, in particular, has been associated with higher levels of oxytocin, an important component of stress relief. Positive relations with others also displayed modest correlations (rs in the .20s) with sleep quality and diabetes, whereas SWB had no impact on health (Ryff, Burton, & Love, 2004). It is apparent that the factors that create happy individuals are not necessarily the same ones that promote better functioning individuals. Although positive relations with others has not been investigated with respect to school or work performance, it would not be surprising if students or employees with more positive relations with others performed better due to enhanced social and physical resources.

Acknowledgement of others should be associated with positive relations with others because of social exchange norms. The recipient of altruistic behavior often feels indebted and motivated to reciprocate. Gratitude has, hence, been referred to as "an insurance policy for future cooperation" (Emmons & Crumpler, 2000). In one study a gratitude intervention was found to increase self-reports of emotional and instrumental support to others (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). Gratitude fosters a sense of benevolence and has been theorized to have a considerable influence on relational well-being (Emmons & Crumpler, 2000). Therefore, it is hypothesized that acknowledgement of others in response to a success will be more positively related to perceived relations with others than will basking in the success or not savoring the success. It is important to note that, in reality, there may be a reciprocal relationship between acknowledgment of others and perceived relations with others. The present study, however, is concerned primarily with the effects of savoring and examines only one direction of causation, which is achieved by manipulating the behavior of acknowledging others.

H9: Acknowledgement of others in response to a personal success will be associated with higher positive relations with others than will basking in success.

Individual Differences

There is some evidence that not all individuals are equally capable of savoring (Bryant, 1989). Bryant and Veroff (2007) suggested that people with low self-esteem may find self-focused savoring difficult, whereas people who distrust the world or others may find other-focused savoring difficult. Additionally, an individual's propensity to engage in certain forms of savoring may depend on personality. One representation of personality influences on savoring is presented in Figure 1, modeled after the choice-

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(a) Choice   (b) Effectiveness
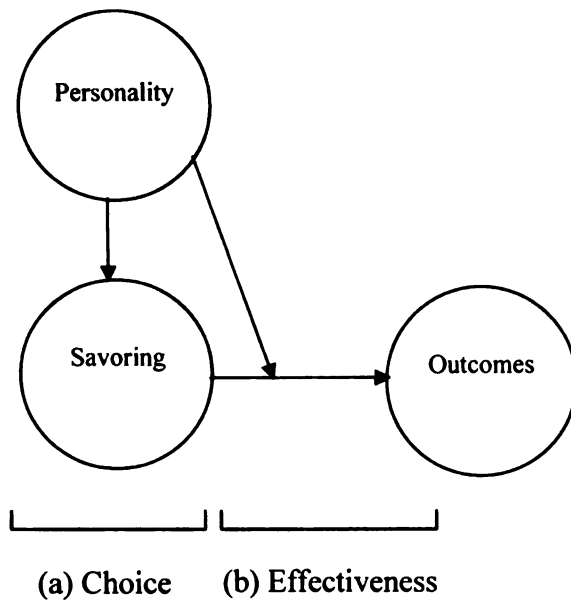
Figure 1. **Personality influences on savoring**

effectiveness distinction in the coping literature (Bolger & Zuckerman, 1995). Personality can influence (a) the choice of savoring strategies in which an individual engages or (b) the extent to which these strategies are effective for an individual. Because the present study randomly assigns individuals to a form of savoring, it is not possible to test whether people with certain personality traits tend to engage in particular forms of savoring (i.e., choice). What can be examined, however, is the extent to which personality influences the effectiveness of savoring, as gauged by affective and motivational outcomes. Certain personality characteristics may influence how well individuals are able to follow the intervention or how authentic the savoring feels to them. If a personality trait enhances or diminishes the savoring process, this can tested by looking at the interaction between the savoring intervention and the trait.

Self-esteem

A person's self-esteem may influence the effectiveness of an intervention that encourages individuals to bask in their success. At first blush the evidence regarding whether self-esteem would enhance or hinder savoring seems conflicting. Depressed people, who are thought to have labile self-esteem, are more strongly impacted by positive events than non-depressed people (Nezlek & Gable, 2001), and positive events

have a greater impact for low-PA individuals who seem to need a boost from their low

baseline of pleasure (Zautra et al., 2005). On the other hand, people with low self-esteem

are more likely to dampen their positive affect (Wood et al., 2003). A distinction between

level and contingency of self-esteem is useful. Depression is more closely related to the

fluctuation or contingency of self-esteem than level of self-esteem, which explains why

individuals with low self-esteem may have different reactions to positive events than

those with depression (Butler, Hokanson, & Flynn, 1994). As explained below, highly

varying self-esteem may promote reaction to successes, whereas low self-esteem would

have the opposite effect.

Contingency of self-esteem refers to the extent to which one's self-worth is subject

to fluctuations dependent on certain events or salient self-aspects (Crocker, Luthaten,

Cooper, & Bouvrette, 2003; Kernis, 2005). The relative stability of self-esteem can be

measured by collecting within-person measurements of momentary self-esteem level and

computing the standard deviation of these measurements (Kernis, 2003; Kernis, 2005).

Some researchers believe that there are meaningful covariates of fluctuations in self-

esteem. That is, self-esteem fluctuates dependent on events. Researchers have varied in

their conceptualization of self-esteem contingency and the existing measures are

reflective of these differences (Crocker & Knight, 2005). Whereas the Self-Esteem

Contingency Scale (Paradise & Kernis, 1998) purports to measure contingency, in

general, the Contingencies of Self-Worth scale (CSW; Crocker et al., 2003) measures the

extent to which self-esteem is contingent on events across specific life domains (e.g.,

academics, appearance, family support). According to this latter view, an individual's

self-esteem may be contingent on one or more of these domains. An individual's reaction

to an event depends on whether it falls within a domain of contingency. For example, Crocker, Sommers, and Luhtanen (2002) found that the self-esteem of college seniors increased after receiving news of acceptance to graduate school more strongly for those seniors whose self-esteem depended on academic competence. If an event is within a domain of contingency, an individual experiences intensified reactions to it (Greenier et al., 1999).

According to the Crocker et al. view, contingent self-esteem is associated with heightened ego involvement and self-enhancement in a specific domain (Crocker, et al., 2003; Parker & Crocker, 2005). Thus, one would expect reactions to success to be more extreme amongst individuals with self-esteem that is contingent in the domain of achievement. In addition, the effects of self-focused savoring should be even greater for these individuals because of a tendency to overgeneralize positive implications of domain-relevant successes and engage in internal attributional style (Kernis, 2003). This moderating effect of contingent self-esteem should be most prevalent for self-evaluations (i.e., self-efficacy) and self-relevant outcomes (i.e., pride).

Level of self-esteem, which refers to typical or general feelings of self-worth, is a distinct concept from self-esteem contingency (Kernis, 2003). Aside from contingencies that may exist a in a person's self-esteem a person can possess more or less self-esteem overall. Self-esteem level has implications for an individual's ability to engage in basking. Most people engage in some level of self-enhancement on a regular basis (Baumeister, Tice, & Hutton, 1989), but there is some evidence to suggest that high self-esteem individuals are more highly motivated to self-enhance than low self-esteem individuals (Brown & Gallagher, 1992), which may explain how they have achieved high

levels of self-esteem. In support of this notion, Wood and colleagues (2005) found across three studies that following a success, high self-esteem was associated with a boost in PA, positive self-relevant thoughts, and future performance expectations, whereas low-self esteem was not. Therefore, it is hypothesized that the effectiveness of basking is enhanced to the extent that an individual is high in their typical level of self-esteem. Again, the outcomes relevant to the processes of self-enhancement are those that are self-oriented in nature, self-efficacy and pride.

Lastly, it is important to consider the *interaction* between level and contingency of self-esteem. Kernis and colleagues (2003, 2005) have demonstrated across numerous studies and with respect to a variety of outcome variables (e.g., psychological well-being, self-regulation) that self-esteem level and stability have both significant independent effects and, in some cases, a significant interaction. Here, it is hypothesized that basking in success will be most effective for those individuals who have contingent but typically high self-esteem. These individuals are especially likely to base their self-esteem on salient information about self-relevant events and cast this information in a positive light.

The following hypotheses predict moderating roles of both self-esteem level and contingency in the relationship between basking and self-relevant positive outcomes. In the case of emotions, self-esteem should be most relevant to authentic versus hubristic pride. Self-esteem is thought to reflect confidence based on accomplishments, both of which are aspects of authentic pride (Tracy & Robins, 2007a).

H10: Contingency of self-esteem moderates the effects of a basking intervention, relative to an acknowledgment of others intervention and a control condition, on

authentic pride and self-efficacy, such that these effects are stronger as contingency of self-esteem increases.

H11: Level of self-esteem moderates the effects of a basking intervention, relative to an acknowledgment of others intervention and a control condition, on authentic pride and self-efficacy, such that these effects are stronger as self-esteem increases.

H12: Level and contingency of self-esteem interact to moderate the effects of a basking intervention, relative to an acknowledgment of others intervention and a control condition, on authentic pride and self-efficacy, such that these effects are stronger as self-esteem becomes higher in level and more contingent.

Narcissism

Narcissism entails excessive self admiration. A few of the diagnostic criteria for clinical narcissism include a grandiose sense of self-importance or uniqueness, a preoccupation with fantasies of unlimited success or power, entitlement or the expectation of special favors without assuming reciprocal responsibilities, and interpersonal exploitativeness (Raskin & Terry, 1988). The measurement of narcissism has been applied successfully to normal populations. Narcissists generally have a negative interpersonal orientation; the trait is negatively correlated with a variety of behaviors including empathy, intimacy, commitment, caring, and communal orientation (Campbell, Rudich, & Sedikides, 2002). Narcissists are believed to have a difficult time feeling gratitude toward others because they are inclined to feel a sense of entitlement with respect to any benefits received (Watkins, Woodward, Stone, & Kolts, 2003).

Therefore, an intervention designed to induce acknowledgement of others is expected to have less of an impact on narcissistic individuals for the other-relevant outcomes.

> H13: Narcissism moderates the effects of an acknowledgement of others intervention, relative to a basking intervention and a control condition, on gratitude and positive relations with others, such that these effects become weaker with increasing levels of narcissism.

Narcissism may also have implications for basking in success. Individuals may vary in the extent to which their basking is based in reality (Gramzow & Willard, 2006). A well-established research finding is that people tend to have self-serving biases toward attributing success to internal causes (Zuckerman, 1979). A small amount of positive cognitive bias is probably normal, if not adaptive, for building self-esteem (Cummins & Nistico, 2001). In its most self-aggrandizing form, however, it is possible that self-congratulation in response to a positive event could resemble narcissism. Research suggests that narcissism is not exactly a case of true high self-esteem but rather defensive self-enhancement (Raskin, Novacek, & Hogan, 1991). Tracy & Robins (2007a) found that narcissism correlated more strongly with hubristic pride than authentic pride while partialling out self-esteem. The opposite pattern was found with regard to self-esteem and pride while partialling out narcissism. Narcissism would moderate the impact of basking primarily with respect to hubristic pride. Additionally, because narcissism is associated with a tendency to engage in high levels of self-enhancement, it is expected to moderate the impact of basking on self-efficacy.

> H14: Narcissism moderates the effects of a basking intervention, relative to an acknowledgment of others intervention and a control condition, on hubristic pride

and self-efficacy such that these effects are stronger with increasing levels of narcissism.

Trait gratitude

Although there is evidence for the validity of gratitude as both a trait and a state (McCullough, Tsang, & Emmons, 2004), gratitude has been mostly researched at the trait level where it is conceptualized as an affective trait. The influence of any one gratitude-relevant event on gratitude is likely to differ depending on one's level of trait gratitude. However, there are two rival hypotheses on the nature of the trait's moderation. The more intuitive conductance hypothesis predicts that trait gratitude predisposes individuals to experience grateful affect given a relevant situation (Watkins, Woodward, Stone, & Kolts, 2003). In this case, one would expect trait gratitude to amplify the effects of an intervention inducing acknowledgement of others in response to a personal success on gratitude. According to the resistance hypothesis, however, grateful individuals are expected to have such high baseline levels of grateful emotion that responses to events are actually weaker than the reactions of less dispositionally grateful individuals (McCullough, Tsang, & Emmons, 2004). Phrased differently, proponents of this view argue that low trait gratitude necessitates a larger amount of gratitude-eliciting factors (i.e., events, people to be thankful to) to achieve the same amount of gratitude. The rival predictions are represented in Figure 2. The resistance hypothesis is consistent with the notion that one's level of trait gratitude is best indicated by one's typical or baseline state, whereas the conductance hypothesis implies that trait gratitude is primarily a reflection of reactions to gratitude-relevant situations. McCullough et al. (2004) provided initial support in favor of the resistance hypothesis. Because the McCullough et al. study is the

only study thus far to pit the conductance and resistance hypotheses against one another in the context of gratitude, it is useful to once again test the competing hypotheses. If the conductance hypothesis is true, trait gratitude will amplify the effects of an acknowledgement of others intervention on gratitude and perceived positive relations with others, whereas if the resistance hypothesis is true, trait gratitude will weaken the effects of such an intervention on both of these other-relevant outcomes. Although both hypotheses are plausible, they represent incompatible conceptualizations of a trait and, as such, only one can be supported by the data.

> H15 (conductance): Trait gratitude moderates the effects of an acknowledgement of others intervention, relative to a basking intervention and a control condition, on gratitude and positive relations with others, such that these effects are stronger with increasing levels of trait gratitude.
>
> H16 (resistance): Trait gratitude moderates the effects of an acknowledgement of others intervention, relative to a basking intervention and a control condition, on gratitude and relations with others, such that these effects are weaker with increasing levels of trait gratitude.

