



WHO YOU ARE MATTERS TO HOW I 'SHOW' MYSELF:  
SELF-PRESENTATION TO FRIENDS AND INTIMATE PARTNERS

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A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department

of Psychology

University of Houston

---

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

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By

Camilla Stine Øverup

May, 2012

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## Abstract

Self-presentation is a communication behavior by which we convey to others who we are (Arkin, 1981). In the context of existing relationships, it can be construed as a relationship maintenance behavior (Baumeister, 1982; Schlenker, 2003), however only little research has examined self-presentation in existing relationships. The current study examined whether type of relationship influences the extent to which a person engages in self-presentation. Two hundred and thirty participants were randomly assigned to romantic partner or friend condition and completed self-report measures. Results revealed small differences in self-presentation to romantic partners versus friends. For intrapersonal factors, an insecure attachment orientation and awareness of authenticity predicted reports of self-presentation, whereas for interpersonal factors, only predictability of partner was related to self-presentation. Furthermore, friendship-contingent self-esteem significantly moderated self-presentation to friends. These results have importance for understanding impression management and subsequent interpersonal behavior within different relationships.

*Keywords:* Self-Presentation, Intimate Relationships, Friendships, Interpersonal predictors, Intrapersonal predictors

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*Til mine forældre, Kirsten og Curt Øverup,*

*De bedste forældre en datter kan ønske sig.*

*To Jacob Aycock*

*for his unwavering support and continual love.*

Who you are matters to how I 'show' myself:

The differential self-presentation to friends and intimate partners

Why is it important to study self-presentation in relationships? In essence, this question could be divided into two parts: Why should we study relationships? And why should we study self-presentation, and specifically, within intimate relationships?

Research has consistently found that marital status tends to provide protection from morbidity and mortality. Divorce has been associated with a number of mental and physical health problems, as well as adjustment problems (Morgan, 1990). This is problematic, as divorce rates continue to be alarmingly high in America. Lifetime incident rates for divorce are estimated to be between 40 and 50% for first time marriages (National Center for Health Statistics, 2005), and these rates increase for subsequent marriages (Amato, 2000). Furthermore, single individuals have been found to have a greater relative risk of morbidity and mortality than married individuals (Burman & Margolin, 1992; Johnson, Backlund, Sorlie, & Loveless, 2000). In addition, marriage is differentially beneficial to men and women; unmarried women suffer from a 50% increase in relative risk of health problems whereas unmarried men suffer from a 250% increase (Robles and Kiecolt-Glaser, 2003), as compared to married individuals.

However, marital status itself is not inherently good (Umberson, Williams, Powers, Liu, & Needham, 2006); distressed or dissatisfied relationships can also have detrimental effects on health. Relationship distress or dissatisfaction has been associated with a number of physical, mental and emotional health problems, such as poorer immune functioning, poorer recovery following illness and hospitalization, greater cardio-vascular reactivity, depression and anxiety (Burman & Margolin, 1992; Holt-Lungstad, Birmingham, & Jones, 2008; Kiecolt-Glaser, Loving, Stowell, Malarkey, Lemeshow, Dickinson, & Glaser, 2005;

Williams, 2003). Thus, it is not only important to health to be married; one must be in a satisfactory marriage to attain the full benefits of marriage.

Relationship quality, or satisfaction, has consistently been related to the interactional behaviors of the partners, such as the extent to which they engage in positive and negative behavior (Bradbury, & Fincham, 1992; Gottman, Coan, Carrere, & Swanson, 1998), attributions for such behaviors (Bradbury, & Fincham, 1992; McNulty, O'Mara, & Karney, 2008), as well as self-disclosure by both partners (Sprecher, & Hendrick, 2004; Vera, & Betz, 1992; Vito, 1999).

Distressed and non-distressed couples can be distinguished by the propensity to engage in positive and negative interactions (Karney, & Bradbury, 1995; Weiss, & Heyman, 1990). Specifically, distressed couples tend to avoid and withdraw from interaction more than non-distressed couples do (Heavey, Christensen, & Malamuth 1995), or engage in more hostile, critical and blaming communication behavior (Gottman, et al., 1998; Gottman & Notarius, 2000), and reciprocate negative affect more often than positive affect (Gottman, et al., 1998). Furthermore, partners in distressed couples tend to make maladaptive attributions about their partners behaviors; they tend to see their partner's behavior as a result of internal dispositions, failing to see situational influences, or the influence that their own behavior has on their partner (Bradbury & Fincham, 1990; Bradbury & Fincham, 1992).

Self-disclosure is a form of relationship communication, as well as a relationship maintenance behavior (Sprecher, & Hendrick, 2004), in which one partner discloses information about his or her feelings and thoughts. It is indicative of an intimate and satisfied relationship. Research has found that happy, non-distressed couples engage in more self-disclosure than do dissatisfied or distressed couples (Sprecher & Hendrick, 2004; Vito,

1999). In sum, positive/negative interactional behaviors, attributions and self-disclosure are all forms of communication that may facilitate relationship maintenance or cause deterioration.

### **Self-Presentation**

Self-presentation is another mode of communication that may facilitate relationship maintenance (Baumeister, 1982; Schlenker 2003). Self-presentation is aimed at conveying a certain image of the self, but self-presentation may also convey information about how the individual feels about the relationship and how the individual sees the partner. Furthermore, it may also influence how the partner feels about him/herself.

Self-presentational behavior is aimed at relaying information to others present in the interaction and is employed to create an image of the self, and of the interaction (Arkin, 1981; Baumeister, 1982). Early self-presentation scholars have proposed that self-presentational behavior has 6 main purposes: 1) to create an internal sense of identity, 2) as an external presentation of who we are, 3) as a way to self-verify our identity, 4) for self-affirmation, 5) for self-assessment, and 6) for self-enhancement in the eyes of others (e.g. Baumeister, 1995). However, others have proposed that the specific goals of our self-presentational efforts vary depending on the social context we are in. For example, some of most predominant goals for self-presentational behaviors may be to influence others' behaviors and thoughts such that they are congruent with the wishes of the self (Arkin, 1981), to gain social approval, to avoid disapproval, or to manipulate others' perceptions of his or her own opinions (Arkin, 1981).

Some self-presentation scholars have argued that there are 2 self-presentational styles (e.g. Baumeister, 1982), whereas others have argued that there are 4 or more distinct styles

(Arkin, 1981; Jones & Pittman, 1982; Schutz, 1998). Most scholars, however, agree that the conceptualization of two styles is the more parsimonious one. These two major styles are defensive self-presentation, which refers to behaviors used to defend or restore an identity, and assertive self-presentation, which refers to behaviors used to develop and draw attention to an identity (Lee, Quigley, Nesler, Corbett, & Tedeschi, 1999; Schutz, 1998). In establishing a scale to measure these two main styles of self-presentation, thirteen different tactics were elucidated. These self-presentational tactics refer to the verbal and behavioral methods by which an individual attempts to convey or control an image, and thus, they are essentially modes of verbal and non-verbal communication. Although the scale consists of two subscales that measure assertive and defensive self-presentation, the sum score for the overall scale can be used to examine the extent to which individuals engage in self-presentation overall. More specifically, the score can be used as an indicator of the extent to which individuals actively engage in influencing how others view them (Lee et al., 1999).

As proposed by some scholars, the social context we are in often dictates our goals and the way in which we attempt to obtain these goals. Specifically, who we are interacting with and what we want to accomplish in this interaction may determine how we self-present to others (Schlenker, 2003).

### **Self-Presentation to Different Targets**

Much of the theorizing and research done within the field of self-presentation has focused on two types of audiences: strangers and friends. When self-presenting to strangers, individuals are more likely to self-enhance, when the information is available to others and identifiable (Giacalone & Rosenfeld, 1986), and when the claims about the self cannot be contradicted (Schlenker & Leary, 1982). But in other situations, individuals may apply other

tactics of self-presentation to strangers, such as ingratiation (e.g. flattery, opinion conformity, doing favors, giving gifts) or supplication (e.g. emphasizing one's limitations, helplessness and dependence) (Schlenker, & Leary, 1982). In general, individuals self-present to strangers in ways they think will create the most favorable impression of themselves (Schlenker & Leary, 1982b), especially when they foresee future interactions with their audience (Danheiser & Graziano, 1982).

Self-presentation to friends appears to take on different forms than self-presentation to strangers. Tice, Butler, Muraven, and Stillwell (1995) found in their study that individuals tended to be more modest on questions about themselves when with a friend, than when with a stranger, and even when a stranger was also present, individuals were more likely to be modest. Tice and colleagues (1995) hypothesize that this difference in self-presentational mode between the two target audiences stems from the fact that friends have more information about the individual. Thus, the self-presenter is modest in an attempt to not project an image of the self that the friend finds to not be true. Otherwise, the individual might incur disapproval from their friend and, perhaps, lose their friendship. In short, we engage in different modes of self-presentation to friends and strangers, because a friend's liking is more important to us than making a good impression on a stranger, with whom future interactions are not certain (Tice, et al., 1995).

Instead of conceptualizing self-presentation in terms of the communicative styles and tactics used, Leary and Allen (2011) propose that people have several presentational personas that are tailored towards the target of the self-presentational efforts. Rather than a specific style or tactic, a self-presentational persona is a profile of characteristics, or "desired impressions" that an individual wants to convey to the target (Leary, & Allen, 2011). In their

recent study, individuals rated lists of adjectives according to how they would like others (e.g., best friend, a coworker, someone they dislike) to see them. According to the results of their research, people tend to highlight certain characteristics of themselves to some people and other characteristics to other people; specifically, they found that individuals tended to highlight some positive traits to their romantic partner, even to a greater extent than how they actually perceived themselves to be (Leary, & Allen, 2011). Although the results of the Leary and Allen (2011) study seems somewhat contradictory to the results of the Tice, Butler, Muraven, and Stillwell (1995) study, both studies support the idea that individuals engage in differential self-presentation depending on the target of their self-presentational efforts.

Thus, it appears that audience matters in how an individual self-presents, not only in terms of strangers and friends, but also when it comes to many other types of relationships. However, except for Leary and Allen (2011), little research has looked at self-presentation within romantic couples, and none have looked at the communicative self-presentational styles and tactics used within intimate couples. Thus, this research will address this gap, by focusing on the differences between self-presentation to friends and romantic partners, with the specific focus being on the communicative styles employed. Based on the literature reviewed above, I expect that individuals self-present differently according to type of relationship. That is, the type of relationship a person has with the target of the self-presentational efforts will affect the style and the specific tactics used.