Resistance

Trait Low   Trait High

AO -------------------------   AO --------------------------
                                C --------------------------

C --------------------------

Conductance

Trait Low   Trait High
                                AO --------------------------

AO --------------------------
C --------------------------   C --------------------------

Figure 2. **The resistance and conductance hypotheses for trait gratitude.**
Expected mean levels of state gratitude as a function of trait gratitude (low or high) and the absence (C =
control condition) versus presence (AO = appreciation of others intervention) of gratitude-relevant
situations

Summary of the Present Study

The present study is narrow with respect to the focal construct of interest. Within the concept of savoring, of particular concern are two forms of savoring that can be accomplished intrapersonally, in the absence of others. These are basking and acknowledgement of others. These forms of savoring are operationalized through the mode of writing, as opposed to other ways that individuals could savor, such as thinking or talking out loud. A number of hypotheses have been offered regarding the effects of basking in success and acknowledging others after success. The outcomes to be investigated include subjective well-being (PA and life satisfaction), motivational constructs (self-efficacy and performance goals), and social aspects of psychological well-being (positive relations with others). The purpose of the present study is not to prove discriminant validity of these measures, as they are sure to have some overlap both in theory and in measurement, but to show that savoring behavior has positive implications for a variety of outcomes. The full set of hypotheses is summarized in Table 1. A simplified representation of hypotheses is provided in Figure 3 and Figure 4. The mediated relationships are presented in Figure 3 and the moderated relations are presented in Figure 4. Relationships that are hypothesized equally for both savoring conditions are evaluated against a control group. For sake of simplicity, hypotheses that predict a stronger relationship in one savoring condition (relative to the same relationship in the other savoring condition) are indicated in the figures by the presence of a relationship for that condition (versus the absence of a relationship in the other condition).

Subjective Well-being	
1	Positive affect will be higher for individuals who write about a personal success compared to individuals in a control group.
2	Life satisfaction will be higher for individuals who write about a personal success compared to individuals in a control group.
Causal Attributions	
3	Basking in a personal success will be positively related to internal attributions of causality, relative to acknowledgement of others in response to the success.
4	Acknowledgement of others in response to a personal success will be positively related to external attributions of causality, relative to basking in the success.
Emotions & Causal Attributions	
5	Acknowledgement of others in response to a personal success will be associated with higher gratitude than will basking in success.
5a	The relationship between acknowledgement of others and gratitude will be mediated by external attributions for success.
6	Basking in a personal success will be associated with higher authentic and hubristic pride than will acknowledgement of others in response to a success.
6a	The relationship between basking and authentic pride will be mediated by effort attributions.
6b	The relationship between basking and hubristic pride will be mediated by ability attributions.
Motivational Constructs	
7	Basking in a personal success will be associated with higher self-efficacy than will acknowledgement of others in response to a success.
8	Basking in a personal success will be associated with higher performance goals than will acknowledgement of others in response to a success.
8a	The relationship between basking and performance goals will be partially mediated by self-efficacy.
Psychological well-being	
9	Acknowledgement of others in response to a personal success will be associated with higher positive relations with others than will basking in success.

Table 1. Hypotheses tested in present study

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Individual Difference Moderators	
10	Contingency of self-esteem moderates the effects of a basking intervention, relative to an acknowledgment of others intervention and a control condition, on authentic pride and self-efficacy, such that these effects are stronger as contingency of self-esteem increases.
11	Level of self-esteem moderates the effects of a basking intervention, relative to an acknowledgment of others intervention and a control condition, on authentic pride and self-efficacy, such that these effects are stronger as self-esteem increases.
12	Level and contingency of self-esteem interact to moderate the effects of a basking intervention, relative to an acknowledgment of others intervention and a control condition, on authentic pride and self-efficacy, such that these effects are stronger as self-esteem becomes higher in level and more contingent.
13	Narcissism moderates the effects of an acknowledgement of others intervention, relative to a basking intervention and a control condition, on gratitude and positive relations with others, such that these effects become weaker with increasing levels of narcissism.
14	Narcissism moderates the effects of a basking intervention, relative to an acknowledgment of others intervention and a control condition, on hubristic pride and self-efficacy such that these effects are stronger with increasing levels of narcissism.
15	Trait gratitude moderates the effects of an acknowledgement of others intervention, relative to a basking intervention and a control condition, on gratitude and positive relations with others, such that these effects are stronger with increasing levels of trait gratitude.
16	Trait gratitude moderates the effects of an acknowledgement of others intervention, relative to a basking intervention and a control condition, on gratitude and relations with others, such that these effects are weaker with increasing levels of trait gratitude.

Table 1 cont'd. **Hypotheses tested in present study**
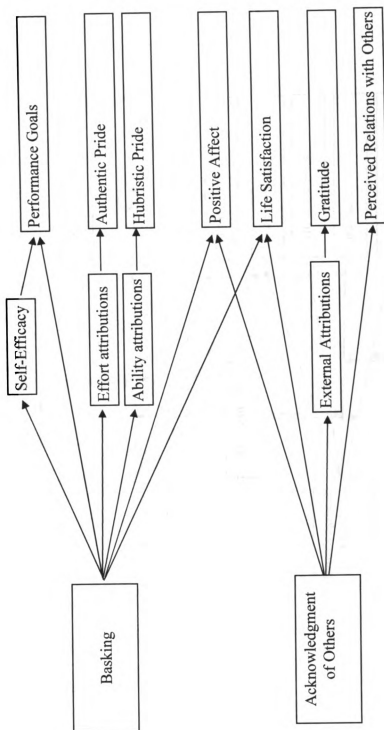
Figure 3. **Hypothesized direct and mediated relations between variables**

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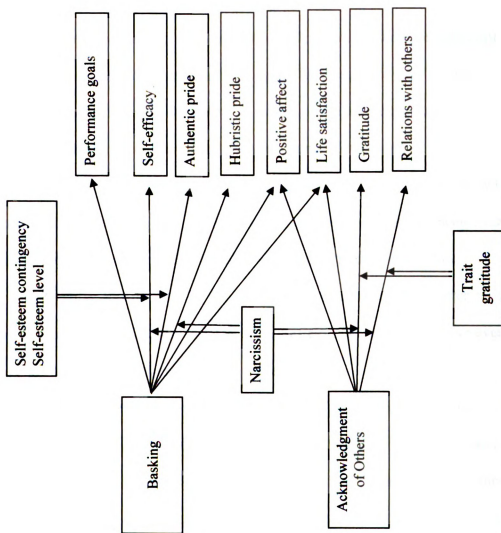
Figure 4. Hypothesized direct and moderated relations between variables

The figure contains the following boxes and labels:

- Self-esteem contingency / Self-esteem level
- Basking
- Narcissism
- Acknowledgment of Others
- Trait gratitude
- Performance goals
- Self-efficacy
- Authentic pride
- Hubristic pride
- Positive affect
- Life satisfaction
- Gratitude
- Relations with others

METHOD

Overview

The participants of the present study were high school students who had all recently experienced the success of being admitted to college. They were contacted via e-mail by the large Midwestern university that admitted them and asked to participate in a study on student experiences and opinions. Only students who had responded positively to their admissions offer by returning a final deposit for attendance were invited to participate. The extent to which those students who volunteered to participate savored their college admission was manipulated over the course of two days.

A primary strength of the study design is that savoring was manipulated instead of self-reported. The research to-date that has focused on savoring, as it is conceptualized in the present study, has correlated self-reported savoring with recalled duration of enjoyment (Bryant & Veroff, 22007). An unfortunate consequence of the latter design is that correlations can be artificially inflated when participants recall the positive event, savoring, and emotional outcomes all at the same time.

A second, unique strength of the study design is that participants were given a common event to savor as opposed to self-selecting an event. Most research examining reminiscence and appreciation has allowed participants to choose an event from their past which can lead to large variance in the types of experiences reported (e.g., Burton & King, 2004; Emmons & McCullough, 2003). It is then difficult to measure quantity of savoring, because specific savoring behaviors (e.g., telling oneself how proud one is) may or may not be applicable. By narrowing the focus of investigation to one type of event, the forms of savoring that are relevant to that event should be comparable across people.

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As a result, there is greater control over the nature of savoring that is engaged in by participants.

Sample

Out of the 2,999 students who were sent an invitation to participate, at least 45 did not have working e-mail addresses. Participation was capped once the desired number of participants had indicated their willingness to participate. A total of 275 responses (9% of invited students) were recorded. Thirty-seven left the study after the first day and thus did not provide usable data (13% attrition). Attrition rates by condition were as follows: 10.5% control, 12.9% basking, 17% acknowledgment of others. One student was dropped who indicated minimal English skills, 5 were removed because of condition contamination caused by technical malfunctions, 2 were removed who did not complete one of the writing tasks, and 5 were removed because of missing responses to entire scales needed for the primary analyses.

The final sample consisted of 225 students, 73% of which were female. The majority of respondents was 18 years old (97%), lived in the United States (98%), indicated English as their primary language (90%), and was Caucasian (87%). Other ethnic groups that participated were Asian (6%), Hispanic (3%), and African-American (2%).

There was some variation across participants in the length of time between their notice of university admission and the study. Students learned of their admission between one to seven months prior to being contacted for the study, with an average period of five months. They received $10 in exchange for their participation.

Design and Procedure

Eligible participants (i.e., those who were accepted for admission) received an e-mail from the university broadly describing the study and requesting their participation. A link was provided where they could view the informed consent for the study before deciding to participate. They were asked to begin the study within a week of receiving the e-mail. The study utilized a three-group posttest design with random assignment. Participants who experienced the success of being accepted into the university were randomly assigned to partake in one of three conditions: a basking intervention, an acknowledgement of others intervention, or a control condition.

The manipulation and measures to test the present hypotheses were administered over the course of two consecutive days. On the first day, participants completed a 10-minute writing task online followed by an assessment of narcissism and self-esteem. The content of participants' writing was determined by the question prompts they received, which varied according to the condition to which they were assigned. On Day 2, participants completed another 10-minute writing task on the same topic with slightly varied instructions to discourage habituation and boredom. Participants also completed surveys that contained self-report measures of outcomes, locus of causality, manipulation checks, control variables, and trait gratitude.

Measures

Outcomes

Positive Affect. Affect "at this moment" was assessed using the 20-item Positive Affect and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). Each item on this scale is an adjective describing a feeling state, such as "alert," "proud," or "inspired." Participants were prompted to indicate to what extent they feel this way (1 =

very slightly or not at all to 5 = *extremely*). Reliability for the PANAS was α = .89. The complete measure is provided in Appendix A.

Pride. State pride was assessed using Tracy and Robins' (2007) 14-item measure. Respondents were presented with different adjective words. This scale has the advantage of distinguishing between authentic (e.g., "successful") and hubristic pride (e.g. "conceited") based on the adjectives. Participants were asked to rate the extent to which they "feel this way at this moment" (1 = *very slightly or not at all* to 5 = *extremely*). The authentic and hubristic pride had reliabilities of α = .91 and .85, respectively. The complete measure is provided in Appendix A.

State Gratitude. State gratitude was assessed using three gratitude-related adjectives (*grateful, thankful, appreciative*). Participants in the present study were asked to respond on a 5-point scale how they "feel at this moment" (1 = *very slightly or not at all* to 5 = *extremely*) to be consistent with the PA and pride scales. The reliability of this scale was α = .95. The complete measure is provided in Appendix A.

Life Satisfaction. Life satisfaction was assessed using the 5-item Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985). A sample item is "I feel as though the conditions of my life are excellent." Participants in the present study used a 5-point response scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). The reliability of the life satisfaction scale was α = .77. The complete measure is provided in Appendix B.

Academic Self-Efficacy. Self-efficacy was measured specific to the college setting using a 4-item scale adapted from Wood and Locke (1987). A sample item is "I am confident in my ability to succeed as a college student." Participants used a 5-point

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response scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). The reliability observed for

the present scale was α = .75. The complete measure is provided in Appendix C.

Performance goals. Participants' goal-setting was measured with a 4-item scale

pertaining to their grade goals (Wood & Locke, 1987). The items ask for the GPA that

they hope to make, that they would be minimally satisfied with, that they would expect,

and that they would actually try for. In the present study, the items were adapted to reflect

grade goals for the first semester of college. A sample item is "What GPA do you expect

to get your first semester of college?" The scale reliability was α = .79. The complete

measure is provided in Appendix C.

Positive relations with others. Participants' perceptions of their positive relations

with others were measured with a 14-item scale constructed by Ryff (1989). Eight items

that referenced friendships, specifically, were revised to refer to interpersonal

relationships, in general. A sample revised item is "I feel like I get a lot out of my

interpersonal relationships." Participants used a 5-point response scale (1 = *strongly

disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). Observed reliability was α = .87. The complete measure

is provided in Appendix D.

Locus of causality. The locus of causality that participants perceived for the

success during the writing exercise was assessed using nine items adapted from the

Multidimensional-Multiattributional Causality Scale (Lefcourt, Baeyer, Ware, & Cox,

1979). The original scale was divided into attributions made with respect to successes and

failures in achievement and social domains. For the present study only the achievement

successes were relevant. The original scale was designed to tap into respondents'

attributional tendencies and not their responses to a particular success. Items were

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modified accordingly to correspond to college admission. Lastly, the original scale measured internal attributions with two subscales (ability and effort) and external attributions with two subscales (task characteristics and luck). The latter subscales reflected sources of external attribution that were not relevant to appreciating others (whereas ability and effort are both conceptually relevant to basking). Therefore, the task characteristics and luck subscales were replaced with a subscale reflecting the construct of attributions to others, which served as the measure of external attributions. The complete modified measure is provided in Appendix E. Reliabilities were .86, .81, and .84 for the ability, effort, and others attribution measures, respectively.

Experimental Manipulation

The intervention was modeled after the expressive writing paradigm (Pennebaker & Beall, 1986). In the original 1986 study, participants wrote about a traumatic experience for 15 minutes a day for four consecutive days and showed marked improvements in health. Since that study, the paradigm has been adapted for a variety of purposes including having people write about their most positive experiences (Kloss & Lisman, 2002; Marlo & Wagner, 1999), their best possible selves (Harrist, Carlozzi, McGovern, & Harrist, 2007; King, 2001), and their romantic relationships (Slatcher & Pennebaker, 2006). A meta-analysis on all available studies employing expressive writing (85% in which participants wrote about a negative topic) indicated that effect sizes do not significantly vary depending on the valence of the writing topic (Frattaroli, 2006).

Studies have varied in the length, number, and spacing of their writing sessions. Spacing of sessions (i.e., daily vs. weekly) has been found to make no difference for effect sizes, whereas findings regarding the number and length of sessions are mixed

(Frattaroli, 2006). Whether or not participants are allowed to switch topics (i.e., events or themes) over the course of the study is less important than whether they are given instructions on whether it is acceptable to do so (i.e., instructions help). In the present study, participants focused on one topic, their acceptance to college. However, some authors have expressed concerns for habituation effects when thinking about positive events (e.g., Duckworth, Steen, & Seligman, 2005). On a related note, Frattaroli wondered whether there might be diminishing returns for expressive writing. In order to reduce concerns of habituation, the questions that were given as a guide for participants were different each day to add variety, and the writing exercises were limited to a relatively short length of ten minutes daily over the course of two days.