### **Contingent Self-Esteem and Self-Presentation to Different Targets**

Self-esteem has been found to be one of the most important determinants of the extent to which individuals engage in self-presentation. Positive self-esteem has been associated with positivity strivings (i.e. the desire to make positive impressions), many researchers have

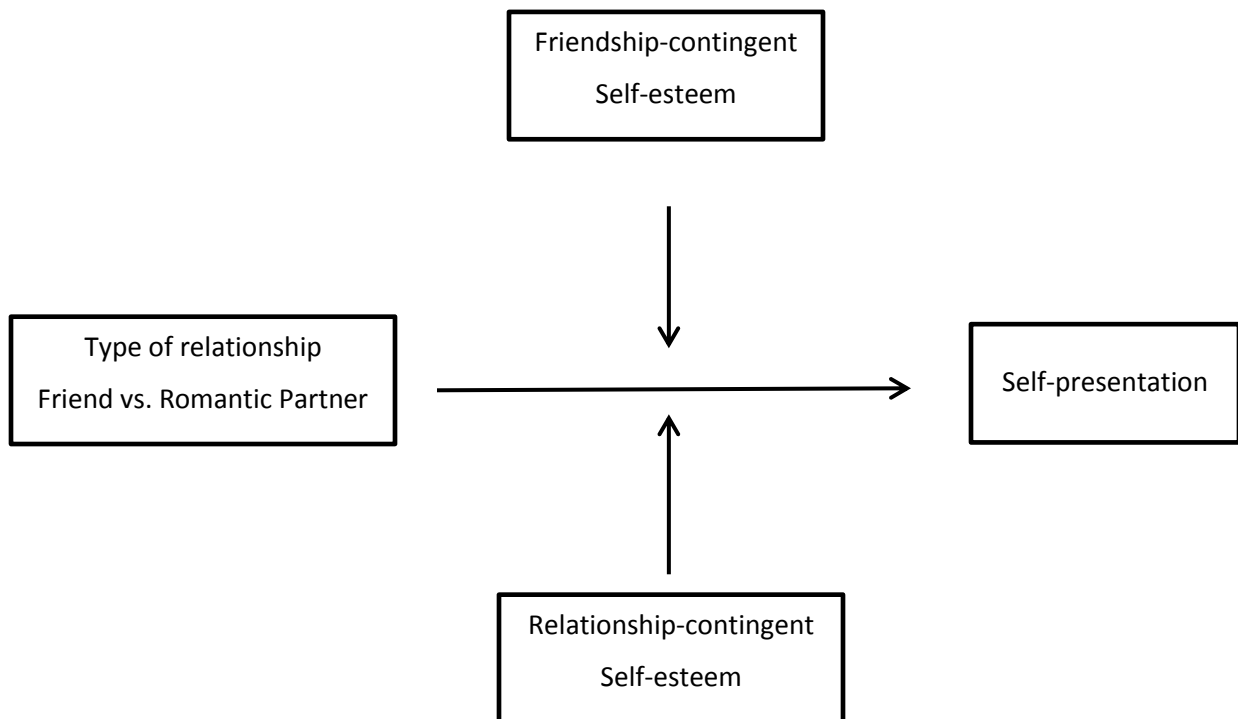


noted that people tend to self-present differently depending on their level of self-esteem. Specifically, individuals high in self-esteem tend to self-enhance (Baumeister, Tice, & Hutton, 1989; Schutz & Tice, 1997), especially in public settings (Baumeister, 1982), or when they received negative or threatening feedback (Britt, Doherty, & Schlenker, 1997). Individuals low in self-esteem tend to be protective of the self in their self-presentational behavior, and to lower their self-rating in public or in threatening situations (Baumeister, 1982; Britt et al., 1997). Prior research has focused on reports of global self-esteem, however; no research has focused on specific types of self-esteem in predicting self-presentational behavior. Contingent self-esteem, such as relationship or friendship contingent self-esteem (Cambron, Acitelli, & Steinberg, 2010; Knee, Canevello, Bush, & Cook, 2008), may be an important factor individual's self-presentational behaviors in the context of personal relationships. That is, if a person's self-esteem depends on how well his relationship with another person is doing, he may be more motivated to engage in more self-presentation in order to maintain the other's positive view of him.

Friendship-contingent and relationship-contingent self-esteem represent two separate and distinct forms of contingent self-esteem. Friendship-contingent self-esteem depends on an individual's assessment of the value, and well-being of his friendships; if an individual perceives that his friendships are not of high quality or that they are not faring well, he feels worse about himself (Cambron, Acitelli, & Steinberg, 2010). Relationship-contingent self-esteem is similarly concerned with the quality of one's relationship; however, the important relationship in this context is not one's friendship, but one's romantic relationship (Knee, Canevello, Bush, & Cook, 2008). Thus, although both types of self-esteem deal with important relationships in one's life, the nature of the relationship is what sets them apart.

As stated earlier, I expect that the relationship one has with the person, to whom one is self-presenting, will affect the extent to which one engages in self-presentation. Therefore, the two types of contingent self-esteem should also affect self-presentation differently. If a person's self-esteem is very contingent on his friendships, he may self-present more to his friends in an attempt to maintain the friendship; conversely, if a person's self-esteem is not very contingent on his friendships, he may not engage in much self-presentation to his friends, as he may see no need to project himself in certain ways. Similarly, if a person's self-esteem is contingent on his romantic relationship, he may attempt to maintain the relationship through self-presentation, whereas if the person's self-esteem is not contingent on the romantic relationship, he may not deem it necessary to create a certain image of the self (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. *The moderating effect of friendship-contingent and relationship-contingent self-esteem on self-presentation.*



## Other Factors Influencing Self-Presentation

Self-presentation is, in essence, an interpersonal behavior that requires two people to be present and interacting. Thus, factors that characterize the individuals and factors that characterize the relationship may be important determinants of the extent to which individuals self-present as well as the form the self-presentation takes.

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Table 1.

*Intrapersonal and interpersonal characteristics affecting self-presentation*

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Intrapersonal variables	Interpersonal variables
Attachment	Trust
Dispositional Authenticity	Closeness
Life Orientation	Self-disclosure

---

Table 1 displays some intrapersonal and interpersonal characteristics that may influence the extent to which individuals engage in self-presentation; the characteristics have been classified based on whether its primary function is within the individual or within the relationship. Attachment, dispositional authenticity and life orientation are characteristics of the individual. They describe the personality, and attitudes of the individual person. Trust, closeness and self-disclosure, on the other hand, are characteristics of the relationship; these characteristics describe the quality of the relationship between two people. These characteristics may affect the extent to which individuals self-present independently of the type of relationship that he/she has with the target of the self-presentational efforts. That is, the overall level of the intrapersonal and intrapersonal characteristics may be predictive of

the extent to which a person engages in self-presentational behavior. For instance, a person, who feel less close to the target of their self-presentational effort, may feel a greater desire to influence the other person's opinions or behavior of the self-presenter, whereas individuals, who feel very close to the target, may not have strong of a need to influence the other person, because he/she may already have established an identity with that target person.

### **Factors Related to the Individual**

**Attachment style.** Attachment style is specific to a person, yet, influences interactions between individuals. Adult attachment styles have been conceptualized as operating along two dimensions: view of self and view of others (Feeney, Noller, & Hanrahan, 1994). These dimensions describe individuals' orientations towards relationships, such that individuals can be broadly categorized as securely attached and insecurely attached. Specifically, it appears securely and insecurely attached individuals can be differentiated based on five main factors relating to views of self and views of others: confidence in the self and in relationships, discomfort with closeness, need for approval and reassurance, preoccupation with relationships and viewing relationships as secondary to achievement. Overall, securely attached individuals are characterized by a positive orientation towards relationships; they are confident in themselves and in their relationship, and are comfortable with closeness and view their relationships as important. Insecurely attached individuals, on the other hand, tend to be less confident in the themselves, may seek approval from others while fearing the loss of it, may worry excessively about their relationships, or may show disinterest in them, and often feel uncomfortable being close with others (Feeney et al., 1994; Feeney, Noller & Roberts, 2000). Thus, attachment style may influence an individual's self-presentational efforts; that is, individuals' self-presentational efforts may reflect their

attachment orientation. Securely attached individuals may not feel the need to attempt to influence others' view of them – and therefore may engage in less self-presentation - because they feel comfortable with who they are, and with their relationship to others. Conversely, insecurely attached individuals, may desire to influence others' view of them as they do not feel certain in their relationship to others, therefore engaging in more self-presentation.

**Dispositional authenticity.** Authenticity is an integral aspect of the individual that may affect dyadic interactions. Authenticity has, for many years, been considered elusive and many researchers have posited that in self-presentation, there invariably cannot be authenticity (Kernis, & Goldman, 2006). However, authenticity and self-presentation are not one and the same; authenticity is an intra-personal process that derives from the idea that one is honest with one self (Kernis, & Goldman, 2006), whereas self-presentation is an interpersonal process that builds on the idea that one actively manipulates others' perceptions and opinions of oneself, or attempts to establish an image of oneself to others as well as to oneself. Hence, an individual may be very honest and aware of himself, but may still engage in self-presentation when interacting with others.

Unquestionably, authenticity is a complex phenomenon, best understood in terms of multiple components as opposed to a single process (Kernis, & Goldman, 2006). Kernis and Goldman (2006) offer one definition of authenticity as “the unobstructed operation of one's true- or core-self in one's daily enterprise” (p. 294), and propose that authenticity can be conceived in terms of four components: (1) Awareness is one's actual self-knowledge - that one is aware of one's thoughts, feelings, and motives, that one trusts such cognitions and wants to learn more about them; (2) Unbiased processing refers to how one responds to self-relevant information, specifically, whether one is objective with regard to positive and

negative aspects of the self, and one's emotions and internal experiences. Unbiased processing does not involve in distortions or exaggerations of said self-relevant information. (3) The behavior component refers to behaving in accordance with one's attitudes, preferences and needs. That is, one does not merely act in ways that will please others, result in personal gains, or as to avoid disapproval or reprimand, but in ways that are in line with what one likes, needs and feel is best. And finally, (4) the relational orientation component refers to valuing and striving for honesty, openness, and sincerity in one's close relationships, rather than pretending to be someone or something one is not (Kernis, & Goldman, 2006). Thus, an individual's level of authenticity should have an impact on the extent to which that person engages in various self-presentational tactics. Specifically, individuals, who are not unbiased in their processing of self-relevant information, and who do not act in accordance with their own attitudes and feelings – essentially, individuals who have low levels of dispositional authenticity - may be more likely to engage in self-presentational tactics that are aimed at presenting a certain image to influence how others see the self.

**Life orientation.** Whether an individual is inherently optimistic or pessimistic also influences an individual's relationship with others, although perhaps more indirectly. Optimistic individuals are characterized by a belief that good things will happen to them, and tend to approach situations with confidence; pessimistic individuals, on the other hand, are characterized by a belief that bad things will happen to them, and therefore tend to be hesitant and disbelieving (Carver, & Scheier, 2003). Furthermore, optimism/pessimism has also been found to be related to an individual's level of trait self-esteem. Specifically, pessimism is negatively related to self-esteem, and optimism is positively related to self-esteem (Davis, Hanson, Edson, & Ziegler, 1992). Thus, it may be that life orientation (i.e.

levels of optimism and pessimism) is indicative of a person's general affectivity and approach to interpersonal interaction. Such life orientation may be related to various intrapersonal and interpersonal variables. For instance, individuals, who are very pessimistic, may also be insecurely attached; they may be doubtful and distrusting of others, may be fearful of becoming close to others, and may be less forthcoming and disclosing with others. In contrast, individuals, who are very optimistic, may be more securely attached; they may be very open to others, see much good in them and in their relationships with them, and may trust them to be there for them. Thus, a person's life orientation may be related to the extent to which individuals engage in self-presentation; pessimistic individuals may engage in more self-presentation, while optimistic individuals may engage in less self-presentation.