According to many characteristics, this study would be considered a minority in the expressive writing paradigm. It would be among the 15% of studies in which participants write about a positive topic. Additionally, the present study explicitly instructed participants to self-reflect and presented guided questions to do so. Only fifty-percent of expressive writing studies have given directed questions and even fewer (4%) have given instructions that were designed to promote cognitive processing or meaning (Fattaroli, 2006).

Participants in all three groups were instructed to write for ten minutes. Only participants in the experimental conditions were prompted to think and write about their admission to the university. The basking group was encouraged to reflect upon themselves and their role in the success, whereas the acknowledgement of others group was encouraged to consider people who have helped them along the way to success. Both savoring conditions (i.e., basking and acknowledgment) were asked to write about their

positive emotions, because this reflects a component common to all forms of savoring.

The control group wrote about unrelated topics, including descriptions of the room in which they were sitting and of a tree which they had seen. The full set of instructions is provided in Appendix F.

In order to provide evidence for the construct validity of the savoring manipulation, participants completed two scales devised by Bryant and Veroff (2007): *self-congratulation*, and *counting blessings*. These scales represent distinct savoring strategies, consisting of a grouping of thoughts or behaviors in which a person engages in reaction to a positive event. Basking in success should be related to the self-congratulation scale, whereas acknowledgement of others in response to a success should be more closely related to the counting blessings scale. Savoring at its broadest conceptual level (i.e., regardless of the form) should be closely related to the construct of positive cognitive rumination. Feldman and colleagues (2008) have devised a scale that decomposes responses to positive affect into those that are emotion-focused, self-focused, and dampening. According to these authors, an example of emotion-focused rumination would be savoring the moment when one is happy, whereas an example of self-focused rumination would be thinking to oneself how proud one feels. Based on their conceptualization of rumination, basking in success was expected to correlate with self-focused rumination, and both basking and acknowledgement of others were expected to correlate with emotion-focused rumination.

Self-congratulation. The self-congratulation scale from Bryant and Veroff's Ways of Savoring Checklist (WOSC; 2007) was administered to participants. One item was omitted that did not make sense in the context of the present experiment ("I thought about

what a good time I was having"). The six remaining items were adapted to make them more specific to the success being savored. For example, an original item was "I thought about what a triumph it was" and the newly worded item was "I thought about what a triumph it was to be accepted to MSU". Responses were made on a 5-point scale (1 = *not at all* to 5 = *to a great extent*). The complete measure is provided in Appendix G. Reliability of the measure was α = .87.

Counting Blessings. An adapted version of the counting blessings scale from Bryant and Veroff's Ways of Savoring Checklist (WOSC; 2007) was administered to participants. When possible, items were made more specific to college admission. One item with religious connotations ("I said a prayer of thanks") was deleted because of the confound that it presented (i.e., participants' spirituality). Three new items were added that were consistent with Bryant and Veroff's conceptualization of counting blessings (e.g., "I reminded myself to thank someone later"). Responses were made on a 5-point scale (1 = *not at all* to 5 = *to a great extent*). The full scale, including the three new items, was pilot tested in a prior data collection by the present author. Reliability was α = .84 in the pilot test and α = .80 in the main study. The original items, their changes, and new items are included in Appendix G.

Responses to Positive Affect (RPA) Questionnaire. Positive cognitive rumination was measured using the 4-item self-focus subscale and 5-item emotion-focus subscale of the RPA (Feldman, Joormann, & Johnson, 2008). The instructions were modified for the present study to ask participants how frequently during the course of the study they had the types of thoughts indicated by the items. The complete questionnaire is provided in

Appendix H. Reliabilities for self-focused and emotion-focused response to positive affect were .87 and .87, respectively.

Controls

Previous causal attributions. Participants responded to two items intended to measure recollections of their internal and external attributions when they first learned of their acceptance to the university. They responded on a 5-point scale (1 = *not at all* to 5 = *to a great extent*). The items are provided in Appendix I.

Previous savoring. Participants' savoring behaviors following their initial notification of acceptance, before partaking in the study, were assessed using a number of items created for the present study. They were designed to tap into a wide range of savoring forms, including basking and acknowledgement of others, while limiting the number of questions. The complete measure is provided in Appendix I. The reliability was α = .89.

Significance of success. The effectiveness of the savoring manipulations could vary as a function of the significance of admission. The significance of the success is expected to vary depending on the student's desire to attend the university. Individuals who do not want to attend the college may find it difficult to savor their acceptance. Participants were presented with one item that asked them to rank MSU in terms of their preferences for colleges (1 = *first* to 4 = *fourth or below*). Perceived success was examined in one item that asked participants to report the extent to which they considered their admission a personal success (1 = *slightly or not at all* to 5 = *very much so*).

Time elapsed since success. Participants were asked to report the month and year that they initially learned of their acceptance to the university. To the extent that an event is more recent, savoring manipulations may have more of an impact.

Individual Differences

Self-esteem. Participants' typical levels of self-esteem were measured using Rosenberg's 10-item Self-Esteem Scale (SES; Rosenberg, 1965). A sample item is "I take a positive attitude toward myself." Responses were made on a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). The reliability was α = .86. The full measure is included in Appendix J.

Participants' contingency of self-esteem was assessed using the 5-item Contingency of Self-Worth Scale (Crocker et al., 2003). A sample item is "Doing well in school gives me a sense of self-respect." Responses were made on a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). Reliability was α = .76. The full measure is provided in Appendix K.

Narcissism. Narcissism was measured using the 37-item version of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) developed by Emmons (1987). A sample item is "I think I am a special person." The response scale was true-false and the reliability was α = .77. The full measure is included in Appendix L.

Trait gratitude. Trait gratitude was measured using the 6-item Gratitude Questionnaire (GQ-6; McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002). A sample item is "I have so much in life to be thankful for". To remain consistent with other measures in the study, responses were on a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). Reliability was α = .85. The full measure is included in Appendix M.

RESULTS

Manipulation checks

As a first step in exploring differences between groups, self-report scores on preestablished savoring scales were examined. Participants were asked to report the extent to which they experienced a number of thoughts during or after the writing exercise. If the basking manipulation were successful, then scores on Self-Congratulation would be highest in that group. If the acknowledgment of others manipulation were successful, then scores on Counting Blessings would be highest in that group. Results indicated that although the anticipated pattern of means was found, there was no significant difference among the three groups on either Self-Congratulation, $F(2,222) = .15$, $p = .86$, or Counting Blessings, $F(2,222) = .38$, $p = .69$. There were also no appreciable differences among groups for self-focused and emotion-focused responses to positive affect, $F(2,222) = .08$, $p = .92$ and $F(2,222) = .20$, $p = .82$, respectively.

One possible explanation for these results is that participants in the control task were confused. They may have wondered why they received questions about their thoughts on university admission when, in fact, they had been thinking about their virtually unrelated assigned topics during the writing task (e.g., trees). This possibility is supported by open-ended comments. Some participants may have made sense of the questions by answering them with respect to their experiences outside of the experiment while others may have followed the directions more exactly. Higher variance was observed amongst control participants compared to the experimental groups on these self-report measures of savoring, which may be reflective not of true variance on these constructs, but of contamination due to differences in following instructions.

The major evidence that participants did indeed savor admission to the university during the experimental task is offered by the content of their writing during the experiment. Two graduate students read a subset of the essays and independently categorized each according to whether it was most representative of basking, acknowledgment of others, or the control task. Additionally, they provided ratings of how well each essay conformed to each of the three categories on a four-point scale (1 = *does not resemble this category whatsoever* to 4 = *fits perfectly*). Raters were provided with descriptions of basking, acknowledgment of others, and a control topic (see Appendix N).

Coders were in agreement for their categorization of 41 out of the 42 writing samples that they examined (98% of the time), resulting in a Cohen's Kappa of .96. For all 41 cases on which they agreed, they correctly identified to which group the participants belonged (i.e., basking, acknowledgment or control). In addition, the coders displayed a high level of consistency in their representativeness ratings. The intraclass coefficients were .92 for basking, .94 for acknowledgment, and 1.00 for the control group. Thus, the coders not only classified the writing samples similarly but they also reported similar ratings of how characteristic each writing sample was of the three conditions.

The consistency in ratings justified the averaging of representativeness scores for each writing sample across raters. These average scores offer support for the validity of the manipulation. As expected, writing samples from the basking group were rated substantially higher on basking representativeness than writing samples from the other two groups, $F(2,39) = 82.06, p < .001$. In a similar fashion, writing samples from the acknowledgment group were rated highest on acknowledgment representativeness,

$F(2,39) = 318.72, p < .001$, and writing samples from the control group were rated

highest on control representativeness[2]. Means and standard deviations of

representativeness ratings are provided in Table 2.

	Ratings of Independent Coders		
Assigned Condition	Basking	Acknowledgment of Others	Control
Basking (N = 14)	3.50 (.59)	1.25 (.47)	1.00 (.00)
Acknowledgment of Others (N = 14)	1.64 (.72)	3.82 (.32)	1.00 (.00)
Control (N = 14)	1.00 (.00)	1.00 (.00)	4.00 (.00)

Table 2. **Manipulation check conducted by independent raters.**
Values represent ratings, averaged across writing samples, of how well writing samples that corresponded to an assigned condition represented that condition as well as the other conditions. Standard deviations are in parentheses.

Discriminant Validity of Outcome Measures

A number of the outcome measures assessed components of well-being and

motivation and, as such, were conceptually related. Discriminant validity was evaluated

in confirmatory factor analyses performed in LISREL 8.72 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 2005)

using maximum likelihood estimation. There was a minimal amount of item-level

missing data (<1%) that was imputed using multiple imputation procedures with an

expectation-maximization (EM) algorithm. A combination of fit indices was used to

evaluate goodness of fit. While a nonsignificant chi-square indicates good fit, Hatcher

(1994) suggested that fit is reasonable if $\chi^2/2$ is less than two. Hu and Bentler (1994) also

provided guidelines such that a model has adequate fit if SRMR is less than .08, and

either the CFI is equal to or greater than .95 or RMSEA is less than or equal to .06.

The first two models examined the structure of the six well-being outcomes:

positive affect (PA), authentic pride, hubristic pride, gratitude, life satisfaction, and

perceived relations with others (PRO). A six-factor model with items as indicators of

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[2] There was no within-group variance on control group representativeness; thus an ANOVA could not be computed.

their respective scales (the latent factors) and correlated factors provided reasonably good

fit to the data, $\chi^2(974, N = 225) = 1799.71$, $\chi^2/df = 1.85$, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .06, SRMR

= .07. An alternative one-factor model tested by constraining the correlations between

factors to one did not provide adequate fit, $\chi^2(989, N = 225) = 6185.45$, $\chi^2/df = 6.25$, CFI

= .80, RMSEA = .15, SRMR = .14. The one-factor model fit the data significantly worse

than the six-factor model, $\chi^2(15, N = 225) = 4385.74$, $p < .001$, indicating that

measurement of six distinct well-being constructs is justified. The latent correlations

between the well-being measures are provided in Table 3 (standard errors of estimates in

parentheses).

	PA	Pride-Hub.	Pride-Auth.	Gratitude	Life Sat.
Pride-Hub.	.20 (.07)				
Pride-Auth.	.80 (.03)	.14 (.07)			
Gratitude	.57 (.05)	-.04 (.07)	.61 (.05)		
Life Sat.	.27 (.07)	.08 (.08)	.36 (.05)	.38 (.07)	
PRO	.20 (.07)	-.19 (.07)	.30 (.07)	.32 (.07)	.53 (.06)

Table 3. **Correlation of latent well-being factors**

The second two models examined the structure of the two motivational outcomes:

self-efficacy and performance goals (8 items in total). A two-factor model with items as

indicators of their respective scales (the latent factors) and correlated factors had

adequate fit, $\chi^2(19, N = 225) = 34.24$, $\chi^2/df = 1.79$, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .06, SRMR =

.06. The alternative one-factor model tested by constraining the correlation between the

two factors to equal one resulted in poor fit, $\chi^2(20, N = 225) = 397.42$, $\chi^2/df = 19.87$, CFI

= .58, RMSEA = .29, SRMR = .18. The difference between the two-factor and one-factor

model was significant, $\chi^2(1, N = 225) = 363.02$, $p < .001$, indicating that self-efficacy and

performance goals are best measured separately. The latent correlation between the two

constructs was .29 (s.e. = .07)

Controlling for Extraneous Variables

Before analyses were conducted, the groups were examined for differences on

several perceived characteristics of the writing tasks. A MANOVA was conducted for

task difficulty, meaningfulness, and enjoyment and revealed significant differences

across conditions, Wilk's lambda = .67, $F(6,438) = 15.99, p < .001$. Univariate tests

revealed that conditions did not significantly differ in average levels of task enjoyment,

$F(2,221) = 2.60, p = .08$, suggesting that controlling for this characteristic was not

necessary. There were no significant differences between the basking and

acknowledgment of others groups on any of the characteristics. Both savoring conditions

(basking and acknowledgment of others) were rated as more difficult and meaningful

than the control task, $F(2,221) = 11.04$ and 26.45, respectively, $p < .001$. Whereas task

difficulty was largely unrelated to the outcomes investigated (with the exception of

perceived relations with others at $r = .30$), task meaningfulness was related to a number

of the outcomes (see , which presents task characteristic ratings and their correlations

with outcomes). Despite this finding, the decision was made to not control for

meaningfulness, because one manner by which savoring should operate is through

providing a meaningful experience to individuals.

Characteristics of the event to be savored were examined, as well. The groups did

not differ in the extent to which they perceived their admission to be a success, $F(2,222)$

$= .02, p = .99$, ranked the university highly in their preferences, $F(2,222) = .29, p = .75$,

Task Characteristic	Condition	M	SD	Positive affect	Life Satisfaction	Gratitude	Authentic Pride	Hubristic Pride	Self-efficacy	Goal Setting	Positive Relations with Others
Enjoyment	B	2.72	.79	.11	.11	-.01	.05	-.08	.13*	.02	.06
	AO	2.97	.95								
	C	3.01	.74								
Difficulty	B	2.41	1.0	.02	-.01	.03	-.05	.10	.01	-.05	-.14*
	AO	2.05	1.0								
	C	1.67	.86								
Meaningfulness	B	3.10	.81	.30*	.08	.17	.20*	.03	.17*	.14*	.16*
	AO	3.23	.99								
	C	2.25	.96								

Table 4. Perceived task characteristics and their correlations with outcomes.
* $p < .05$. N = 224-225. B = Basking, AO = Acknowledgment of Others, C = Control

savored their admission to the university prior to the study, $F(2,221) = .01$, p = .99, or

attributed their admission to external factors prior to the study, $F(2,221) = .53$, $p = .59$.