### **Factors Related to the Relationship**

**Closeness.** Closeness is related to how an individual behaves within a relationship. Closeness has been conceptualized in a number of ways, with the main two being 1) an experience of 'we-ness', that is, individuals experience a feeling of belonging together and as forming a distinct unit (Hatfield, 1982 and McDonald, 1981, as cited in Aron, Aron, Tudor & Nelson, 1991), and 2) an integration of the other into the self, that is, the distinction between self and other becomes blurred and greater similarity between individuals is perceived (Aron and colleagues, 1991, 1992, 1999). Research has shown that individuals tend to be more empathic (Joireman, Needham, & Cummings, 2002) and engage in more pro-social behaviors (Wright, & Richard, 2010) with people whom they feel close to. Furthermore, individuals tend to have different standards for what constitute appropriate behaviors depending on the target of those behaviors; that is, individuals behave differently with familiar others, than with less familiar, or unfamiliar, others (Leary, & Allen, 2011; Tice et al, 1995). Familiarity,

or closeness, is associated with more honest and open interactions (Sprecher, & Hendrick, 2004). Thus, it is likely that perceived closeness will affect the extent to which individuals engage in self-presentation; the closer individuals feel to others, the less individuals may feel the need to actively influence the others' view of them.

**Self-disclosure.** How much a person discloses to another person is also highly related to how close the person feels to the other (Greene, Derlega, & Mathews, 2006; Sprecher, & Hendrick, 2004). Self-disclosure is an act of telling another person about one's private thoughts and feelings, and is considered by many scholars to be a mode of relationship communication and maintenance (Greene, et al, 2006; Sprecher, & Hendrick, 2004). Disclosure in relationships can take on many forms, such as in disclosure about events and thoughts of the individual, or in relational disclosure, where the individual discloses thoughts and feelings about the relationship. However, there can be great overlap between the two, such as when personal disclosures to one's interaction partner concern or affect the relationship (Green, et al., 2006). Furthermore, some theorists have proposed a link between self-disclosure and self-presentation, positing that by engaging in more self-disclosure, individuals attempted to convey certain messages to the interaction partner (Backman, 1990). However, others have argued that self-disclosure carries a component of authenticity with it (Greene, et al., 2006), and therefore, cannot be completely construed as being self-presentational, as it lacks a component of (willful) manipulation. Thus, it is likely that self-disclosure will affect the extent to which individuals present themselves to others; the more they engage in self-disclosure, the less they engage in self-presentation, because the interaction partner is already privy to much personal information about the individual.



**Trust.** Trust between two individuals is also essential to facilitate openness and uninhibited interaction. Trust has been defined in multiple ways, however, the common theme of these definitions establish trust as the ability to count on another individual to provide the assurance and support one needs, or, reversely, as the lack of fear of being met with rejection and condemnation (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985). Trust can be understood in terms of three distinct, but related components: predictability, dependability and faith (Rempel, et al., 1985). Predictability refers to judgments about the consistency of the partner's behaviors; that is, whether an individual can reliably count on his/her partner to act on a certain way, and perceive that the partner has control over his/her own behavior. Dependability concerns the character of the partner; it is an evaluation of the individual's qualities and attributes and not of specific behaviors of the individual. And finally, faith reflects an emotional component of trust that arrives from simply believing that the partner is worthy of trust; this component is based more in instincts and feelings than in prior experiences, which the previous two components can be said to be based on (Rempel, et al., 1985). Although such characteristics are evaluated at the partner level (that is, one partner evaluates his/her partner on these characteristics), they are fostered in the context of the relationship between the two individuals, and describe the extent to which there is trust within the relationship. Thus, trust may be considered an integral part of interactions between an individual and close others, and may affect self-presentation in such relationships. Individuals, who do not harbor much trust toward their partner or their friend, may perceive a stronger need to influence the other's view of them, perhaps to gain more favor from them, or to avoid rejection or disapproval. Therefore, a lack of trust may lead to more self-presentational behavior, and having much trust may lead to less self-presentational behavior.

## **Expectations and hypotheses**

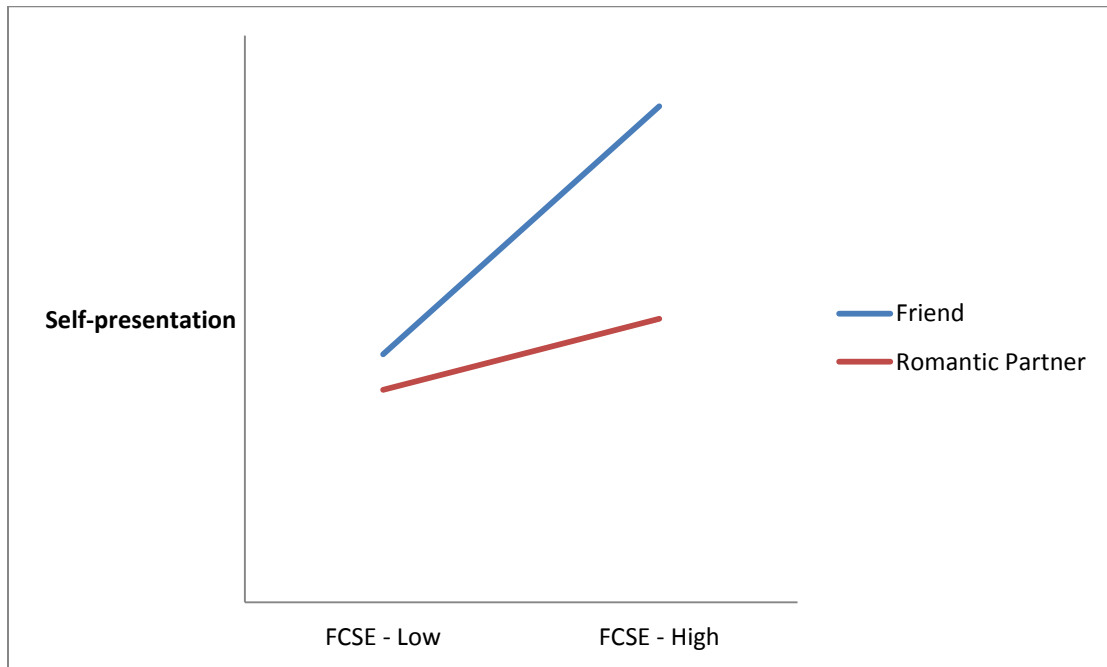
Based on the literature reviewed above, I formed the following hypotheses, and research questions.

*Hypothesis 1:* There will be a significant difference between the level of self-presentation to friends and the level of self-presentation to romantic partners. That is, the type of relationship one has with the target of one's self-presentational efforts influences the extent to which one engages in self-presentation.

*Hypothesis 2:* Type of contingent self-esteem will moderate the extent to which individuals engage in self-presentation. Specifically:

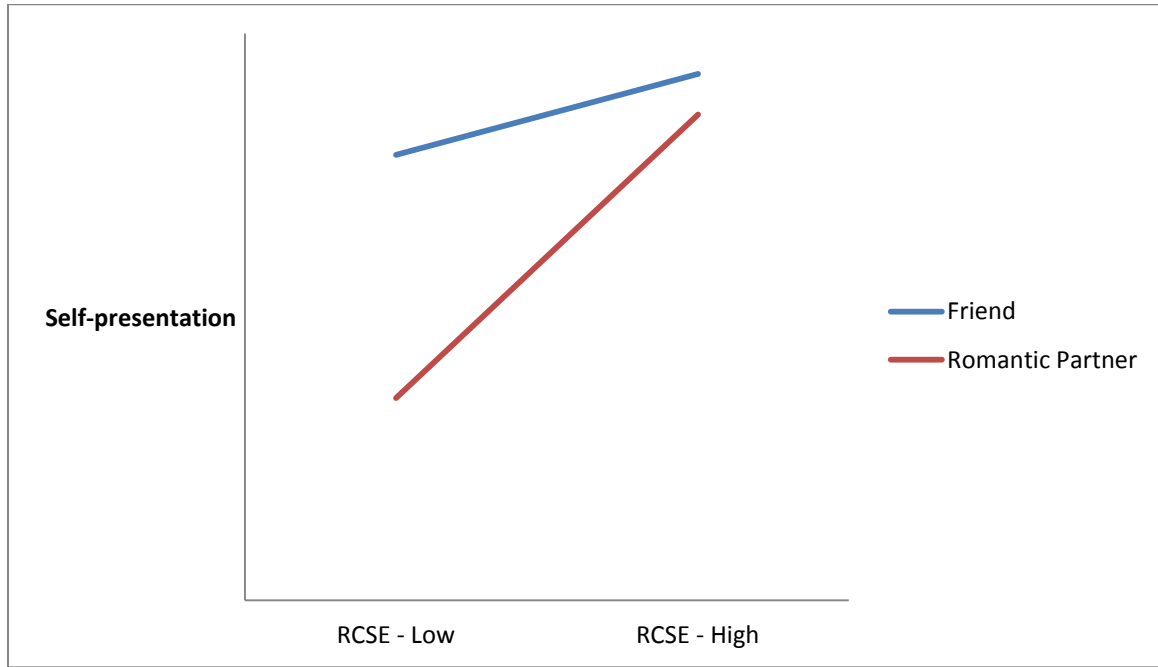
*Hypothesis 2a:* Target audience will moderate the effects of friendship-contingent self-esteem on self-presentation. That is, when self-presenting to a friend, individuals, who report being high in friendship-contingent self-esteem, will engage in more self-presentation, and individuals, who report being low in friendship-contingent self-esteem, will engage in less self-presentation. However, friendship-contingent self-esteem will only be weakly related to self-presentation in romantic relationships. (see figure 2a)

Figure 2a. *Friendship-Contingent Self-Esteem as a Moderator of Self-Presentation.*



*Hypothesis 2b:* Target audience will moderate the effects of relationship-contingent self-esteem on self-presentation. That is, when self-presenting to a romantic partner, individuals, who report being high in relationship-contingent self-esteem, will engage in more self-presentation, and individuals, who report being low in relationship-contingent self-esteem, will engage in less self-presentation. However, relationship-contingent self-esteem will only be weakly related to self-presentation in friendships. (see figure 2b)

Figure 2b. *Relationship-Contingent Self-esteem as a Moderator of Self-Presentation.*



*Hypothesis 3:* Intrapersonal factors will predict the extent to which individuals engage in self-presentation, regardless of target (friend or romantic partner). That is, individuals who report being low in dispositional authenticity and insecurely attached will engage in more self-presentation, whereas individuals who report being high in dispositional authenticity, and securely attached will engage in less self-presentation.

*Hypothesis 4:* Interpersonal factors will predict the extent to which individuals engage in self-presentation, regardless of target (friend or romantic partner). That is, individuals who report being low in closeness, self-disclosure, and trust will engage in more self-presentation, whereas individuals who report being high closeness, self-disclosure, and trust will engage in less self-presentation.

*Research question 1:* Does self-presentation to a friend versus a romantic partner differ with regards to a self-presentational style? That is, do individuals in the friend-

condition engage in assertive self-presentation more than individuals in the romantic partner-condition? And do individuals in the friend-condition engage in defensive self-presentation more than individuals in the romantic partner-condition?

*Research question 2:* Is optimistic/pessimistic life orientation predictive of self-presentational style? Does life orientation (optimism/pessimism) predict self-presentation over and above the contingent self-esteem variables specified in hypothesis 2?

This research is important in its capacity to further knowledge concerning communicative processes in daily interactions, and specifically within intimate relationships. Self-presentation is one form of communication that is related to how individuals shape their understanding of each other within a relationship. Communication in relationships has great influence on the health of individuals to the extent that it fosters understanding, and intimacy (Gottman, et al., 1998; Gottman & Notarius, 2000; Sprecher & Hendrick, 2004; Vito, 1999). Gaining a more detailed knowledge of the processes underlying this communication may be useful in improving conditions in many relationships.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

Participants were recruited from among students at a large metropolitan university in Texas. In order to participate in the study, students had to currently be in a relationship. This screening criterion was imposed such that the survey questions would be applicable to all participants. A total of 278 individuals participated in the study. Of those, 48 individuals were dropped from the sample for having failed to correctly answer 2 out of 3 check questions that were designed to catch those that were not reading the questionnaires, or merely clicking through. Those, who were dropped from the data set differed significantly

from those who were not dropped in terms of overall Self-presentation, Assertive self-presentation, Awareness (authenticity), Behavior (authenticity), Relational Orientation (authenticity), Confidence (attachment), Relationships as Secondary (attachment), predictability (trust), dependability (trust), Faith in person (trust), and Self-disclosure. Those who WERE dropped had higher means on Self-presentation, Assertive self-presentation, Relationships as Secondary (attachment) and Predictability (trust). Those who were NOT dropped had higher means on Awareness (authenticity), Behavior (authenticity), Relational orientation (authenticity), Confidence (attachment), Dependability (trust), Faith in person (trust), and Self-disclosure. Differences in means may be due to incomplete data for those who were dropped, or due to random responding and not reading the questions. It is not surprising that those who were dropped differed from those who were not. The reason for dropping them was that their data could not be trusted to be reliable or accurate.

The final sample consisted of two hundred and thirty individuals participated in the study (102 men and 128 women). There were 50 men and 65 women in the Romantic Partner condition, and there were 52 men and 63 women in the friend condition. The mean age for men was 22.12 years and the mean age for women was 23.96 years. The sample was ethnically diverse, although primarily Caucasian (36% Caucasian, 23% Hispanic, 17% African-American, and 12 % Asian).

## **Procedure**

Participants were asked to complete a battery of questionnaires online. They were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: A “friend” condition, and an “intimate partner” condition.

Prior to commencing the online survey, participants were asked to sign an informed consent form, which explained the procedures of the study and informed them that they could quit the study any time they should wish to do so. Participants were then asked to complete an online survey; they were asked to do this alone, and without discussing their answers with anyone. The survey contained a number of questionnaires concerning self-presentational tactics, as well as several intrapersonal and interpersonal measures. At the beginning of the survey, the participants were asked to give the first name or a nickname of the target to which they had been assigned (friend or romantic partner), and some information about the relationship with that person (see appendix A). They were also asked to complete some demographics questions (appendix K). After completing all the scale measures, the participants were debriefed and thanked for their participation, and received 1 hour extra credit compensation.

## **Measures**

The survey began by asking participants a series of questions concerning demographics such as gender, age, and race. They were also asked about current relationship status and length of relationship. In both conditions, the participants were asked to identify the target audience by name and how long they have known this individual.

**Self-presentation Tactics Scale** (Lee, et al.,1999). This 63 item scale examines the extent to which an individual engages in self-presentation. The scale consists of two subscales, which measures assertive and defensive self-presentation; these two subscales are utilized in this study. The scale can be further parsed into 12 self-presentational tactics, however, for the sake of parsimony, these subscales are not examined here. Statements are rated on a 9-point Likert scale (1 = very infrequently; 9 = very frequently). This measure is

constructed as a general measure of self-presentation across all interactions, however, for this study, we adapted it, such that participants were asked to think of a friend/intimate partner when answering these questions. ( $\alpha_{\text{roman.part.}} = .95$  and  $\alpha_{\text{friend}} = .97$ ; see appendix B)

**Relationship contingent self-esteem** (Knee, et al., 2008). This 11 item scale measures the extent to which an individual's self-esteem is contingent on their intimate relationship. That is, individuals may experience higher self-esteem, when they perceive that their relationship is going well, and experience decreases in self-esteem, when they perceive that it is not. The items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 ("not at all like me") to 5 ("very much like me"). The scale is constructed such that higher scores indicate more contingent self-esteem. ( $\alpha = .59$ ; see appendix C)

**Friendship contingent self-esteem** (Cambron, et al., 2010). This 8 item scale measures the extent to which an individual's self-esteem is contingent on their friendships. That is, individuals may experience higher self-esteem, when they perceive that their friendships are going well, and experience decreases in self-esteem, when they perceive that they are not. The items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (very little like me) to 5 (very much like me). ( $\alpha = .92$ ; see appendix D)

**Authenticity Inventory** (Kernis, & Goldman, 2006). This 45 item measure examines the extent to which individuals are dispositionally authentic. The scale consists of 4 subscales: Awareness (the extent to which one is aware of and trust one's own thoughts and feelings), unbiased processing (the extent to which one does not deny, distort or ignore knowledge about the self), behavior (the extent to which one acts in line with one's values and needs), and relational orientation (the extent to which one values and strives for openness



in one's relationships). The items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). ( $\alpha = .65$ ; see appendix E)

**Attachment Style Questionnaire** (Feeney, J. A., Noller, P., & Hanrahan, M., 1994). This 40 item self-report scale measures different styles of attachment in adults. The scale consists of five subscales that measure various aspects of attachment. Confidence in self and relationship indicates secure attachment; need for approval and preoccupation with relationships indicate anxious attachment; discomfort with closeness, and relationships as secondary indicate avoidant attachment. Statements are rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 ("totally disagree") to 6 ("totally agree"). ( $\alpha = .77$ ; see appendix F)

**Inclusion of Other in Self Scale** (Aron, Aron, & Smollan, 1992). This single item pictorial scale, which measures felt closeness, consists of 7 Venn diagrams, with varying degrees of overlap. Participants were asked to indicate which diagram offers the most accurate description of how close they feel to the self-presentational target (friend/intimate partner). Instructions will be given, such that participants are asked to evaluate how close they feel to the primed target out of all the people they know. This is done to unify the criterion against which participants rate closeness with the target, and not merely to in a specific group (e.g. "compared to all of my friends, I feel this close to this friend", or "out of all the partners I have had, I feel this close to this partner"), which could create an artificial ceiling effect. This measure has been shown to have good reliability and validity, even across a number of targets of closeness (e.i. friends, romantic partners, and mentoring relationships). (see appendix G)

**Trust in Close Relationships** (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985). This 17 item self-report scale examines the extent to which an individual feels trust towards his/her partner.

The scale consists of three subscales that measure the predictability, and dependability of partner, and faith in partner. Items are rated on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (“Strongly disagree”) to 7 (“Strongly agree”). ( $\alpha_{\text{rom,part}} = .78$  and  $\alpha_{\text{friend}} = .81$ ; see appendix H)

**Self-disclosure Index** (Miller, Berg, & Archer, 1983). This 10 item measure examines the extent to which individuals self-disclose about thoughts, and feelings about the self. The scale was constructed with an emphasis of target-specificity, because self-disclosure may vary depending on the identity of the target and relationship one shares with that individual. Thus, the items consist of a stem, to which the participants indicate how much they disclose, using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“discuss not at all”) to 5 (“discuss fully and completely”). ( $\alpha_{\text{rom,part}} = .90$  and  $\alpha_{\text{friend}} = .88$ ; see appendix I)

**Life Orientation Scale – Revised** (Scheier, Carver, & Bridges, 1994). This measure is a 10 item scale that examines the extent to which individuals hold positive or negative attitudes about the future; it has often been used as a measure of trait optimism or pessimism (Burke, Joyner, Czech, & Wilson, 2000). Originally, the scale was created as a unidimensional measure of optimism/pessimism such that high scores indicate optimism and low scores indicate pessimism, but it has been argued that it should instead be treated as a scale from which an overall score is obtained as well as two subscale scores (Lightsey, 1996, as cited in Burke, et al., 2000). It consists of 3 negative items, 3 positive items and 4 filler items. Participants indicate the extent of their agreement along a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (“strongly agree”) to 5 (“strongly disagree”). ( $\alpha_{\text{optimism}} = .66$  and  $\alpha_{\text{pessimism}} = .79$ ; see appendix J)

## **Results**

### **Descriptive Statistics**

T-tests were performed to compare the two conditions on all study variables; table 2 displays means and standard deviations for all predictor variables by survey condition (romantic partner condition or friend condition). Furthermore, table 3 presents the correlations between the study variables. Cohen's D was calculated to obtain a measure of effect size for the main outcome variable, self-presentation. The effect size was small, Cohen's  $d = 0.235$ .

Table 2.

*Means and Standard Deviation for all Predictor Variables by Group*

	Romantic relationship		Friendship		<i>t</i> -value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Self-Presentation (overall)	3.63	1.05	3.37	1.19	1.77
Assertive Self-Presentation	3.08	0.93	2.92	1.09	1.17
Defensive Self-Presentation	4.19	1.30	3.82	1.41	2.06*
RCSE	3.53	0.86	3.53	0.76	-0.03
FCSE	2.50	1.07	2.54	0.96	-0.31
Authenticity					
Awareness	3.98	0.70	3.79	0.57	2.18*
Processing	3.32	0.65	3.25	0.63	0.81
Behavioral	3.61	0.54	3.51	0.50	1.45
Relational Orientation	3.97	0.61	3.93	0.53	0.60
Attachment					
Confidence	4.26	0.96	4.26	0.85	-0.04
Discomfort	3.68	1.00	3.70	0.92	-0.17
Relationships as secondary	2.61	0.95	2.67	0.88	-0.42
Need for Approval	3.06	1.19	3.03	0.96	0.21
Preoccupied	3.04	1.17	3.26	1.04	-1.55
Trust					
Predictability	-0.57	1.02	-0.77	0.99	1.54
Dependability	1.21	1.35	1.45	1.09	-1.46
Faith In person	2.41	1.19	1.84	1.11	3.74**
Self-disclosure	4.19	0.76	4.14	0.66	0.57
Optimism	3.58	0.88	3.62	0.81	-0.32
Pessimism	2.60	1.02	2.68	0.89	-0.62
Closeness (IOS)	5.42	1.52	4.93	1.49	2.45*
Relationship length	38.82	57.08	75.98	62.95	-1.10