The results did suggest that there was a significant difference between groups in the

extent to which they recalled attributing their success to internal factors prior to the study

when they first learned of their admission, $F(2,221) = 3.48$, $p = .03$. Both experimental

groups, recalled marginally higher internal attributions than the control group, $p = .06$ and

$p = .07$ for basking and acknowledgment of others, respectively. The means of event-

related perceptions and behaviors, as well as their correlation with outcomes, are

presented in Table 5. The first three variables displayed moderate correlations with

outcomes and were substantially interrelated. Perceived success of admission correlated r

= .51 with personal ranking of the university and $r = .65$ with previous savoring. The

latter two variables correlated $r = .37$. To avoid redundancy, perceived success but not

the latter two variables was controlled in the analyses. This statistical control procedure

removes variance in outcomes due to perceived success of the achievement, thus, has the

advantage of improving the sensitivity of analyses by decreasing the within-group error term. Participants' recollections of their causal attributions when they first learned of their acceptance were also statistically controlled because they were related to a number of outcomes and, as mentioned above, prior internal attributions varied slightly between groups. In general, the practice of supplementing random assignment with statistical control of variables is recommended when groups differ by chance on an important variable or when adding a predictor can decrease error in the model (Darlington, 1990).

Table 5. **Success-related perceptions/behaviors and their correlations with outcomes**
*p<.05. N = 224-225. B = Basking, AO = Acknowledgment of Others, C = Control

Event Characteristic	Condition	M	SD	Positive affect	Life Satisfaction	Gratitude	Authentic Pride	Hubristic Pride	Self-efficacy	Goal Setting	Positive Relations	Ability Attribution	Effort Attribution	Others Attribution
Perceived success	B	3.91	1.09	.21*	.05	.18*	.13*	-.24*	.05	-.12	.23*	-.07	.30*	.07
	AO	3.93	1.05											
	C	3.90	1.07											
University rank	B	3.43	.90	.11	.13*	.18*	.17*	-.16*	.06	-.07	.16*	.07	.27*	.08
	AO	3.36	.87											
	C	3.31	.95											
Previous savoring	B	3.18	.84	.32*	.16*	.32*	.20*	-.14*	.04	-.13*	.34*	-.07	.41*	.31*
	AO	3.20	.95											
	C	3.19	.99											
Prior internal attributions	B	4.47	.68	.06	.15*	.16*	.17*	-.02	.18*	.16*	.16*	.18*	.20*	.05
	AO	4.46	.60											
	C	4.22	.72											
Prior external attributions	B	2.09	.86	.15*	.03	.13	.07*	.09	-.07	-.08	.11*	.00	.11	.46*
	AO	2.26	1.23											
	C	2.23	1.02											

Table 6. Intercorrelations, Means, Standard Deviations, and Reliabilities

	M	SD	N	basking	acknowledgment	success	prior internal attributions	prior external attributions	positive affect	life satisfaction	ability attributions	effort attributions	others attributions	gratitude emotion	authentic pride	hubristic pride	self-efficacy
basking	0.30	0.46	225	—													
acknowledgment	0.33	0.47	225	-.46	—												
success	3.92	1.07	225	.00	.01	—											
prior internal attributions	4.38	0.68	224	.09	.09	.06	—										
prior external attributions	2.20	1.05	224	-.07	.04	.12	-.06	—									
positive affect	3.05	0.83	225	.13	.10	.21	.06	.15	.89								
life satisfaction	3.57	0.68	225	-.04	.08	.05	.15	.03	.19	.77							
ability attributions	3.73	0.93	225	.10	.04	-.07	.18	.00	.09	.11	.86						
effort attributions	3.96	0.91	225	.07	-.02	.30	.20	.11	.23	.15	.38	.81					
others attributions	3.44	1.04	225	-.11	.19	.07	.05	.46	.17	.22	.14	.29	.84				
gratitude emotion	3.81	1.08	225	.06	.14	.18	.16	.13	.54	.34	.10	.27	.28	.95			
authentic pride	3.27	0.85	225	.03	.16	.13	.17	.08	.74	.27	.12	.17	.14	.58	.91		
hubristic pride	1.46	0.53	225	.01	.02	-.24	-.02	.09	.19	.04	.07	-.14	-.04	-.01	.14	.85	
self-efficacy	4.12	0.62	225	.00	.14	.05	.18	-.08	.13	.22	.02	.01	-.04	.12	.21	-.01	.75
goal setting	3.58	0.23	225	-.07	.12	-.12	.16	-.08	-.01	.02	.04	-.08	-.09	-.04	.03	-.04	.23
relations with others	3.84	0.54	225	.05	.03	.23	.16	.11	.20	.43	.08	.27	.24	.32	.27	-.17	.17
self-esteem	3.92	0.60	225	.02	.05	.14	.21	.09	.15	.48	.06	.05	.14	.15	.31	.03	.41
self-esteem contingency	4.08	0.58	225	-.03	.12	-.04	.25	.05	.03	.04	.28	.20	.13	.05	.06	.01	-.02
narcissism	18.58	5.29	225	-.06	.00	-.06	.08	.03	.13	.09	.02	.11	.02	.01	.12	.28	.14

Correlations in bold are significant at the .05 level or above. Reliabilities (Cronbach's alpha) are reported along the diagonal.

	M	SD	N	goal setting	relations with others	self-esteem	self-esteem contingency	narcissism	trait gratitude
basking	0.30	0.46	225						
acknowledgment	0.33	0.47	225						
success	3.92	1.07	225						
prior internal attributions	4.38	0.68	224						
prior external attributions	2.20	1.05	224						
positive affect	3.05	0.83	225						
life satisfaction	3.57	0.68	225						
ability attributions	3.73	0.93	225						
effort attributions	3.96	0.91	225						
others attributions	3.44	1.04	225						
gratitude emotion	3.81	1.08	225						
authentic pride	3.27	0.85	225						
hubristic pride	1.46	0.53	225						
self-efficacy	4.12	0.62	225						
goal setting	3.58	0.23	225	.79					
relations with others	3.84	0.54	225	.00	.87				
self-esteem	3.92	0.60	225	.07	**.41**	.86			
self-esteem contingency	4.08	0.58	225	**.25**	.05	.00	.76		
narcissism	18.58	5.29	225	.07	**.16**	**.21**	.11	.77	

Table 6 cont'd. Intercorrelations, Means, Standard Deviations, and Reliability of Measures
Correlations in bold are significant at the .05 level or above. Reliabilities (Cronbach's alpha) are reported along the diagonal.

Test of Hypotheses

The scale intercorrelations, means, standard deviations, and reliabilities for all variables included in the hypotheses and as control variables are provided in . To test the effects of the savoring interventions on outcomes, a series of ANCOVAs and planned contrasts were conducted. Perceived success of university admission and both internal and external prior causal attributions were statistically controlled in all analyses unless specifically mentioned otherwise (i.e., in some cases, it made conceptual sense to only control for one type of casual attribution).

Subjective well-being

The first set of hypotheses concerned the effects of both savoring interventions on subjective well-being. Hypothesis 1 stated that positive affect (PA) would be higher for individuals who savored a success compared to individuals in a control group. An analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) confirmed that there were significant differences on PA between the three conditions, $F(2,218) = 5.47$, $p < .01$. Contrast results indicated that both the basking and acknowledgment of others conditions had higher means on adjusted PA than the control group ($p < .01$ and $p < .05$, respectively) thus supporting Hypothesis 1. Participants who savored their success reported higher positive affect than control participants, regardless of the extent to which the event was considered a success and their prior internal and external causal atributions. The raw (unadjusted means) are presented in Figure 5.

Hypothesis 2 stated that life satisfaction would be higher for individuals who savored a success compared to individuals in a control group. An ANCOVA showed no significant effects of condition on life satisfaction, $F(2,218) = .51$, $p = .60$, after

perceived success and prior causal attributions were controlled. The raw (unadjusted

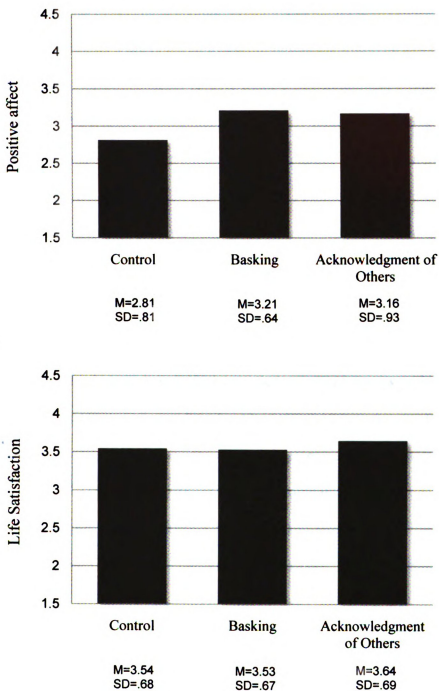means) are presented in Figure 5. Hypothesis 2 was not supported.

Figure 5. **Positive affect and life satisfaction means by condition.**
$N = 225$ (83, 68, and 74, respectively)

Causal Attributions

The type of savoring engaged in, either self-focused basking or other-focused acknowledgment of others, was proposed to be associated with causal attributions of success. Hypothesis 3 predicted that basking in success would be associated with higher internal attributions of causality relative to the acknowledgment group. To test this hypothesis, a MANCOVA of ability and effort attributions controlling for perceived success and internal causal attributions was performed, which revealed no significant differences across groups, Wilk's lambda = .98, F(4,436) = .91, p = .46. The pattern of raw means suggested that participants who basked in success tended to attribute their success to ability more so than control participants, which was confirmed in a more liberal t-test ($p < .05$). Nevertheless, the results failed to support Hypothesis 3, which proposed differences in internal attributions between the savoring groups.

Hypothesis 4 predicted that acknowledgment of others would be positively related to external attributions of causality. An ANCOVA on attribution to others indicated significant effects of condition controlling for perceived success and prior external attributions, $F(2,219) = 4.18, p < .05$. Planned comparisons confirmed that the difference was due to higher external attributions in the acknowledgment of others condition when compared to both the control and basking groups ($ps < .01$). Hypothesis 4 was supported.

Emotions

The next set of hypotheses proposed differential relationships of the two types of savoring with emotions. Only the attribution type theoretically relevant for the outcome was controlled when testing Hypotheses 5 and 6. Hypothesis 5 predicted that acknowledgment of others in response to success would be associated with higher

gratitude than would basking in success. An ANCOVA on gratitude indicated significant group differences after controlling for perceived success and prior external attributions, $F(2,219) = 4.32$, $p < .05$. The acknowledgment of others condition did not differ significantly from the basking condition on gratitude ($p = .62$). Counter to expectations, gratitude was higher in both the acknowledgment of others and basking conditions compared to the control group ($p < .01$ and $p < .05$, respectively). Mean levels of gratitude, unadjusted for the effects of covariates, are shown in Figure 6. These results indicate that gratitude was related to the savoring manipulations but not differentially according to type of savoring. Thus, Hypothesis 5 was not supported.

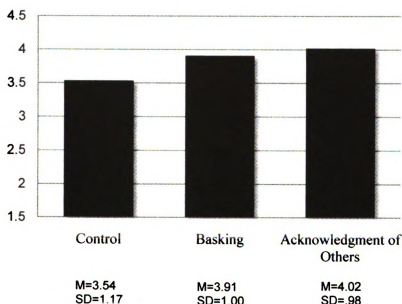| Control	Basking	Acknowledgment of Others
M=3.54	M=3.91	M=4.02
SD=1.17	SD=1.00	SD=.98

Figure 6. **Gratitude means by condition**.
$N = 225$ (83, 68, and 74, respectively)

Hypothesis 5a stated that the effects of acknowledgment of others on gratitude would be mediated by external causal attributions for success. Mediation is not readily examined in ANCOVA and, therefore, two dummy codes were used to represent the

study groups in a regression. The results conformed with the requirements of the first three steps but not the fourth of the Baron and Kenny (1986) test, i.e., the path from acknowledgment of others to gratitude remained significant, suggesting only partial mediation. A formal assessment of indirect effects can be conducted using the Sobel test, which is considered conservative and more accurate and powerful than the Baron and Kenny test (MacKinnon, Warsi, & Dwyer, 1995). Results indicated that the indirect effect of acknowledgment of others on gratitude through external attributions was significant ($z = 2.30, p < .05$) and that the direct effect of acknowledgment on gratitude was not significant after attributions were controlled, $t = 1.34, p = .18$. This latter finding provides support for full mediation. Because of the relatively small sample size, it is preferable to use a bootstrapping method to estimate the indirect effect as recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2004). Using 5,000 bootstrap samples, results confirmed that the 95% confidence interval of the indirect effect did not include zero (.03, .23). Hypothesis 5a was supported.

Hypothesis 6 predicted that basking in success would be associated with higher authentic and hubristic pride than would acknowledgment of others in response to success. Because the observed correlation between authentic and hubristic pride was only .13, these forms of pride were examined in two separate ANCOVAs. The results indicated significant group differences on state authentic pride, $F(2,219) = 3.72, p < .05$, but not hubristic pride, $F(2,220) = .10, p = .91$, after controlling for perceived success and prior internal attributions. Hence, follow-up tests were conducted for authentic pride only. A planned contrast indicated that authentic pride did not differ between the basking and acknowledgment of others conditions ($p = .28$). To explore the data further, post-hoc

pairwise comparisons were conducted with bonferroni corrections, which revealed that

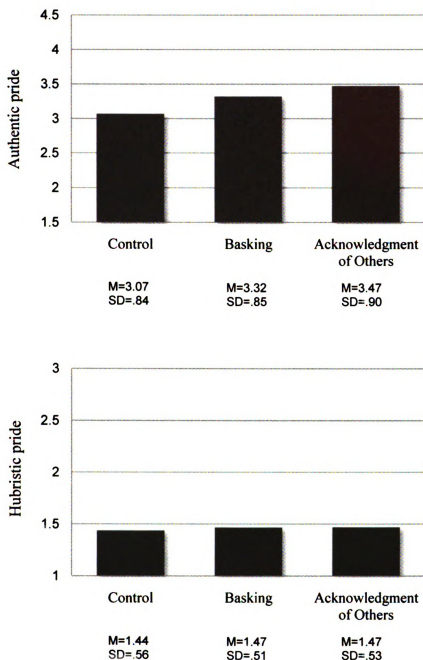that there was no difference between the basking condition and control group ($p = .37$),

Figure 7. **Authentic and hubristic pride means by condition**.
N = 225 (83, 68, and 74, respectively)

but that authentic pride was significantly higher in the acknowledgment of others condition compared to the control group ($p < .05$). These results failed to support Hypothesis 6. The raw (unadjusted) means for authentic and hubristic pride are presented in Figure 7.

Because there was no significant relationship between basking in success and either form of pride, it was not feasible to test for mediation by internal causal attributions as predicted in Hypothesis 6a and 6b. Although acknowledgment of others was unexpectedly related to authentic pride, it was unrelated to ability and effort attributions, $F(2,221) = 1.06, p = .35$.

Motivational Constructs

The next two hypotheses concerned effects of savoring success on motivational constructs. Hypothesis 7 stated that basking in a success would be associated with higher self-efficacy than would acknowledgment of others in response to a success. An ANCOVA on self-efficacy indicated that there were no significant group differences, $F(2,218) = 1.94, p = .15$. These results failed to support Hypothesis 7.

Hypothesis 8 stated that basking in a personal success would be associated with higher performance goals than would acknowledgment of others. An ANCOVA on performance goals was not significant, $F(2,218) = 1.57, p = .21$. Thus there was no support for Hypothesis 8. Hypothesis 8a, proposing a mediation of the relationship between basking and performance goals, could consequently not be tested. The raw (unadjusted) means for self-efficacy and performance goals are provided in Figure 8.
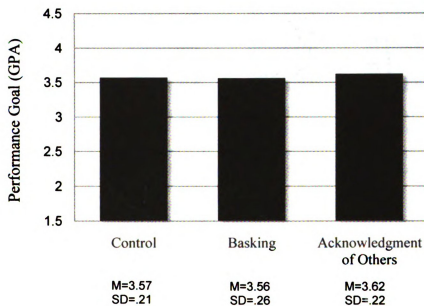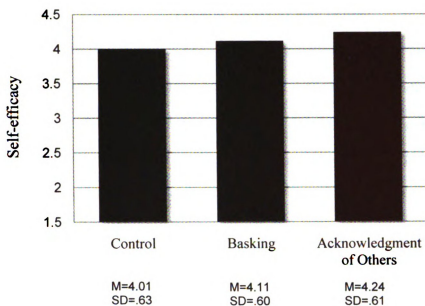
Figure 8. **Self-efficacy and performance goal means by condition.**
N = 225 (83, 68, and 74, respectively)

Positive Relations with Others

Hypothesis 9 predicted positive relations with others to be higher in the acknowledgment of others condition compared to the basking condition. An ANCOVA indicated that perceived relations with others did not differ as a function of condition, $F(2,218)=.27$, $p = .77$. These results failed to support Hypothesis 9. The unadjusted means are presented in Figure 9.
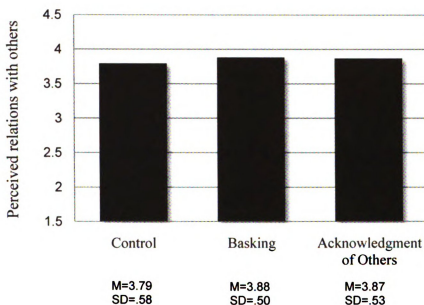
Figure 9. **Perceived relations with others means by condition**.
$N = 225$ (83, 68, and 74, respectively)

Individual Difference Moderators[3]

Hypothesis 10 stated that contingency of self-esteem would moderate the effects of a basking intervention on authentic pride and self-efficacy. A MANCOVA indicated that the interaction between self-esteem contingency and condition was not significant, Wilk's lambda = .99, $F(4,428) = .62$, $p = .65$. Hypothesis 10 was not supported.

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[3] The number of individuals across analyses differed by one in some instances because one individual was missing scores on contingent self-esteem and trait gratitude.

Hypothesis 11 stated that level of self-esteem would moderate the effects of a basking intervention on authentic pride and self-efficacy. A MANCOVA indicated that the interaction between self-esteem level and study condition was not statistically significant, Wilk's lambda = .97, $F(4,428) = 1.95$, $p = .10$, but the direct effect of self-esteem was significant, Wilk's lambda = .79, $F(2,214) = 28.63$, $p < .001$. Because the correlation between the outcome variables of authentic pride and self-efficacy was modest ($r = .21$), univariate statistics were subsequently examined, which revealed that the interaction between condition and self-esteem was significant for authentic pride, $F(2,215) = 3.85$, $p < .05$, but not for self-efficacy, $F(2,215) = .18$, $p = .84$. Follow-up testing, which controlled for perceived success and prior internal attributions, indicated that the effect of the acknowledgment intervention on authentic pride (relative to control) was significantly moderated by self-esteem level ($p < .05$), whereas the effect of the basking intervention on authentic pride (relative to control) was only marginally moderated by self-esteem level ($p = .07$). Thus, Hypothesis 11 was not supported. Moderation occurred but was not significant for the expected group. The observed benefits of the acknowledging others intervention for authentic pride were qualified by self-esteem levels, with higher authentic pride reported for individuals in the acknowledgment group with higher self-esteem. In Figure 10 the interaction is plotted with respect to residualized authentic pride, the dependent variable with the effects of the covariates partialled out.

Hypothesis 12 predicted a three-way interaction between self-esteem level, self-esteem contingency, and condition with respect to authentic pride and self-efficacy. A

Figure 10. **Authentic pride as a function of condition and level of self-esteem.**
Control=control group, Bask=Basking group, Ack=Acknowledgment of Others group. Residuals are from the regression of authentic pride on the covariates, i.e., on perceived success of university admission and on task enjoyment. The low, medium, and high values of self-esteem represent one standard deviation below the mean, at the mean, and one standard deviation above the mean.

MANCOVA produced nonsignificant results, Wilk's lambda = 1.0, $F(4,416)$ = .18, p =

.95. Because of the modest correlation between authentic pride and self-efficacy

univariate results were examined, but neither were significant. Hypothesis 12 was not

supported.

Hypothesis 13 predicted that the effects of an acknowledgment of others

intervention on gratitude and perceived positive relations with others would depend on an

individual's level of narcissism. A MANCOVA, controlling for perceived success and

prior external attributions, indicated that narcissism had a significant main effect, Wilk's

lambda = .97, $F(2,215)$ = 3.46, p < .05, but its interaction with condition was not

significant, Wilk's lambda = .98, $F(4,430)$ = 1.25, p = .29. Follow-up tests indicated that

the main effect was due to narcissism positively predicting perceived relations with others. These results failed to support Hypothesis 13.

Hypothesis 14 stated that the relationships between a basking intervention and the outcomes of hubristic pride and self-efficacy would be stronger for individuals higher in narcissism. Because the two outcomes were unrelated ($r = -.01$), separate ANCOVAs were conducted. The interaction between condition and narcissism was not significant for self-efficacy, $F(2,216) = .72, p = .49$, although narcissism did have a direct positive effect on self-efficacy. The interaction between condition and narcissism was significant for hubristic pride, $F(2,216) = 3.22, p < .05$. Whereas higher narcissism was expected to amplify the relationship between basking and hubristic pride, it instead was associated with higher hubristic pride in the acknowledgment of others group (see Figure 11 where the interaction is plotted with respect to residualized hubristic pride). Hypothesis 14 was
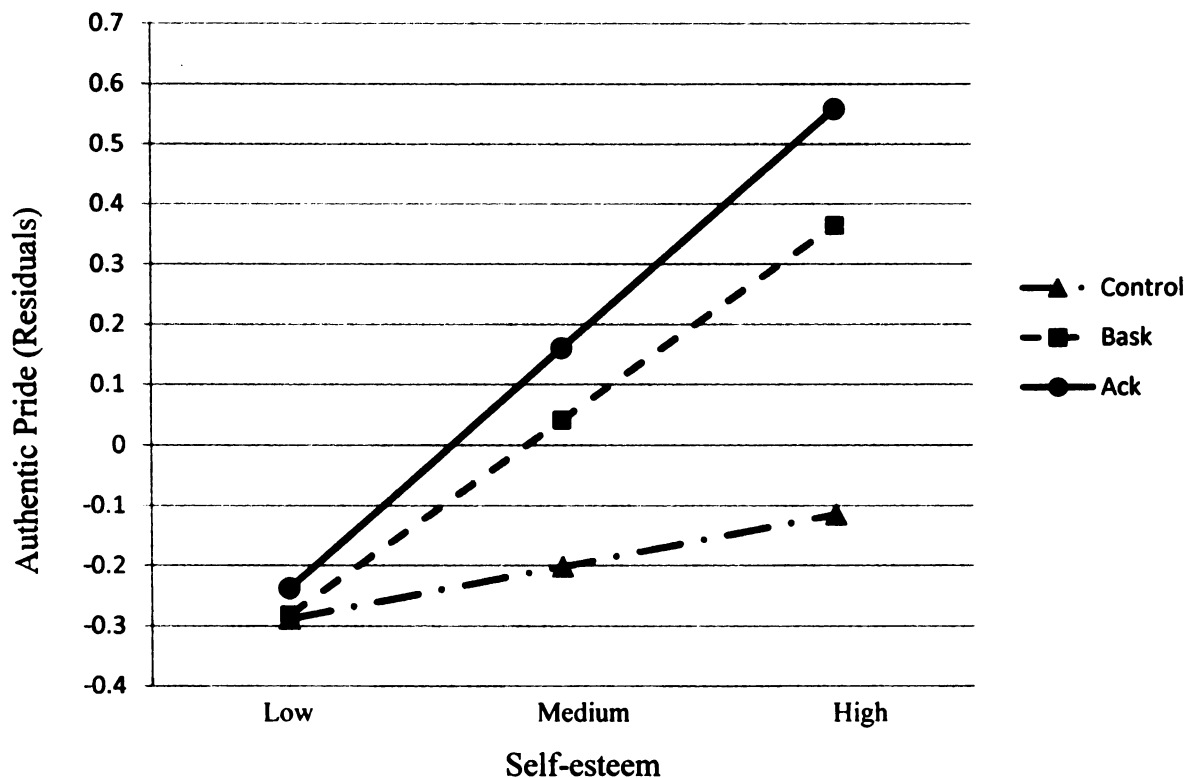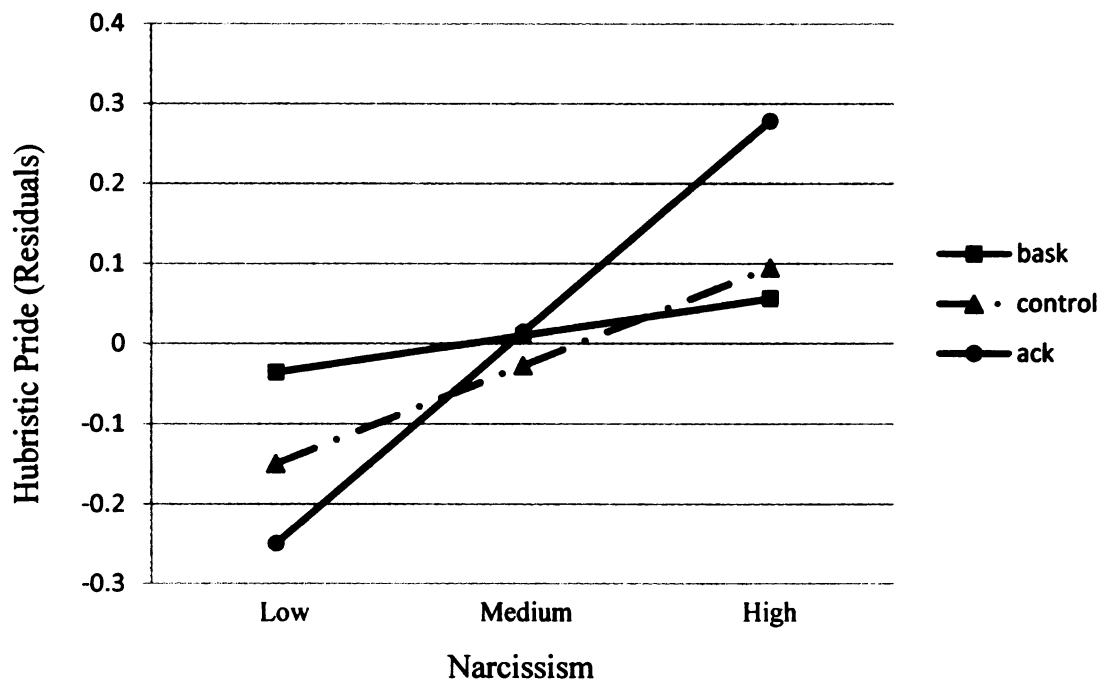

Figure 11. **Hubristic pride as a function of condition and level of narcissism.**
Control=control group, Bask=Basking group, Ack=Acknowledgment of Others group. Residuals are from the regression of hubristic pride on the covariates, i.e., on perceived success of university admission and on task enjoyment. The low, medium, and high values of narcissism correspond to one standard deviation below the mean, at the mean, and one standard deviation above the mean.

not supported.

Hypotheses 15 and 16 predicted trait gratitude would moderate the relationship between the acknowledgment of others intervention and the outcomes of gratitude and perceived positive relations with others. Specifically, competing hypotheses were made about the direction of the moderating effect. Trait gratitude did have a strong direct relationship with these outcomes, Wilk's lambda = .67, $F(2,215) = 53.32$, $p < .001$. The interaction between trait gratitude and condition was not significant after controlling for perceived success and prior external attributions, Wilk's lambda = .98, $F(4,430)= .99$, $p = .41$. Thus neither Hypothesis 15 nor 16 were supported. These results indicate that individuals high in trait gratitude did not respond any differently to the savoring intervention than did individuals low in trait gratitude.

Supplementary Analysis: The Role of Time

Organizational researchers have called for a more thorough consideration of time in theory building (George & Jones, 2000). An exploratory analysis was conducted to investigate the role of time in savoring processes. The time lag between the occurrence of participants' success (i.e., the date they were notified of university acceptance) and the date of savoring was examined as a potential moderator of the effects of savoring. One could imagine that savoring might have its most impact shortly after an event when it retains some of its novelty and one is still processing all of its positive implications. On the other hand, the effect of a new event might overpower any incremental benefits from savoring, in which case independent effects of savoring might best be felt after the rush of initial excitement has worn off. Contrary to both of these exploratory hypotheses, the analysis did not reveal any significant interactions between time lag and savoring.