**Note.** \*  $p < .05$ \*\*  $p < .01$ 

Relationship length = months

Table 3.  
Correlations among study variables

								Authenticity			Attachment		
Variable		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Survey cond	--											
2	Selfpresent	-0.12	--										
3	Defensive	-0.14*	0.96***	--									
4	Assertive	-0.08	0.93***	0.80***	--								
5	RCSE	0.00	0.21**	0.23***	0.17**	--							
6	FCSE	0.02	0.39***	0.40***	0.32***	0.45***	--						
Authenticity													
7	Aware	-0.14*	-0.16*	-0.17**	-0.11	-0.18**	-0.41***	--					
8	Process.	-0.05	-0.32***	-0.32***	-0.28***	-0.26***	-0.44***	0.54***	--				
9	Behavior.	-0.10	-0.27***	-0.28***	-0.23***	-0.19**	-0.39***	0.61***	0.48***	--			
10	Rel.Or.	-0.04	-0.18**	-0.16*	-0.19**	-0.08	-0.29***	0.63***	0.51***	0.64***	--		
Attachment													
11	Confiden.	0.00	-0.14*	-0.18**	-0.06	-0.09	-0.27***	0.45***	0.33***	0.43***	0.47***	--	
12	Discomf	0.01	0.20**	0.20**	0.18**	0.05	0.13*	-0.18**	-0.30***	-0.19**	-0.26***	-0.48***	--
13	Rel.Secon.	0.03	0.36***	0.30***	0.39***	-0.01	0.17*	-0.25***	-0.29***	-0.33***	-0.40***	-0.14*	0.41***
14	Need	-0.01	0.41***	0.42***	0.35***	0.36***	0.58***	-0.55***	-0.57***	-0.48***	-0.42***	-0.45***	0.27***
15	Preocc.	0.10	0.40***	0.41***	0.35***	0.36***	0.52***	-0.43***	-0.50***	-0.40***	-0.30***	-0.44***	0.34***
Trust													
16	Predict	-0.10	0.44***	0.40***	0.44***	0.08	0.27***	-0.18**	-0.33***	-0.20**	-0.25***	-0.11	0.22***
17	Depend	0.10	-0.18**	-0.12074	-0.23***	0.06	-0.08	0.31***	0.19**	0.22***	0.42***	0.28***	-0.26***
18	Faith	-0.24***	-0.08	-0.03	-0.15*	0.11	-0.07	0.36***	0.21**	0.32***	0.46***	0.32***	-0.14*
19	IOS	-0.16*	-0.01	0.02	-0.05	0.15*	0.01	0.19**	0.11	0.17*	0.20**	0.24***	-0.18**
20	Selfdiscl	-0.04	-0.06	-0.02	-0.10	0.10	-0.03	0.33***	0.27***	0.32***	0.52***	0.28***	-0.26***
21	Optim	0.02	-0.07	-0.10	-0.03	-0.11	-0.24***	0.40***	0.21**	0.29***	0.24***	0.40***	-0.20**
22	Pessim	0.04	0.31***	0.33***	0.25***	0.23***	0.31***	-0.42***	-0.43***	-0.31***	-0.27***	-0.32***	0.38***
23	Rellength	0.07	-0.08	-0.09	-0.06	0.03	0.06	-0.00	-0.03	-0.06	-0.12	0.01	-0.11

**Note.** \* p< .05 \*\*p< .01 \*\*\*p<0.001 Survey cond: 0: romantic partner 1: friend. Selfpresent = Overall self-presentation. Defensive = Defensive self-presentation. Assertive = Assertive self-presentation. RCSE = Relationship-contingent self-esteem. FCSE = Friendship-contingent self-esteem. Aware = Awareness. Process. = Unbiased Processing. Behavior. = Behavioral Component. Rel.Or. = Relational Orientation. Confiden. = Confidence. Discomf. = Discomfort with Closeness. Rel.Second. = Relationships as Secondary. Need = Need for Approval. Preocc. = Preoccupation with Relationships. Predict = Predictability. Depend = Dependability. Faith = Faith in Person. IOS = Inclusion of other in Self. Selfdicl. = Self-disclosure. Optim. = Optimism. Pessim. = Pessimism. Rellength = Relationship Length (in months).

Table 3.  
Correlations among study variables (continued)

Variable	Attachment		15	Trust			19	20	21	22	23
	13	14		16	17	18					
1 Survey cond											
2 Selfpresent											
3 Defensive											
4 Assertive											
5 RCSE											
6 FCSE											
Authenticity											
7 Aware											
8 Procedur.											
9 Behavior.											
10 Rel.Or.											
Attachment											
11 Confiden.											
12 Discomf											
13 Rel.Secon.	--										
14 Need	0.24***	--									
15 Preocc.	0.21**	0.66***	--								
Trust											
16 Predict	0.23***	0.29***	0.25***	--							
17 Depend	-0.18**	-0.19**	-0.17*	-0.35***	--						
18 Faith	-0.19**	-0.17*	-0.14*	-0.27***	0.70***	--					
19 IOS	-0.04	-0.04	-0.11	-0.13	0.41***	0.54***	--				
20 Selfdiscl	-0.21**	-0.16*	-0.12	-0.20**	0.55***	0.65***	0.50***	--			
21 Optim	-0.08	-0.39***	-0.19**	-0.11	0.18**	0.21**	0.10	0.19**	--		
22 Pessim	0.28***	0.47***	0.43***	0.31***	-0.16*	0.31***	-0.16*	-0.17*	-0.49***	--	
23 Rellength	-0.01	-0.09	-0.02	-0.04	-0.07	-0.04	-0.07	-0.00	-0.02	-0.09	--

**Note.** \*  $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < 0.001$  Survey cond: 0: romantic partner 1: friend. Selfpresent = Overall self-presentation. Defensive = Defensive self-presentation. Assertive = Assertive self-presentation. RCSE = Relationship-contingent self-esteem. FCSE = Friendship-contingent self-esteem. Aware = Awareness. Process. = Unbiased Processing. Behavior. = Behavioral Component. Rel.Or. = Relational Orientation. Confiden. = Confidence. Discomf. = Discomfort with Closeness. Rel.Second. = Relationships as Secondary. Need = Need for Approval. Preocc. = Preoccupation with Relationships. Predict = Predictability. Depend = Dependability. Faith = Faith in Person. IOS = Inclusion of other in Self. Selfdiscl. = Self-disclosure. Optim. = Optimism. Pessim. = Pessimism. Rellength = Relationship Length (in months).

### **Relationship-Specific Self-Presentation (H1 and RQ1)**

To examine whether self-presentation to a romantic partner differs from self-presentation to a friend, a two-sample t-test was performed. The test revealed marginal, but non-significant, differences between self-presentation to a romantic partner and self-presentation to a friend,  $t(228) = 1.77$ ,  $p = 0.08$ . Individuals in the romantic partner condition ( $M = 3.63$ ,  $SD = 1.05$ ) reported slightly more self-presentation than did individuals in the friend condition ( $M = 3.37$ ,  $SD = 1.19$ ). To further examine if there are differences in terms of the specific self-presentational style, additional t-tests were performed on the defensive and assertive self-presentation subscales. There were no significant differences between the two conditions in terms of assertive self-presentation,  $t(228) = 1.17$ ,  $p = \text{NS}$ . However, the two conditions differed significantly in terms of defensive self-presentation,  $t(228) = 2.06$ ,  $p = 0.04$ . Individuals in the romantic partner condition ( $M = 4.19$ ,  $SD = 1.30$ ) reported more defensive self-presentation than individuals in the friend condition ( $M = 3.82$ ,  $SD = 1.41$ ).

Analyses were repeated, one set controlling for closeness and one set controlling for relationship length. Adding closeness or relationship length as a predictor did not change the results, as closeness was a non-significant predictor of self-presentation (the sum score), assertive self-presentation and defensive self-presentation. Also, controlling for closeness or relationship length did not improve the predictive ability of relationship type. Thus, hypothesis 1 (and research question 1) was partially supported. In terms of overall self-presentation, the difference between the two conditions was marginal, however, individuals in the romantic partner condition reported more defensive self-presentation than individuals in the friend condition.

## **Contingent Self-Esteem as a Moderator of Self-Presentation (H2).**

To examine whether friendship-contingent self-esteem and relationship contingent self-esteem were moderators of self-presentation, two regression analyses were performed. Friendship-contingent self-esteem was evaluated first. In the regression, friendship-contingent self-esteem, a dummy-coded condition variable (friend condition = 1, and romantic partner condition = 0), and the interaction term of these two variables were entered as predictors, and self-presentation was entered as the outcome variable (see Table 4). The overall model was statistically significant,  $F(3,225) = 17.83$ ,  $p < .0001$ ,  $R^2 = .19$ . The analyses revealed two significant main effects and these were qualified by a significant interaction between survey condition and friendship-contingent self-esteem,  $\beta = 0.48$ ,  $t(225) = 2.78$ ,  $p = .006$  (see Figure 3). This analysis was then repeated for assertive and defensive self-presentation to examine whether the moderation was specific to the self-presentational styles. Both overall regressions were statistically significant (Assertive self-presentation:  $F(3,225) = 11.95$ ,  $p < .0001$ ,  $R^2 = .14$ , and Defensive self-presentation:  $F(3,225) = 19.17$ ,  $p < .0001$ ,  $R^2 = .20$ ). And in both analyses, the interactions were significant (Assertive self-presentation:  $\beta = 0.48$ ,  $t(225) = 2.69$ ,  $p = .008$ , and Defensive self-presentation:  $\beta = 0.43$ ,  $t(225) = 2.54$ ,  $p = .012$ ; see Figure 4 and 5, respectively). Table 4 displays the standardized betas and standard errors of all three analyses. The interactions were graphed using PROC GPLOT SAS code, obtained from the UCLA website (Chapter 7, 2012).

Furthermore, simple slopes were examined to see if the slopes for the two conditions were significantly different from zero. Simple slopes are tested by reversing the dummy-coding of the categorical variable (Cohen, Cohen, West & Aiken, 2003), and substituting the original categorical variable with the new reverse-coded variable. The significance of the



new dummy-coded variable indicates whether the slope for the group coded 1 is significantly different from 0. In all three analyses, reverse-coded condition variable (relationship type) was significant (self-presentation:  $\beta = 0.54$ ,  $t(225) = 3.32$ ,  $p = .001$ ; Assertive self-presentation:  $\beta = 0.50$ ,  $t(225) = 2.98$ ,  $p = .003$ ; Defensive self-presentation:  $\beta = 0.52$ ,  $t(255) = 3.23$ ,  $p = .01$ ). The slope for both the relationship condition and the friendship condition were significantly different from zero.

Table 4.