DISCUSSION

The first aim in the present study was to test the effects of intrapersonal savoring on positive affect. While past researchers have found "thankfulness" interventions to be successful in this regard, the present study demonstrated that individuals can reap similar affective benefits from self-focused basking. Although theory suggests that several forms of savoring positive events result in positive affect (Bryant & Veroff, 2007), this proposition had yet to be empirically tested. The present study was unique in its experimental design in several respects and, as such, was able to provide firm evidence of this relationship. First, by manipulating savoring rather than relying on self-report, one can rule out common method variance due to raters or items as an alternative explanation for the results. Second, random assignment to conditions lends confidence that differences between conditions were due to the savoring manipulation. Finally, admissions data on applicants was obtained from the university and individuals were contacted because they had all experienced the same positive event of being accepted to the university. Identifying a population that had experienced a common positive event made it possible to control a priori (not statistically) for the effects of the event itself on affective well-being (i.e., even participants in the control condition had been admitted to the university). This feature of the design also removes some of the contamination that is inherent in asking people to both nominate what they consider to be positive events and to report the absence or occurrence of savoring that event.

In contrast to its association with positive affect, savoring was not related to life satisfaction. This is perhaps not surprising considering life satisfaction is more stable and less malleable than affect. Nevertheless, this finding is at odds with Gable et al. (2004)

who found interpersonal savoring was positively related to life satisfaction. At least two important differences may account for the disparity in findings. It may be that the effects of sharing events with others do not generalize to savoring in which individuals engage by themselves. Sharing news may have stronger effects than savoring good news internally. Another difference is methodological. Researchers have varied in their operationalizations of life satisfaction. The measure used in the present study asked participants how they felt at the moment, but with respect to their overall life, not their life that day. The items of Gable et al. (2004) allowed participants to reflect on "life today." This difference speaks to the notion of capturing an aspect of subjective well-being that is likely to be susceptible to daily fluctuations in experience.

A second aim of the study was to specify a context for savoring. Thus, an additional variation in the design of the present study from past savoring research is in the scope of positive events considered. The majority of studies investigating reactions to positive events have not differentiated between or specified what types of positive events were experienced by participants (e.g., Bryant et a., 2005; Gable et al., 2004; Langston, 1994; Lyubomirsky et al., 2006; Seligman et al., 2005). This study confined positive events to personal achievements and was designed to examine the forms of savoring that previous research (Bryant & Veroff, 2007) suggested were relevant to this domain of events.

The third aim of the study was to expand the nomological network of psychological constructs in which savoring achievements is embedded. By focusing on specific types of positive events, one can be more precise in theorizing proposed effects of savoring these events. Savoring achievement events was proposed to influence not

only general positive subjective states, but also positive feelings and thoughts focused specifically on the self, because achievement is a self-relevant event. The results suggest that savoring personal successes may lead to enhanced feelings about oneself in the form of pride, but may not affect motivational states (e.g., self-efficacy or goal setting) or perceptions of relationships with others. Thus, one conclusion that could be made is that the primary implications of savoring are for hedonic well-being, and that the outcomes affected by savoring success may not be as broad as hypothesized in the present study.

Can Forms of Savoring be Distinguished?

As mentioned previously, all forms of savoring should have some conceptual overlap. Bryant and Veroff (2007) contend that the common feature is a meta-awareness of pleasure. Accordingly, all participants in the present study were instructed to reflect on the emotions they were experiencing with regard to their success. At the same time, one would hope to find meaningful differences between savoring styles. In the present study, one group focused inward on their own positive qualities and actions, whereas the other group focused outward on the people who helped them achieve success. A pertinent question is whether these two forms of savoring—basking and acknowledgment of others—were empirically distinguishable from one another. One method of showing discriminant validity is through content analysis. The content of participants' savoring experiences, as indicated by their writing during the experiment, highly resembled the current study's predefined notions of what basking and acknowledgment of others entail. These results constitute the most straightforward evidence of distinctiveness.

A more sophisticated means of demonstrating discriminant validity would entail observing divergent relationships between the two forms of savoring and other variables.

Based on attributional theory of emotion (Weiner, 1985), a number of such differential hypotheses were formed. The results were not as supportive in this regard. The basking and acknowledgment of others groups did not differ from one another in amount of pride (hubristic or authentic) or in the extent to which they attributed their success to internal factors. In fact, only the acknowledgment of others group differed significantly from the control group on authentic pride, an unexpected finding. The two savoring groups did not differ in gratitude even though the acknowledgment of others group exhibited higher external attributions for their success. In sum, these results provide only modest evidence for distinctiveness in the savoring processes of basking and acknowledgment of others. The subjective experiences of the individuals asked to engage in each type of savoring were more similar than was expected.

Shortfalls of Attribution Theory in Predicting Positive Emotions

According to attribution theory and Bryant and Veroff's (2007) conceptualization of savoring forms, basking should not have been associated with gratitude, and acknowledgment of others should not have been associated with authentic pride. Why did participants who were asked to reflect on their own doings report feelings of gratitude (e.g., thankful, appreciative)? Similarly, why did participants who were asked to write about the support and help received from others subsequently report higher feelings of authentic pride (e.g., successful, confident, accomplished)? The framework of attribution theory explicated by Weiner (1985), which provided the basis for the majority of hypotheses, offers little in the way of explaining these results.

A parsimonious explanation for these findings is that savoring, in any form, induces a positive affective halo effect. The general positive affect evident amongst

participants in both savoring groups may have influenced experiences of specific

emotions or reports thereof. In support of this notion, positive affect was moderately

related to both pride and gratitude. Additionally, exploratory analyses conducted to

explore this possibility revealed that the effects of both types of savoring on gratitude

were fully mediated by positive affect. Likewise, the effect of acknowledging others on

authentic pride was mediated by positive affect. Research has shown that positive

emotional states (more so than negative states) tend to blend together in individuals'

experience of them (Fredrickson, 1998). Perhaps then it is not surprising that different

types of savoring did not produce a differentiated pattern of results for gratitude versus

pride.

The above explanation would account for the fact that (a) participants who basked

were more likely than control participants to experience gratitude even though they were

no more likely to make external causal attributions for their success and that (b) the

effects of acknowledgment on authentic pride were not mediated by internal attributions.

An implication of this study's findings is that individuals can arrive at the same emotions

despite dissimilar attributions. These results are consistent with Emmons and

MCullough's (2003) results, which showed that a gratitude intervention increased general

positive affect along with gratitude. This is concordant with research that shows positive

emotions are preceded by less differentiated patterns of appraisal than are negative

emotions (Ellsworth & Smith, 1988). Attributional theory may provide a better account

of negative than positive emotion generation. In an evolutionary sense, understanding and

reacting to a negative situation is more consequential than accurately appraising and

responding to a positive situation (Fredrickson, 1998). In fact, one may benefit from the

spreading of positive emotions and a diffuse "feel good" state. One important caveat to the above explanation is that individuals in both of the savoring conditions reflected upon personal successes. An interesting research question is whether a positive mood induction would stimulate pride and gratitude in the absence of a situation in which personal success is made salient.

Basking and Pride

Although there was a trend toward higher authentic pride in the basking condition compared to the control group, the difference was not significant. Exploratory analyses conducted to investigate this curious finding suggested that certain standards of personally defined success had to be met for basking to result in feelings of authentic pride. Although the continuous measure of perceived success of admission did not moderate effects of basking in the full sample, a reduced dataset consisting only of those individuals who viewed their university admission as reflective of a high degree of personal success revealed significant effects of basking on authentic pride, $t(1,153) = 2.54$, $p < .05$. Thus, basking appears to only influence pride when the event is perceived as highly successful. In contrast, the effect of acknowledging others on authentic pride was observed in the full sample of participants with a full range of success perceptions. One possible account of these results is that authentic pride is a default response to any form of savoring achievements (i.e., via the mechanisms described in the preceding section), but self-focused savoring in particular runs the risk of dampening this prideful response for those individuals who see flaws in their achievements. Basking through a writing task may have amplified this effect. Lyubomirsky, Sousa, and Dickerhoof (2008)

proposed that the activity of self-analysis through writing prompts an over-analytic style of thinking that interferes with the benefits of reflecting on success.

How Does Savoring Work?

One intended contribution of the present study was to gain a better understanding of how specific thought processes in reaction to positive events (e.g., acknowledgment of others, basking) influence well-being. Because hypotheses regarding positive rumination and attributions for success were not supported, these results call into question the cognitive mechanism by which savoring affects well-being. On a more serious note, these results cannot necessarily rule out the interpretation that any form of meaningful positive thinking increases positive affect. In fact, the effect of savoring on positive affect and emotions was no longer statistically significant after controlling for the meaningfulness of task participation.

The fact that task meaningfulness appeared to be driving the results in the present study prompts a closer scrutiny of past savoring research. Interventions typically employ control groups that engage in relatively meaningless tasks, such as the ones used in the present study. For example, Watkins et al. (2003), in their fourth study, compared participants in a gratitude condition with participants in a control group who described the layout of their living room. Similarly, Burton and King (2004) compared participants who wrote about intensely positive experiences to control participants who wrote about their plans for the day, the shoes they were wearing, or a description of their bedroom. Such comparison groups preclude researchers from making strong statements about how savoring specifically is different from meaningful, positive experiences more generally, at least in terms of their effects. At present, there is limited knowledge of how savoring

per se works. The utility of the savoring construct can be greatly enhanced to the extent that future research can demonstrate that it is associated with *unique* benefits (i.e., beyond those expected from having meaningful, positive thoughts).

Does Savoring Affect Lasting Outcomes?

The prescriptive utility of research on savoring would also be augmented to the extent that the effects of savoring are long-lasting. Thus, the longevity of the effects of savoring was examined in an exploratory manner. The majority of participants returned for a third day only to complete the outcome measures again. Self-reports of positive affect, gratitude, authentic and hubristic pride, life satisfaction, goal setting, self-efficacy, and positive relations with others were collected from 220 participants. Examining these delayed outcomes revealed that the effects of savoring success were short-lived. The relationship with positive affect observed on day two of the intervention had disappeared by day three. Because the effects of savoring were solely affective and immediate, one might question whether the process of savoring can be relegated to simple mood induction. Similar concerns have been voiced previously with regards to the expressive writing paradigm by emphasizing a distinction between changes in mood and changes in psychological health (Marlo & Wagner, 1999). This possibility, while it cannot be refuted by the present study, is not as condemning for the construct of savoring as it seems.

Whereas the fleeting effects of savoring in an experimental context resemble what is typically referred to as positive mood induction, its fleeting effects in a naturally occurring context fall under the research rubric of positive affect regulation. Savoring positive events is likely to be one method by which people regulate momentary positive affect (Wood et al., 2003). The functional benefits of savoring are highlighted from

this perspective. Although any one instance of restoring or maintaining positive affect does not affect long-term personal outcomes, a person's patterns (and consistency) of affect regulation over time impact their psychological health (Larson, 2000). Although research on positive affect regulation to date is sparse, there is evidence that individuals differ characteristically from one another in their desire and tendency to maintain positive affective states (Hemenover, 2003; Wood et al., 2003). The extent to which an individual regularly engages in savoring should have more long-lasting consequences than any given incidence of savoring. For example, instead of an employee growing accustomed to his promotion, he could occasionally and repeatedly reflect on his good fortune. Consistent with this idea, Bryant and Veroff (2007) found that perceived capability to savor is related to reports of overall happiness. Additionally, in the present study self-reported savoring of university admission (enacted prior to the study) correlated significantly with a wider range of outcomes—life satisfaction, performance goals, and perceived relations with others, $[F(3,220) = 11.04, p < .001]$—than did the two-day experimental manipulation of savoring.

The above conceptual argument in combination with the results of the present study suggest that the majority of previous savoring research, in which savoring is manipulated on only a few occasions, is most useful in improving understanding of momentary positive affect regulation. A few notable exceptions exist in which interventions have lasted a significant period of time (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Seligman et al., 2005). These studies have produced promising results including life satisfaction increases and longer lasting changes in affect. If one wishes to demonstrate lasting effects of savoring, then an investigation of repeated savoring over a prolonged

time period may be more appropriate. There is a trend toward recognizing happiness as a skill that can be learned with practice (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005; Seligman et al., 2005). Viewing savoring as a skill that can be learned may be a fruitful perspective. Treatment of depression was informed by studying why depressed people were depressed, which has been largely attributed to cognitive processes (e.g., rumination, negative bias). How to enhance positive aspects of well-being can be similarly informed by studying opposite but parallel cognitive processes, such as savoring.

Do Individual Differences Affect the Savoring Process?

If people do vary from one another in the extent to which they benefit from savoring, it would be useful to understand whether stable individual differences predict this variation. The moderating effects hypothesized were not supported in this study. Contrary to expectations, self-esteem did not significantly moderate basking effects. Likewise, narcissists did not appear to be better baskers (experience greater authentic pride) or worse at acknowledging others (experience less gratitude). In spite of these null findings, self-esteem and narcissism did yield several intriguing albeit unanticipated moderating effects, which are elaborated upon below.

Dispositional Predictors of Authentic and Hubristic Pride

Recall that Tracy and Robins (2007a) described authentic and hubristic as two distinct facets of pride. These authors found that self-esteem correlated mostly with authentic pride, whereas narcissism was more closely related to hubristic pride. The present study went one step further and hypothesized trait moderation of prideful *responses to events*. Self-esteem was expected to moderate the effects of basking on authentic pride, whereas narcissism was expected to moderate the effects of basking on

hubristic pride. The results did not support this prediction (basking was not significantly related to either form of pride). Unexpectedly, the effects of acknowledging others in response to success did follow this pattern. Self-esteem (and not narcissism) moderated the effects of acknowledging others on authentic pride, whereas narcissism (and not self-esteem) moderated effects of acknowledging others on hubristic pride.

The observed association between acknowledging others for one's success and higher authentic pride was stronger for individuals higher in self-esteem. Additional exploratory analyses revealed that the association between acknowledging others and positive affect was also stronger for these individuals (see Figure 12). There was a trend toward self-esteem moderating the effects of basking on these two outcomes, as well, as evident in Figures 10 and 12 but neither reached significance. These results seem to
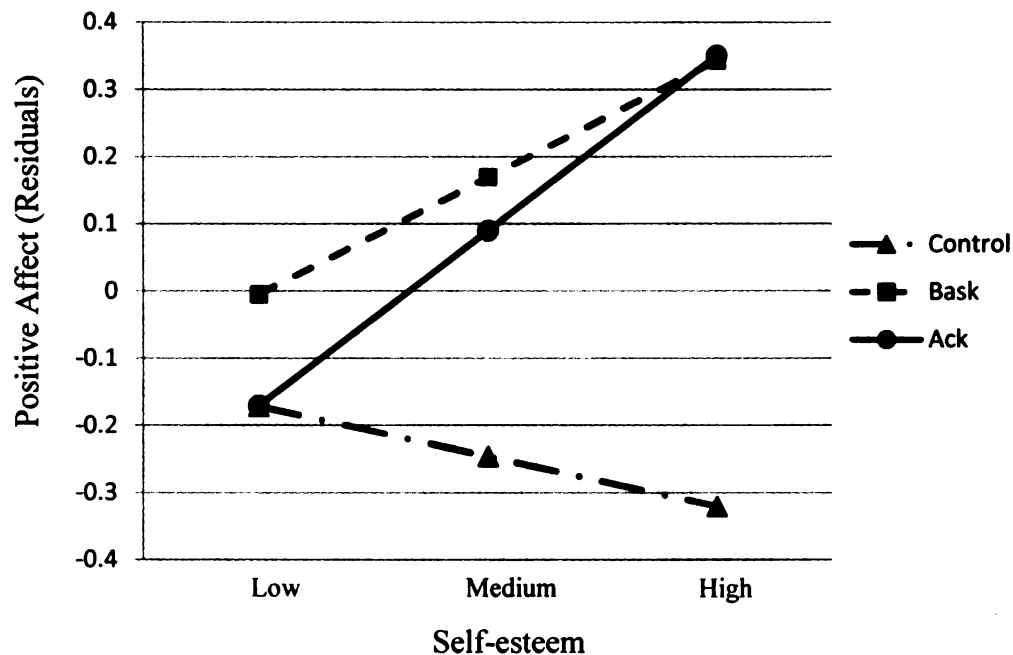
Figure 12. **Positive affect as a function of condition and level of self-esteem.**
Control=control group, Bask=Basking group, Ack=Acknowledgment of Others group. Residuals are from the regression of positive affect on the covariates, i.e., on perceived success of university admission and on task enjoyment. The low, medium, and high values of self-esteem represent one standard deviation below the mean, at the mean, and 1 standard deviation above the mean. The simple slope in the control condition is nonsignificant.

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suggest that self-esteem affects the ability to savor. Individuals high in self-esteem appeared to benefit more from savoring than their low self-esteem counterparts. However, because the moderation of basking was not significant and the moderation of acknowledgment of others was unexpected, these findings should be regarded tentatively until they can be replicated. The fact that this moderation occurred for the acknowledgment of others condition was particularly surprising, especially considering the presumed mechanism for self-esteem effects was though self-enhancement. How could acknowledging others promote self-enhancement? If these results were not due to chance, one explanation could be provided by the sociometer theory of self-esteem (Leary, 2006). According to this theory, self-esteem is less a reflection of one's esteem for oneself and more an assessment of one's relational value in others' eyes. Thus individuals high in self-esteem would be more apt to interpret contributions from others as a sign of social acceptance and to view themselves as deserving of these contributions. Reflecting on others' support would kindle feelings of authentic pride, which is theorized to be a direct function of self-perceived social value (Tracy & Robins, 2007b).

The second intriguing finding was that narcissism interacted with the acknowledgment of others condition to predict hubristic pride[4]. For individuals high in narcissism, acknowledging others was associated with relatively high hubristic pride. Narcissists experience a tension between hidden negative self-representations and an explicit grandiose sense of self. As a result, they are highly sensitive to ego threat (Bushman & Baumeister, 1998). If acknowledging the role of others in their success instigated feelings of inadequacy, narcissists may have spun the situation in their own

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[4] Exploratory analyses confirmed that narcissism only moderated the effects of acknowledgment of others on hubristic pride, and no other outcomes.

favor and compensated with exaggerated feelings of their own greatness (e.g., "Of course my teachers wrote me great letters of recommendation, because I am awesome").

Dispositional Predictors of Gratitude

Whereas the effect of acknowledging others on pride was qualified by personality, its effect on gratitude was fairly straightforward. Neither trait gratitude nor narcissism were significant moderators. This study suggests that these particular traits do not affect whether a person has the capacity to be grateful for their successes. This finding is promising for "gratitude interventions" that use a blanket approach to instilling gratitude across participants (e.g., Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005). Although there may be other relevant individual differences to consider, these results offer initial support for the robustness of gratitude manipulations.

Contrary to the beliefs of some clinical observers (e.g., McWilliams & Lependorf, 1990), these results suggest that narcissists are not any less *capable* of experiencing gratitude. When asked to acknowledge others, narcissists were able to recognize external help and feel grateful. However, one possible account for the data suggests that they counteracted the humbling effects of gratefulness by reasserting their specialness and superiority (i.e., they also reported higher hubristic pride in the acknowledgment of others condition). Perhaps if left to their own devices, narcissists may not be naturally inclined to experience gratitude. Future researchers might investigate whether high levels of narcissism discourage the self-initiation of grateful thoughts, feelings, or expressions.

Because the gratitude manipulations benefitted individuals equally, regardless of trait gratitude level, neither the conductance nor resistance hypothesis was supported. Trait gratitude does not appear to reflect a superior *ability* to experience gratitude.

Although the resistance hypothesis was not supported in this study, it is possible that certain design features—specifically, the provision of a gratitude-relevant event to be savored—provided an unfair test. Trait gratitude may reflect an individuals' *propensity* to naturally (i.e., not through experimental manipulation) see the world from a grateful lens, which would produce results that are consistent with the resistance hypothesis that was supported by McCullough et al. (2004). Individuals high in trait gratitude may be able to construe what many would consider neutral circumstances into something for which to be grateful. However, when an event with obvious gratitude-relevance (e.g., college admission) is presented to individuals and a request is made to reflect upon it, individuals high and low in trait gratitude might experience similar levels of state gratitude. The present data cannot speak to this possibility but they do not refute it either. In contrast, the results appear to contradict the conductance hypothesis, which predicts that individuals high in trait gratitude react more intensely when asked to reflect on the same positive event as their low trait gratitude counterparts.

Limitations

There are several features of the present study that may limit the generalizability of its results. First, savoring was prompted using guided questions (e.g., In what ways are you fortunate for your success?). This characteristic of the study design was necessary to achieve some level of uniformity of treatment across participants and to ensure that they were engaging in savoring as defined in this study. If the directions had been vague, the causal process by which results were attained would have been ambiguous. Whether the effects of savoring on short-term positive affect hold under less structured circumstances cannot be confidently said from these results. However, previous research (e.g., Bryant,

Smart, & King, 2005) suggests that more free-flowing exercises can also be effective for enhancing positive affect.

Second, savoring was operationalized through the task of writing, as opposed to thinking or talking out loud. It is possible that results could differ if people were to savor via different modes (Lyubomirsky, Sousa, & Dickerhoof, 2006). There is little surface similarity between the writing task completed in this study and the way that adults probably savor. For example, employees are unlikely to keep a journal at work about their personal successes, but they may savor them thoughtfully while sipping their coffee and gazing out their office window. The latent components that bring out the effect, however, which are positive thoughts about the self and others, should be similar. Furthermore, whereas savoring through writing may not be descriptively valid, the results are prescriptive in the sense that savoring interventions can be conducted through writing.

A third manner in which the nature of this study might differ from other potential savoring contexts is the sample. The high school students who were accepted to a four-year university constituted a convenience sample. As such, all the limitations of using college students apply, as they are part of a select group that desires and is able to attend college. As social science researchers, we can only hope that the psychological processes we study are basic enough to be universal. Reactions to positive events that reflect the attainment of personal goals are likely to have universal components including the experience of positive affect (Ekman, 1992). However, cultures may differ in the experiences that individuals define as personal success and in the appropriate responses to success. Future research could investigate whether there are cultural differences in savoring strategies. Savoring success is likely to be affected by cultural norms for giving

credit to the self versus others and by differences in need for positive self-regard (Heine, Lehman, Markus, & Kitayama, 1999).

Fourth, although the experimental nature of the study strengthened the ability to confidently interpret the results, it may also limit the generalizability of results. Most importantly, participants did not self-define their success nor did they self-initiate savoring. It is unknown to what extent these aspects of savoring are critical to observing effects. One might argue that savoring would be more powerful when initiated spontaneously in response to a personally meaningful event. Recall that participants' self-reported pre-study savoring was correlated with a wide range of outcomes. In addition to reflecting dispositional tendencies to savor, this finding could mean that self-initiated savoring has more far-reaching consequences than does instructed savoring, but common method variance and unmeasured third variables could also explain the results. It would be worthwhile in future research to explore innovative research designs that explore savoring as a natural occurrence yet control for such confounds.

Lastly, a number of unhypothesized effects were observed. Tentative explanations were offered but these were only conjectures that require refinement and empirical testing. Many of the unexpected findings concerned the association between interpersonal constructs and intrapersonal constructs (e.g., acknowledgment of others, self-esteem, and pride). The clean distinction between the effects of self- versus other-focused savoring was not found; the self and others appear to be inherently intertwined. These results validate the movement toward integrating research on self and others, which has historically been bifurcated (Finkel & Vohs, 2006), in order to better explicate their interrelationship.

Practical Implications and Future Research

The finding that savoring personal successes is associated with enhanced positive affect has several implications for achievement contexts. Positive affect is related to a variety of desirable performance behaviors, including spontaneity and creativity. If these behaviors are important to an organization, then fostering savoring would be one way to increase the positive affect of students, or even employees. Some interventions have already been designed and tested with students, such as the "three good things" intervention, which drew participants' attention to daily events that went well and increased positive affect (Seligman et al., 2005). Savoring interventions can be designed for workplaces with the dual purpose of improving employee well-being and encouraging creative work behavior. The present study along with Seligman et al.'s research suggest that brief writing sessions can be an effective means of intervention. The few studies that have applied the expressive writing paradigm to the workplace thus far have focused on reducing stressors (e.g., Barclay & Skarlicki, 2009), whereas the present results suggest expressive writing about achievements could have benefits in the workplace. Furthermore, the results of this study provide guidance on types of savoring that are effective. Specifically, the results suggest that in the wake of success, whether individuals focus their savoring on inward or outward concerns makes little difference in terms of affective outcomes. Strong correlations between the two focuses (Bryant & Veroff, 2007) along with the present results suggest that individuals probably engage in both with respect to the same event.

Savoring accomplishments can be considered a form of daydreaming. Researchers have found that as individuals begin to daydream, they spend a significant portion of that

time not only imagining possibilities but also reviewing past experiences. Recent findings suggest that daydreaming can have positive consequences. Specifically, people who let their minds wander and are aware of it perform better on tests of creativity. At the same time, daydreaming of which a person is not aware or excessive daydreaming can be counterproductive in that detracts attention away from on task-behavior (Smallwood et al., 2009). While this study investigated the benefits of savoring, future research might consider whether individuals are aware of their savoring experiences and the impact their awareness has on the effects of savoring.

Conclusion

Only recently have social scientists begun to investigate the implications of individuals' responses to positive events. This study made an incremental contribution by focusing on one type of positive event—personal successes—and one type of response— intrapersonal savoring. The results confirm that intrapersonal savoring of a positive event is associated with higher positive affect independent of the effects of the event itself. A quasi-experiment in which savoring was manipulated lends confidence to the substantive nature of this relationship. Students who savored their acceptance to a university experienced higher positive affect and gratitude, and under certain circumstances pride, than control participants who had also been accepted to the same university. Counter to expectations, the effects of savoring as operationalized in this study did not extend to more stable components of subjective well-being (life satisfaction), to motivational constructs (self-efficacy, performance goals), or to perceived relations with others.

An important consideration for future research on savoring is the study design, which determines the question being addressed. Manipulating savoring speaks to whether

savoring *can* affect certain outcomes under specified conditions (although the failure to find an effect does not mean it *cannot* affect these outcomes under some other conditions). Observing self-initiated savoring is a reflection of whether savoring *does* affect outcomes under some natural (and probably more ambiguous) conditions. Both are important questions. This study, in combination with previous research, suggests that savoring can and does enhance positive mood.

APPENDIX A

PANAS (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988)

This scale below consists of a number of words and phrases that describe different feelings and emotions. Read EACH item and then rate to what extent you feel this way RIGHT NOW (that is, at the present moment), using the scale provided.

1	2	3	4	5
very slightly or not at all	a little	moderately	quite a bit	extremely

_____ Attentive   _____ Excited   _____ Distressed   _____ Irritable

_____ Determined   _____ Guilty   _____ Afraid   _____ Enthusiastic

_____ Nervous   _____ Upset   _____ Alert   _____ Inspired

_____ Jittery   _____ Proud   _____ Interested   _____ Ashamed

_____ Strong   _____ Active   _____ Scared   _____ Hostile

Hubristic and Authentic Pride (Tracy & Robins, 2007a)
*Uses same response scale as the PANAS

_____ Snobbish   _____ Pompous   _____ Stuck-up   _____ Conceited

_____ Egotistical   _____ Arrogant   _____ Smug   _____ Accomplished

_____ Successful   _____ Achieving   _____ Fulfilled   _____ Self-worth

_____ Confident   _____ Productive

Gratitude emotion (McCullough, Tsang, & Emmons, 2004)

_____ Grateful   _____ Thankful   _____ Appreciative

APPENDIX B

Satisfaction of Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985)

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the next five statements about your life, using the scale provided. Please respond according to how you have feel RIGHT NOW (that is, at the present moment).

		Strongly disagree				Strongly Agree
1.	I feel that in most ways my life has been close to ideal.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I feel as though the conditions of my life are excellent.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I feel satisfied with my life.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I feel as though I have gotten the important things I want in life.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I feel that if I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX C

Academic self-efficacy (adapted from Wood & Locke, 1987)

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the next five statements about your life, using the scale provided. Please respond according to how you have feel RIGHT NOW (that is, at the present moment).