*Moderation Analyses of Friendship-Contingent Self-Esteem*

	$\beta$	SE	$t$ -value
Self-Presentation			
Intercept	0**	0.24	12.14
Condition	-0.54**	0.36	-3.32
FCSE	0.24**	0.09	2.99
Condition*FCSE	0.48**	0.13	2.78
Assertive Self-presentation			
Intercept	0**	0.23	11.62
Condition	-0.50**	0.334	-2.98
FCSE	0.17*	0.08	2.09
Condition*FCSE	0.48	0.13	2.69
Defensive Self-presentation			
Intercept	0**	0.29	11.22
Condition	-0.52**	0.44	-3.23
FCSE	0.27**	0.11	3.36
Condition*FCSE	0.43*	0.16	2.54

*Note.* \*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$

Figure 3. *Interaction between Relationship Type and Friendship-Contingent Self-Esteem to Predict Self-Presentation.*

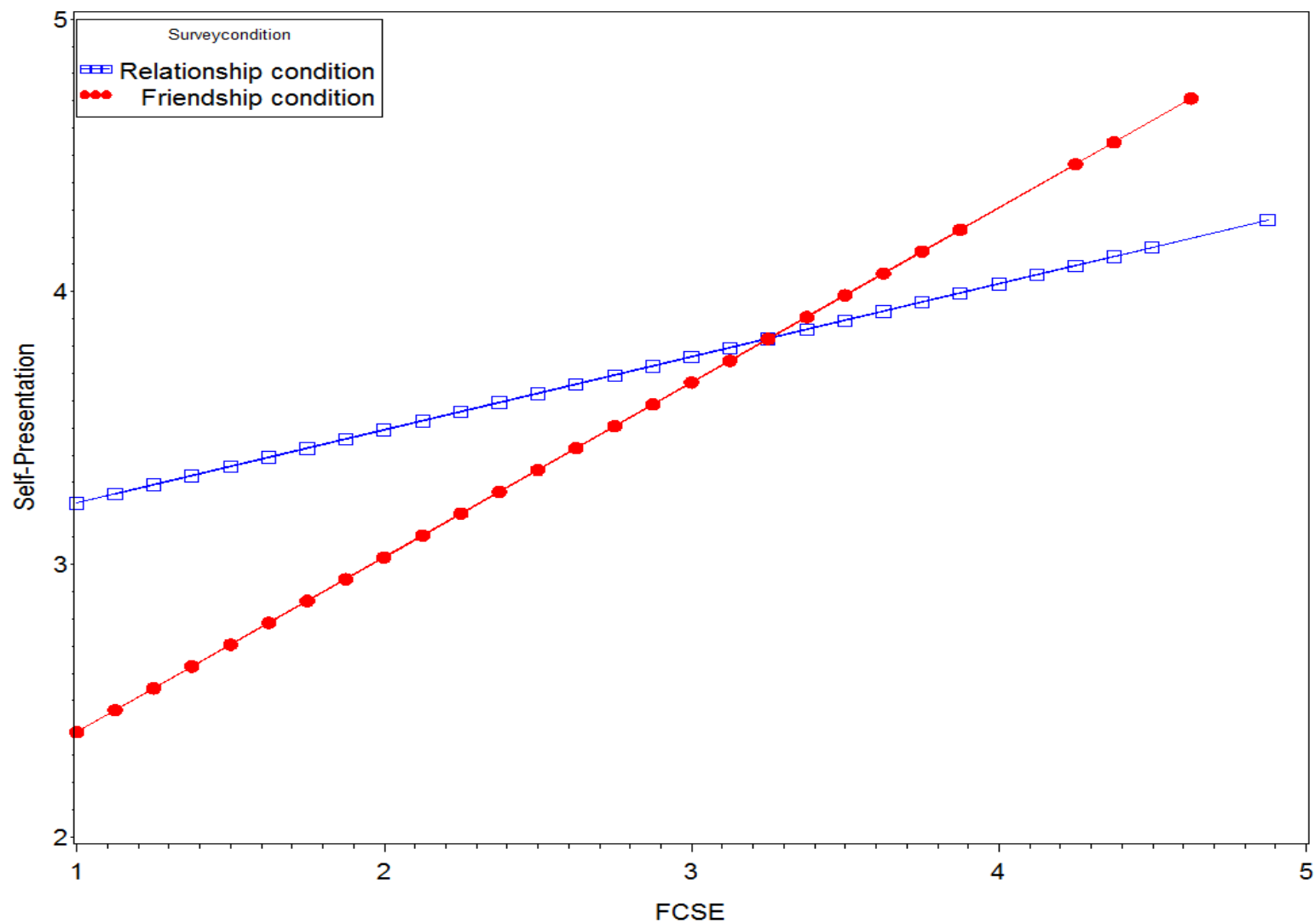


Figure 4. *Interaction between Relationship Type and Friendship-Contingent Self-Esteem to Predict Assertive Self-Presentation.*

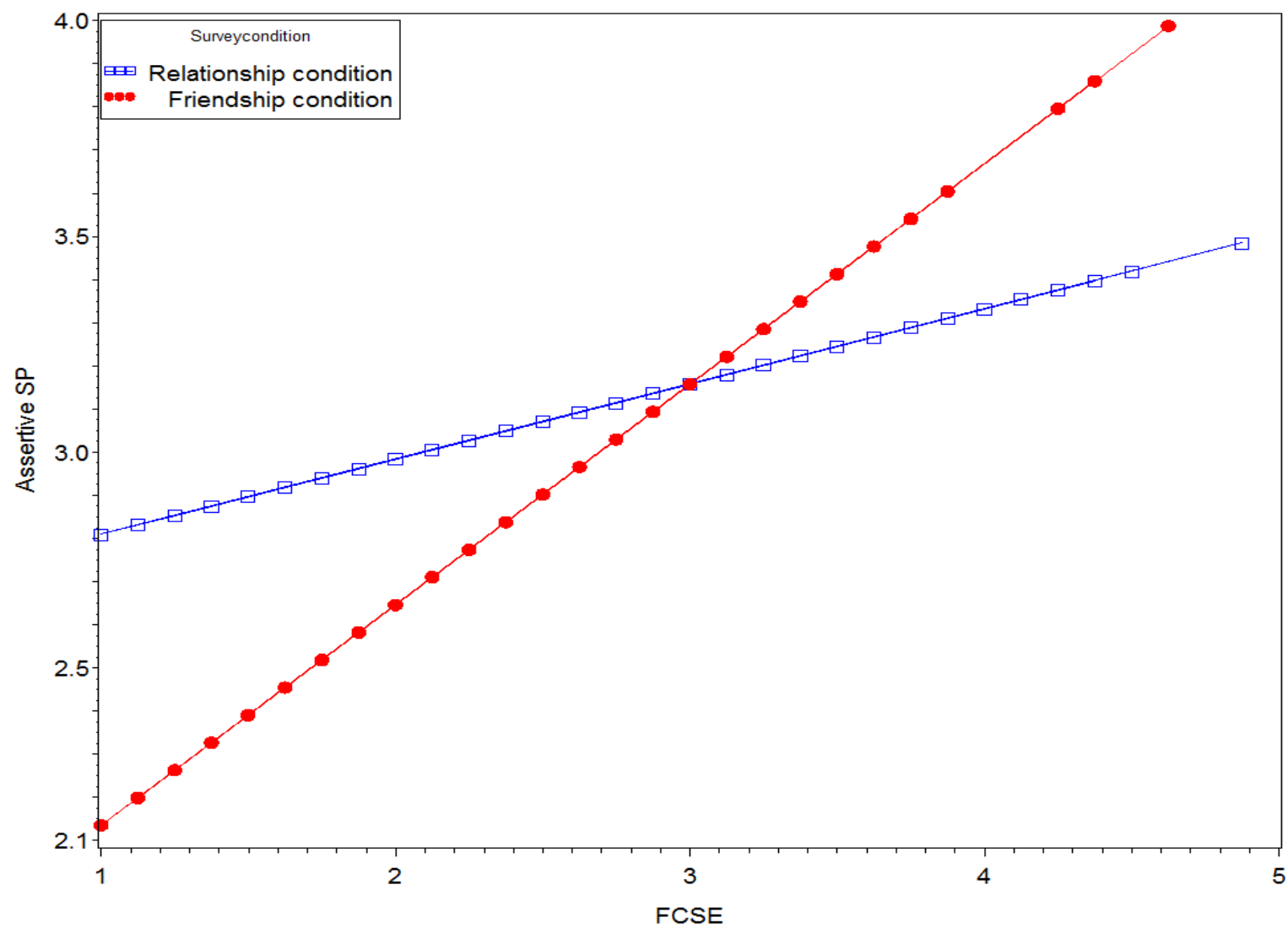
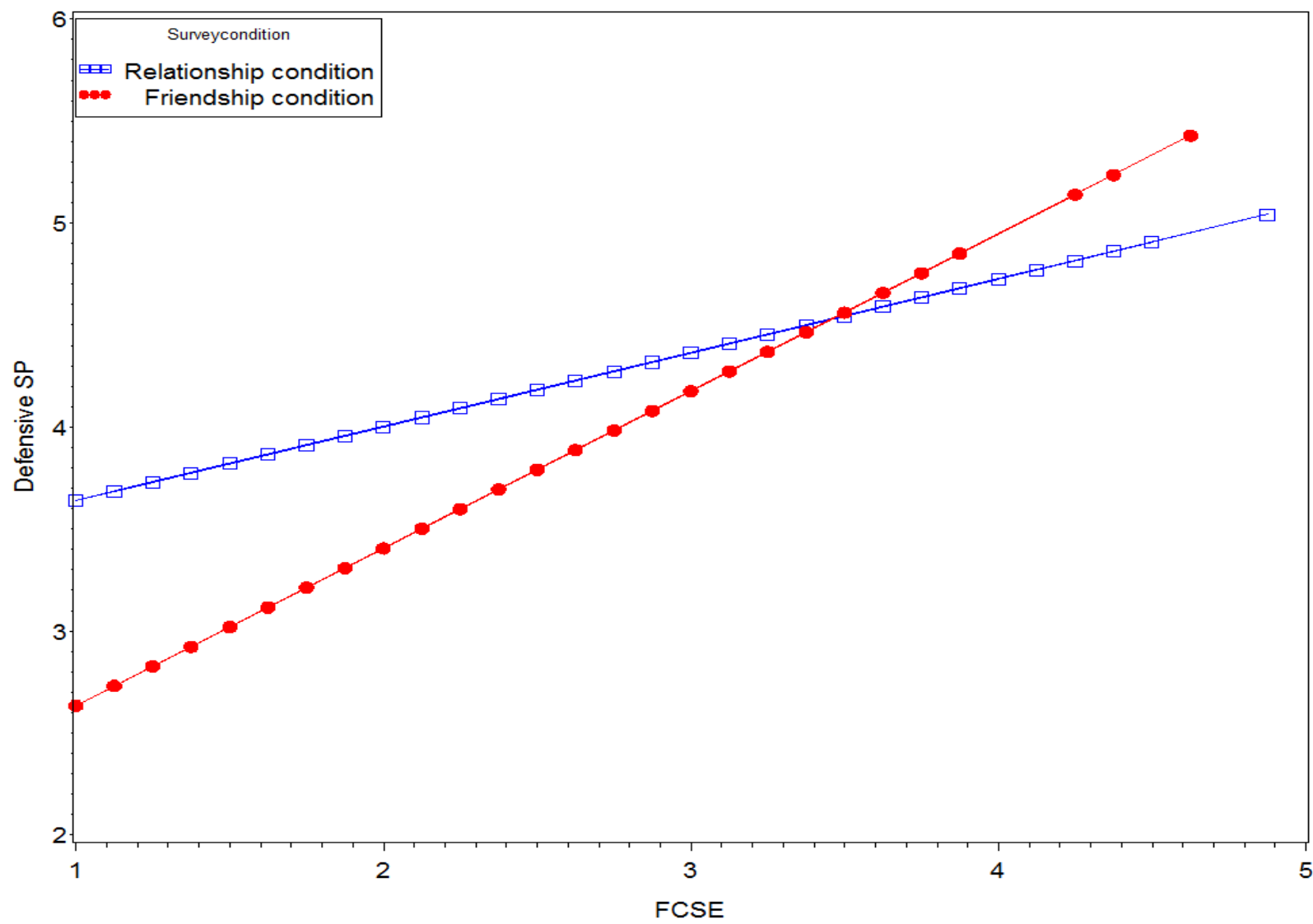


Figure 5. *Interaction between Relationship Type and Friendship-Contingent Self-Esteem to Predict Defensive Self-Presentation.*



Relationship-contingent self-esteem was then evaluated in a second set of regressions similar to those described above. Relationship-contingent self-esteem, a dummy-coded condition variable (friend condition = 0, and romantic partner condition = 1), and the interaction term of these two variables were entered as predictors, and self-presentation was entered as the outcome variable. The overall model for self-presentation was statistically significant,  $F(3,225) = 4.91$ ,  $p = .0025$ ,  $R^2 = .06$ . The analyses however revealed only a significant main effect of RCSE ( $\beta = 0.28$ ,  $t(225) = 2.86$ ,  $p = .005$ ); the main effect of condition and the interaction between condition and RCSE were not significant. This analysis was then repeated for assertive and defensive self-presentation to examine whether moderation would emerge for the two self-presentational styles. Both overall regressions were significant (Assertive self-presentation:  $F(3,225) = 3.02$ ,  $p = .031$ ,  $R^2 = .04$ , and Defensive self-presentation:  $F(3,225) = 5.73$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $R^2 = .07$ ), but yielded interactions that were not significant. Only the main effect of RCSE was significant in all three analyses. Table 5 displays the betas and standard errors of all three analyses. Simple slopes were not tested, because the interactions were not significant.

Thus, hypothesis 2 was partially supported. Specifically, hypothesis 2a (friendship-contingent self-esteem as a moderator) was fully supported, whereas hypothesis 2b (relationship-contingent self-esteem as a moderator) did not receive support.

Table 5.

*Moderation Analyses of Relationship-Contingent Self-Esteem*

	$\beta$	SE	<i>t</i> -value
Self-Presentation			
Intercept	0**	0.49	4.11
Condition	0.37	0.66	1.26
FCSE	0.28**	0.14	2.86
Condition*FCSE	-0.27	0.18	-0.89
Assertive Self-presentation			
Intercept	0**	0.45	4.09
Condition	0.39	0.60	1.32
FCSE	0.25*	0.12	2.53
Condition*FCSE	-0.33	0.17	-1.10
Defensive Self-presentation			
Intercept	0**	0.59	3.74
Condition	0.31	0.79	1.09
FCSE	0.27**	0.16	2.83
Condition*FCSE	-0.19	0.22	-0.64
<i>Note.</i> * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$			

**Intrapersonal predictors (H3)**

To examine whether interpersonal factors (attachment and authenticity) predict self-presentation, regression analyses were performed. Both attachment and authenticity are measured with scales that have multiple subscales. Hence, attachment was first tested as a set of subscales (Model 1), and then authenticity was tested as a set (Model 2). Next, a regression analysis was performed, examining the predictive value of both attachment and authenticity entered into one model. Attachment variables (confidence in self; need for

approval; preoccupation with relationships; discomfort with closeness; relationships as secondary) were entered first, because attachment presumably forms early in a person's life, and hence, may have more long-term effects. Authenticity variables (awareness; unbiased processing; behavior; relational orientation) were entered second, due to its more proximal formation in a person's life (Model 3). And finally, on the recommendation of Cohen, Cohen, Aiken and West (2003), another regression analysis was performed, removing those predictors that did not significantly contribute to the prediction of self-presentation (model 4). In all regressions, survey condition was entered first to control for any differences between target audiences (see Table 6).

Model 1, which examined aspects of attachment as predictors of self-presentation, was statistically significant,  $F(6,222) = 15.51, p < .001, R^2 = .30$ . Specifically, viewing relationships as secondary ( $\beta = 0.27, t(223) = 4.31, p < .0001$ ), needing approval from others ( $\beta = 0.22, t(1) = 2.79, p = .006$ ) and being preoccupied with relationships ( $\beta = 0.27, t(223) = 3.42, p = .0007$ ) significantly predicted engaging in more self-presentation. Reports of confidence in relationships and feeling discomfort in relationships were not significant as predictors of self-presentation.

Model 2, which examined various aspects of authenticity as predictors, was also statistically significant,  $F(5,223) = 7.93, p < .001, R^2 = .15$ . The unbiased processing ( $\beta = -0.30, t(224) = -3.85, p = .0002$ ) and behavioral ( $\beta = -0.24, t(224) = -2.76, p = .006$ ) components of authenticity significantly predicted engaging in less self-presentation.

Model 3, which examined attachment and authenticity jointly as predictors of self-presentation, was again statistically significant,  $F(10,218) = 10.17, p < .0001, R^2 = .32$ .

Adding authenticity to a model that already contained attachment increased the variance accounted for,

$\Delta R^2 = .023$ . In this model, the same predictors as in model 1 were statistically significant.

Reporting seeing relationships as secondary ( $\beta = 0.28$ ,  $t(219) = 4.09$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), needing approval from others ( $\beta = 0.24$ ,  $t(219) = 2.63$ ,  $p = .009$ ), and being preoccupied with relationships



Table 6.

*Regression Analyses for Intra-Personal Predictors (Self-Presentation)*

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	$\beta$	SE	<i>t</i>	$\beta$	SE	<i>t</i>	$\beta$	SE	<i>t</i>	$\beta$	SE	<i>t</i>
Survey condition	-0.15	0.13	-2.55*	-0.14	0.14	-2.18*	-0.13	0.13	-2.32*	-0.12	0.13	-2.13*
Attachment												
Confidence	0.12	0.09	1.71				0.08	0.10	1.10			
Discomfort	-0.00	0.08	-0.02				-0.02	0.09	-0.27			
Relationships as secondary	0.27	0.08	4.31**				0.28	0.08	4.09**	0.29	0.07	4.87**
Need for Approval	0.22	0.08	2.79**				0.23	0.09	2.63**	0.25	0.09	3.05**
Preoccupied	0.27	0.08	3.42**				0.25	0.08	3.08**	0.25	0.08	3.27**
Authenticity												
Awareness				0.09	0.16	1.01	0.17	0.15	1.95	0.14	0.12	2.04*
Processing				-0.30	0.14	-3.85**	-0.10	0.14	-1.26			
Behavior				-0.24	0.19	-2.76**	-0.13	0.18	-1.63			
Relational Orientation				0.06	0.18	0.68	0.08	0.17	0.88			
F-value	15.51			7.93			10.17			18.88		
R <sup>2</sup>	0.30			0.15			0.32			0.30		

*Note.* \*  $p < 0.05$       \*\*  $p < 0.01$

( $\beta = 0.23$ ,  $t(219) = 3.08$ ,  $p = .002$ ) significantly and positively predicted engaging in self-presentation. Of the authenticity predictors, the unbiased processing and behavioral components no-longer significantly predicted self-presentation; in fact, none of the components of authenticity significantly predicts self-presentation. Awareness of oneself ( $\beta = 0.17$ ,  $t(219) = 1.95$ ,  $p = .052$ ) trended towards significance.

For the final analysis, all non-significant predictors were removed, per the recommendation of Cohen et al. (2003). The one marginal predictor from authenticity was retained in the model. Model 4 was statistically significant,  $F(5,223) = 18.88$ ,  $p < .0001$ ,  $R^2 = .30$ . All predictors were statistically significant (see Table 6).

The analyses described above were performed for assertive self-presentation and defensive self-presentation as well. In both cases, the same predictors were significant, resulting in the same final model (see table 7 and 8, respectively). For assertive self-presentation, the final model accounted for 26.8 % of the variance, and for defensive self-presentation, the final model accounted for 27.7 % of the variance.

Thus, hypothesis 3 was supported. Those, who are insecurely attached, reported more self-presentation. Furthermore, those, who reported being low in dispositional authenticity also reported more self-presentation. However, the more one was aware of whether one is authentic with oneself, the more self-presentation was endorsed.

Table 7.

*Regression Analyses for Intra-Personal Predictors (Assertive Self-Presentation)*

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	$\beta$	SE	<i>t</i>	$\beta$	SE	<i>t</i>	$\beta$	SE	<i>t</i>	$\beta$	SE	<i>t</i>
Survey condition	-0.10	0.12	-1.80	-0.09	0.13	-1.34	-0.09	0.11	-1.49	-0.08	0.12	-1.30
Attachment												
Confidence	0.18	0.08	2.44*				0.15	0.09	1.90			
Discomfort	-0.00	0.08	-0.06				-0.02	0.08	-0.33			
Relationships as secondary	0.32	0.07	5.08**				0.32	0.08	4.65**	0.34	0.07	5.68**
Need for Approval	0.20	0.08	2.46*				0.21	0.08	2.45*	0.22	0.08	2.66**
Preoccupied	0.24	0.07	2.97**				0.23	0.07	2.80**	0.20	0.07	2.63**
Authenticity												
Awareness				0.14	0.14	1.50	0.19	0.14	2.19*	0.16	0.11	2.33*
Processing				-0.26	0.12	-3.36**	-0.07	0.13	-0.95			
Behavior				-0.18	0.17	-2.01*	-0.08	0.16	-0.99			
Relational Orientation				-0.03	0.16	-0.29	-0.00	0.16	-0.11			
F-value	13.97			5.58			9.00			16.34		
R <sup>2</sup>	0.27			0.11			0.29			0.27		

*Note.* \*  $p < 0.05$       \*\*  $p < 0.01$

Table 8.

*Regression Analyses for Intra-Personal Predictors (Defensive Self-Presentation)*

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	$\beta$	SE	<i>t</i>	$\beta$	SE	<i>t</i>	$\beta$	SE	<i>t</i>	$\beta$	SE	<i>t</i>
Survey condition	-0.16	0.16	-2.81**	-0.16	0.17	-2.60**	-0.16	0.16	-2.64**	-0.15	0.16	-2.50*
Attachment												
Confidence	0.07	0.11	0.97				0.03	0.12	0.37			
Discomfort	0.00	0.10	0.02				-0.01	0.10	-0.19			
Relationships as secondary	0.21	0.10	3.23**				0.22	0.10	3.19**	0.22	0.09	3.69**
Need for Approval	0.22	0.10	2.72**				0.21	0.11	2.46*	0.25	1.11	2.99**
Preoccupied	0.27	0.10	3.36**				0.24	0.10	2.92**	0.26	0.10	3.37**
Authenticity												
Awareness				0.05	0.19	0.53	0.13	0.18	1.55	0.11	0.15	1.59
Processing				-0.29	0.16	-3.83**	-0.11	0.17	-1.34			
Behavior				-0.26	0.22	-3.05**	-0.16	0.21	-1.92			
Relational Orientation				0.12	0.21	1.36	0.13	0.21	1.53			
F-value	13.85			8.62			9.28			17.08		
R <sup>2</sup>	0.27			0.16			0.30			0.26		

*Note.* \*  $p < 0.05$       \*\*  $p < 0.01$

#### **Interpersonal Predictors of Self-Presentation (H4)**

To examine whether interpersonal characteristics (characteristics of the relationship) are predictive of self-presentation, stepwise multiple regressions were performed to examine increases in the variance accounted for at each step. Predictors were entered based on hypothesized importance in predicting the outcome; closeness was entered first, then trust and then self-disclosure. The scale used to measure trust contains subscales (predictability of person; dependability of person; faith in person) and these were used in the regression analyses. In all regressions, survey condition was entered first to control for the effect of relationship.