	Strongly disagree				Strongly Agree
1. I am confident in my ability to succeed as a college student.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I believe that I can achieve good grades in college.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I worry that I won't be successful in college.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I have the ability to excel in school.	1	2	3	4	5

Performance goals (Wood & Locke, 1987)

Please use the following scale of Grade Point Average (GPA) to answer the questions below.

A	(4.0)
A-	(3.7)
B+	(3.3)
B	(3.0)
B -	(2.7)
C+	(2.3)
C	(2.0)
C-	(1.7)

6. What GPA do you hope to make during your first semester in college? ____

7. What is the minimum GPA that you would be satisfied with your first semester in college? ____

8. What GPA do you *expect* to get your first semester in college? _____

9. What GPA would you actually try for in your first semester in college? _____

APPENDIX D

Positive relations with others (Ryff, 1989)

	Strongly disagree				Strongly Agree
1. Most people see me as loving and affectionate.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Maintaining close relationships has been difficult and frustrating for me	1	2	3	4	5
3. I often feel lonely because I have few close people with whom to share my concerns.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I enjoy personal and mutual conversations with people in my life.	1	2	3	4	5
5. It is important to me to be a good listener when people in my life talk to me about their problems.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I don't have many people who want to listen when I need to talk.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I feel like I get a lot out of my interpersonal relationships.	1	2	3	4	5
8. It seems to me that most other people have more interpersonal relationships than I do.	1	2	3	4	5
9. People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I have not experienced many warm and trusting relationships with others.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I often feel like I'm on the outside looking in when it comes to interpersonal relationships.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I know that I can trust the people in my life, and they know they can trust me.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I find it difficult to really open up when I talk with others.	1	2	3	4	5
14. My friends/family and I sympathize with each other's problems.	1	2	3	4	5

Multidimensional-Multiattributional Causality Scale (adapted from Lefcourt, Baeyer, Ware, & Cox, 1979)

During or following the writing exercises, how much did you think/write about the following things related to your **acceptance to Michigan State University?**

	Not at all				To a great extent
(Ability)					
1. The most important ingredient in getting accepted into MSU was my academic ability.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Being accepted into MSU reflects directly on my academic ability.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I was accepted into MSU because of my academic competence.	1	2	3	4	5
(Effort)					
4. Being accepted into MSU was the direct result of my efforts.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I was accepted into MSU because I worked hard.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I overcame potential obstacles to being accepted to MSU by working hard.	1	2	3	4	5
(Others' contributions)					
7. I was accepted into MSU because others helped me along the way.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I was accepted into MSU because my parents and teachers made it possible.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I was accepted into MSU because I had support from people in my life.	1	2	3	4	5

Basking instructions

<u>Day 1</u>
What you are to write about during this study are your thoughts regarding your acceptance at Michigan State University. *When writing, consider the questions that follow these instructions.* **This exercise is designed to help you understand how your personal qualities and actions led to this particular success. Please try to think of the things you did right.**

We ask that you do not share the details of this study with other students. Remember that your responses will remain confidential. You will be fully debriefed at the conclusion of the study.

Do not concern yourself with spelling, grammar, or composition. These are not important. The only rule we have about your writing is that you write continuously for at least 10 minutes about your acceptance at MSU. It is okay to repeat ideas if you run out of things to write. A button to proceed to the next page will appear when 10 minutes has passed, but you can continue writing past that time if you wish.

> *What were the good things you did to result in your admission to MSU?*
> *What strengths of yours did your admission to MSU highlight?*
> *In what ways did you deserve your admission to MSU?*

<u>Day 2</u>
Today's exercise is similar to the one you completed yesterday. We are asking you to write more of your thoughts regarding your acceptance at Michigan State University. *When writing, consider the questions that follow these instructions.* **This exercise is designed to help you understand how your personal qualities and actions led to this particular success. Please try to think of the things you did right.**

We ask that you do not share the details of this study with other students. Remember that your responses will remain confidential. You will be fully debriefed at the conclusion of the study.

Do not concern yourself with spelling, grammar, or composition. These are not important. The only rule we have about your writing is that you write continuously for at least 10 minutes about your acceptance at MSU. It is okay to repeat ideas if you run out of things to write. A button to proceed to the next page will appear when 10 minutes has passed, but you can continue writing past that time if you wish.

> *How was your admission to MSU a success and in what ways was it an*
> *impressive achievement?*
> *What obstacles were there that you overcame?*
> *What kinds of positive emotions do you feel as a result being admitted to MSU?*

Acknowledgement of others instructions

<u>Day 1</u>
What you are to write about during this study are your thoughts regarding your acceptance at Michigan State University (MSU). *When writing, consider the questions that follow these instructions.* **This exercise is designed to help you reflect on how others (e.g., teachers, parents, mentors, friends) have helped you along the way to this particular success. Please try to think of how other people made a difference.**

We ask that you do not share the details of this study with other students. Remember that your responses will remain confidential. You will be fully debriefed at the conclusion of the study.

Do not concern yourself with spelling, grammar, or composition. These are not important. The only rule we have about your writing is that you write continuously for at least 10 minutes about your acceptance at MSU. It is okay to repeat ideas if you run out of things to write. A button to proceed to the next page will appear when 10 minutes has passed, but you can continue writing past that time if you wish.

> *Who are the people that helped you on the way toward achieving admission to MSU?*
> *What things would not have been possible if it were not for their support?*
> *In what ways are you fortunate for your admission to MSU?*

<u>Day 2</u>
Today's exercise is similar to the one you completed yesterday. We are asking you to write more of your thoughts regarding your acceptance at Michigan State University. *When writing, consider the questions that follow these instructions.* **This exercise is designed to help you reflect on how others (e.g., teachers, parents, mentors, friends) have helped you along the way to this particular success. Please try to think of how other people made a difference.**

We ask that you do not share the details of this study with other students. Remember that your responses will remain confidential. You will be fully debriefed at the conclusion of the study.

Do not concern yourself with spelling, grammar, or composition. These are not important. The only rule we have about your writing is that you write continuously for at least 10 minutes about your acceptance at MSU. It is okay to repeat ideas if you run out of things to write. A button to proceed to the next page will appear when 10 minutes has passed, but you can continue writing past that time if you wish.

> *Who would you thank in light of your admission to MSU?*
> *What sorts of things did they give up (or do that they didn't have to) in order to make this success possible for you?*
> *What kinds of positive emotions do you feel as a result of being admitted to MSU?*

Control group instructions

<u>Day 1</u>
What you are to write about during this study is the room in which you are sitting. **We would like you to provide a description of this room in as much detail as possible.**

We ask that you do not share the details of this study with other students. Remember that your responses will remain confidential. You will be fully debriefed at the conclusion of the study.

Do not concern yourself with spelling, grammar, or composition. These are not important. The only rule we have about your writing is that you write continuously for at least 10 minutes providing a description of the room. It is okay to repeat ideas if you run out of things to write. A button to proceed to the next page will appear when 10 minutes has passed, but you can continue writing past that time if you wish.

> *During this session we would like you to provide a description of the room in which you are sitting in as much detail as possible.*

<u>Day 2</u>
Today's exercise is similar to the one you completed yesterday. **We are asking you to provide another description, this time of a tree that you have seen. We would like you to provide a description of this tree in as much detail as possible.**

We ask that you do not share the details of this study with other students. Remember that your responses will remain confidential. You will be fully debriefed at the conclusion of the study.

Do not concern yourself with spelling, grammar, or composition. These are not important. The only rule we have about your writing is that you write continuously for at least 10 minutes providing a description of the tree. It is okay to repeat ideas if you run out of things to write. A button to proceed to the next page will appear when 10 minutes has passed, but you can continue writing past that time if you wish.

> *During this session we would like you to provide a description of a tree that you have seen in as much detail as possible.*

APPENDIX G

Ways of Savoring Checklist (WOSC; Bryant & Veroff, 2007)

For the next part of the study, please answer the following questions related to your acceptance at Michigan State University.

During or following the writing exercises, how much did you think/write about the following things related to your **acceptance to Michigan State University?**

	Not at all				To a great extent

Self-congratulation

10. I reminded myself how long I had waited to be accepted to MSU.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I thought about what a triumph it was to be accepted to MSU.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I told myself how proud I was to be accepted to MSU.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I told myself how impressed others must be that I was accepted to MSU.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I reminded myself what a relief it was to be accepted to MSU.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I told myself why I deserved this good thing.	1	2	3	4	5

Counting Blessings (revised scale with revisions noted below)

Original Items	Changes	New Items
I reminded myself how lucky I was to have this good thing happen to me.	modified	I reminded myself how fortunate I was to be accepted to MSU.
I thought about what a lucky person I am that so many good things have happened to me.	n/a	I thought about what a lucky person I am that so many good things have happened to me.
I said a prayer of thanks for my good forune.	deleted	n/a
	new item	I reflected on how grateful I was to be accepted to MSU.

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new item	I reminded myself to thank someone later.
new item	I reminded myself to appreciate my acceptance to MSU.

Note: Response scale is identical to that of self-congratulation

APPENDIX H

Response to Positive Affect (RPA) Questionnaire (Feldman, Joormann, & Johnson, 2008)

To what extent during the writing exercises did you...	Not at all				To a great extent
(Self-focus)					
1. Think "I am achieving everything"	1	2	3	4	5
2. Think "I am living up to my potential"	1	2	3	4	5
3. Think about how proud you are of yourself	1	2	3	4	5
4. Think "I am getting everything done"	1	2	3	4	5
(Emotion-focus)					
5. Think about how happy you feel.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Think about how strong you feel	1	2	3	4	5
7. Think about you feel up to doing everything	1	2	3	4	5
8. Notice how you feel full of energy	1	2	3	4	5
9. Savor the moment	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX I

When I first learned of my acceptance to MSU (prior to participating in this study), I believed that...

	Not at all				To a great extent
1. My acceptance to MSU was due to internal factors (e.g., ability or effort).	1	2	3	4	5
2. My acceptance to MSU was due to external factors (e.g., others' help or luck).	1	2	3	4	5

How much did you engage in the following behaviors and what were some of your reactions when you first learned of your acceptance to Michigan State University (prior to participating in this study?)

	Not at all				To a large extent
3. I really savored my acceptance.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I celebrated with friends and family.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I daydreamed about my acceptance and how excited I was.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I wrote about it to a friend or in a journal.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I treated myself to a reward because of my acceptance.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I thought about what an accomplishment my acceptance was.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I thought about my good qualities.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I thought about the things I did right to get into college.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I thought about how grateful I was for my acceptance.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I thought about the people to whom I was thankful.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX J

Self-Esteem Scale (SES; Rosenberg, 1968)

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with each statement.

	Strongly disagree				Strongly Agree
1. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	1	2	3	4	5
3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.	1	2	3	4	5
7. On the whole, I am satisfied with my self.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I certainly feel useless at times.	1	2	3	4	5
10. At times I think I am no good at all.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX K

Contingencies of Self-Worth in Academic Competence (Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper, and Bouvrette, 2003)

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with each statement.

	Not at all like me				Very much like me
1. My opinion about myself isn't tied to how well I do in school. (R)	1	2	3	4	5
2. I feel better about myself when I know I'm doing well academically.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Doing well in school gives me a sense of self-respect.	1	2	3	4	5
4. My self-esteem is influenced by my academic performance.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I feel bad about myself whenever my academic performance is lacking.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX L

37-item version of Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI; Emmons, 1987)

Please respond True or False to the following statements about yourself.

1.	I see myself as a good leader.	T	F
2.	I would prefer to be a leader.	T	F
3.	I really like to be the center of attention.	T	F
4.	I like having authority over other people.	T	F
5.	I would be willing to describe myself as a strong personality.	T	F
6.	I have a natural talent for influencing people.	T	F
7.	I am assertive.	T	F
8.	People always seem to recognize my authority.	T	F
9.	I like to look at my body.	T	F
10.	I like to look at myself in the mirror.	T	F
11.	I am an extraordinary person.	T	F
12.	I like to display my body.	T	F
13.	I have good taste when it comes to beauty.	T	F
14.	I think I am a special person.	T	F
15.	I like to be complimented.	T	F
16.	I am going to be a great person.	T	F
17.	I know that I am good because everyone keeps telling me so.	T	F
18.	Everybody likes to hear my stories.	T	F
19.	I usually dominate any conversation.	T	F
20.	I can make anybody believe anything.	T	F
21.	I am a born leader.	T	F
22.	I can read people like a book.	T	F
23.	I am apt to show off if I get the chance.	T	F
24.	People can learn a great deal from me.	T	F
25.	I always know what I am doing.	T	F
26.	I can usually talk my way out of anything.	T	F
27.	Superiority is something you are born with.	T	F
28.	I would do almost anything on a dare.	T	F
29.	I expect a great deal from other people.	T	F
30.	I am envious of other people's good fortune.	T	F

31. I like to be the center of attention.   T   F

32. I insist upon getting the respect that is due me.   T   F

33. I will never be satisfied until I get all that I deserve.   T   F

34. I have a strong will to power.   T   F

35. I get upset when people don't notice how I look when I go out in   T   F
    public.

36. I find it easy to manipulate people.   T   F

37. I am more capable than other people.   T   F

GQ-6 Gratitude Questionnaire (McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002)

		Strongly disagree				Strongly Agree
1.	I have so much in life to be thankful for.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	If I had to list everything that I felt grateful for, it would be a very long list.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	When I look at the world, I don't see much to be grateful for. (R)	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I am grateful to a wide variety of people.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	As I get older I find myself more able to appreciate the people, events, and situations that have been part of my life history.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Long amounts of time can go by before I feel grateful to something or someone. (R)	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I have so much in life to be thankful for.	1	2	3	4	5

Condition descriptions provided to raters

Basking: This form of savoring positive outcomes primarily consists of praising oneself for a success. An individual who basks considers the impressive nature of the success. Basking is associated with an internal locus of causality and a person's "appreciation for the way he/she is or what he/she has done". Examples include thoughts in reference to one's strengths including intelligence, personality, or hard work.

Acknowledgment of Others: This form of savoring positive outcomes primarily consists of a recognition that other people were a positive influence on one's path toward success. Although it is associated with some degree of external locus of control, acknowledgment of others does not preclude the assumption of primary responsibility for the positive event. In its protoypical form, a specific benefactor(s) is identified that is credited with helping the individual. Examples include thoughts in reference to how fortunate one is or relating to the emotional or instrumental support provided by parents, friends, or teachers.

Control Topic: This is not a form of savoring success, but instead participants were asked to write about neutral topics, such as descriptions of the room in which they were sitting or a tree.

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