The first model, containing closeness, was not significant,  $F(2,227) = 1.65$ ,  $p = ns$ ,  $R^2 = .01$ . Neither survey condition nor closeness significantly predicted self-presentation. The second model was significant,  $F(5,224) = 11.26$ ,  $p < .0001$ ,  $R^2 = .20$ . Only one predictor was significant. Specifically, lack of predictability of person predicted more self-presentation ( $\beta = 0.43$ ,  $t(224) = 6.63$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). And the third model, containing closeness, trust (all three subscales) and self-disclosure as predictors, was also significant,  $F(6, 223) = 9.36$ ,  $p < .0001$ ,  $R^2 = .20$ . Again, only lack of predictability of person was significant,  $\beta = 0.43$ ,  $t(223) = 6.61$ ,  $p < .0001$  (see Table 9).

These analyses were also performed for Assertive and Defensive self-presentation, and similar results were obtained (see Table 9). Again, only models containing lack of predictability of partner as a predictor emerged as significant.

Thus, hypothesis 4 was only partially supported. Whether one perceives that the target person is predictable was the only interpersonal factor that significantly predicted reports of self-presentation.

Table 9.

*Interpersonal Predictors of Self-Presentation*

	Self-Presentation								
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	$\beta$	SE	$t$	$\beta$	SE	$t$	$\beta$	SE	$t$
Condition	-0.12	0.15	-1.81	-0.05	0.15	-0.70	-0.05	0.15	-0.74
Closeness	-0.03	0.05	-0.42	0.04	0.06	0.57	0.04	0.05	0.48
Trust									
Predictability				0.43	0.07	6.63**	0.43	0.07	6.61**
Dependability				-0.08	0.08	-0.84	-0.08	0.09	-0.87
Faith in Person				0.05	0.09	0.53	0.04	0.10	0.36
Self-disclosure							0.03	0.13	0.36
R <sup>2</sup>	0.01			0.20			0.20		
	Assertive								
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	$\beta$	SE	$t$	$\beta$	SE	$t$	$\beta$	SE	$t$
Condition	-0.09	0.14	-1.30	-0.01	0.14	-0.22	-0.02	0.14	-0.25
Closeness	-0.06	0.04	-0.89	0.04	0.05	0.61	0.04	0.05	0.52
Trust									
Predictability				0.40	0.07	6.28**	0.40	0.07	6.26**
Dependability				-0.12	0.08	-1.28	-0.12	0.08	-1.31
Faith in Person				0.01	0.08	0.15	0.00	0.09	0.02
Self-disclosure							0.03	0.12	0.31
R <sup>2</sup>	0.01			0.20			0.20		
	Defensive								
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	$\beta$	SE	$t$	$\beta$	SE	$t$	$\beta$	SE	$t$
Condition	-0.14	0.18	-2.03*	-0.07	0.19	-0.98	-0.07	0.19	-1.01
Closeness	-0.00	0.06	-0.02	0.04	0.06	0.49	0.03	0.07	0.40
Trust									
Predictability				0.40	0.09	6.19**	0.40	0.09	6.17**
Dependability				-0.04	0.10	-0.42	-0.04	0.10	-0.46
Faith In person				0.08	0.12	0.75	0.06	0.12	0.56
Self-disclosure							0.03	0.16	0.35
R <sup>2</sup>	0.02			0.17			0.17		

*Note.* \*  $p < 0.05$       \*\*  $p < 0.001$

## **Life Orientations As Predictors of Self-Presentation (RQ2)**

To examine whether a person's life orientation (that is, optimistic or pessimistic view of life) is predictive of self-presentational styles over and above contingent self-esteem, several stepwise multiple regressions were performed. First, it was examined whether life orientation is predictive of self-presentational styles. Secondly, it was examined whether life orientation remained predictive of self-presentational styles, when adding contingent self-esteem to the regression. In all regressions, survey condition was entered into the model first to control for the effect of relationship.

To examine the first question, regression analyses were performed, containing life orientations as predictors. Optimism was not predictive of assertive self-presentation, nor was it predictive of defensive self-presentation. Pessimism was predictive of assertive self-presentation ( $\beta = 0.26$ ,  $t(228) = 3.98$ ,  $p < .001$ ) as well as defensive self-presentation ( $\beta = 0.33$ ,  $t(228) = 5.34$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In short, only those with a pessimistic view of life appear to engage in self-presentation, whether assertive or defensive.

To examine the second question, contingent self-esteem was added to the model. Betas and the incremental changes in the variance accounted for ( $R^2$ ) were examined for significance. Optimism remained non-significant, when contingent self-esteem was added to the analyses. Pessimism was predictive of assertive self-presentation over and above friendship-contingent self-esteem ( $\Delta R^2 = .027$ ), and relationship-contingent self-esteem ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.049$ ) (see Table 10 for full model information). Pessimism was also predictive of defensive self-presentation over and above friendship-contingent self-esteem ( $\Delta R^2 = .046$ ), and relationship-contingent self-esteem ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.082$ ) (see Table 11 for full model

information). Pessimism was positively related to engaging in defensive self-presentation and assertive self-presentation, even over and above contingent self-esteem.

Table 10.

*Pessimism as a Predictor of Assertive Self-Presentation (Over and Above Contingent SE)*

FCSE									
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	$\beta$	SE	$t$	$\beta$	SE	$t$	$\beta$	SE	$t$
Condition	-0.08	0.13	-1.30	-0.08	0.13	-1.27	-0.09	0.13	-1.38
FCSE				0.32	0.06	5.14**	0.27	0.07	4.13**
Pessimism	0.26	0.07	3.98**				0.17	0.07	2.62**
R <sup>2</sup>	0.07			0.11			0.14		
RCSE									
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	$\beta$	SE	$t$	$\beta$	SE	$t$	$\beta$	SE	$t$
Condition	-0.08	0.13	-1.30	-0.07	0.13	-1.12	-0.08	0.13	-1.29
RCSE				0.17	0.08	2.57*	0.11	0.08	1.74
Pessimism	0.26	0.07	3.98**				0.23	0.07	3.48**
R <sup>2</sup>	0.07			0.03			0.08		
<i>Note.</i> * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$									



Table 11.

*Pessimism as a Predictor of Defensive Self-Presentation (Over and Above Contingent SE)*

	FCSE								
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	$\beta$	SE	$t$	$\beta$	SE	$t$	$\beta$	SE	$t$
Condition	-0.15	0.17	-2.35**	-0.14	0.16	-2.34**	-0.15	0.16	-2.54*
FCSE				0.40	0.08	6.71**	0.33	0.08	5.39**
Pessimism	0.33	0.09	5.34**				0.23	0.09	3.68**
R <sup>2</sup>	0.13			0.18			0.23		

	RCSE								
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	$\beta$	SE	$t$	$\beta$	SE	$t$	$\beta$	SE	$t$
Condition	-0.15	0.17	-2.35*	-0.13	0.17	-2.07*	-0.15	0.17	-2.36*
RCSE				0.23	0.11	3.54**	0.16	0.1	2.50*
Pessimism	0.33	0.09	5.34**				0.29	0.09	4.66**
R <sup>2</sup>	0.13			0.07			0.15		

*Note.* \*  $p < 0.05$       \*\*  $p < 0.01$

## Discussion

The purpose of the research was to examine the extent to which the relationship with the target audience matters in self-presentational efforts. Furthermore, the study sought to examine whether self-presentation is influenced by a number of other factors, such as authenticity striving, level of self-disclosure, felt closeness, contingent self-esteem and attachment style, as those are important in shaping individuals' styles of communicating and relating to other individuals.

The results of this study show that the processes behind self-presentation are complicated. There were no differences in self-presentation to friends versus romantic partners in terms of overall self-presentation, even when controlling for closeness and length

of relationship. Follow-up analyses revealed that differences in assertive self-presentation were not significant, but differences in defensive self-presentation were, such that individuals reported more defensive self-presentation in the romantic partner condition than in the friend condition. This suggests that people may be more invested in managing the impressions of their romantic partner than those of their friends and that these impressions are formed by means of defensive self-presentation (avoiding to be seen negatively, by excusing, justifying, apologizing etc.). In short, it appears that individuals wish to maintain their good standing with their romantic partner. This finding is interesting in the light of previous research. One study found that individuals presented themselves less when interacting with people whom they knew well (Tice, et al. 1995). Another study, however, found that individuals will attempt to highlight positive traits when interacting with people that they like and have invested relationships with (Leary, & Allen, 2011).

As research has previously suggested, self-esteem plays an important role in the extent to which individuals engage in self-presentation. The focus has primarily been on general measures of self-esteem (e.g. Rosenberg's general self-esteem measure). However, with the recent development of friendship-contingent self-esteem (Cambron et al., 2010) and relationship-contingent self-esteem (Knee et al., 2008) measures, this study expands on previous research by examining the importance of relationship type contingent self-esteem. There was a significant main effect of both (romantic) relationship-contingent and friendship-contingent self-esteem predicting self-presentation; the more individuals endorsed having contingent self-esteem, the more they endorsed engaging in self-presentation. Interestingly, only friendship-contingent self-esteem significantly interacted with the relationship type; for those in the friend condition, having friendship-contingent self-esteem

was important to self-presentation to a friend. On the other hand, for those in the romantic partner condition, (romantic) relationship-contingent self-esteem did not interact with relationship type. In sum, it appears that friendship-contingent self-esteem is an important predictor of self-presentation, whereas in romantic relationships, contingent self-esteem may be less important to self-presentation. These findings suggest that an overall relationship-based contingent self-esteem may be important overall to self-presentation, whereas relationship-specific self-esteem (relationship versus friendship) may be less important. That is, if a person's self-esteem depends on the extent to which he feels that his relationships are going well, it does not matter if he is interacting with a friend or a romantic partner, he is more likely to attempt to manage the impression he makes.

Interestingly, a person's life orientation (that is, whether he is a pessimist or an optimist) may be more important to self-presentation than his self-esteem levels. Only those who endorsed a negative life orientation (that is, those that are pessimistic) reported engaging in self-presentation. Indeed, negative life orientation was predictive of self-presentation over and above contingent self-esteem. This finding suggests that a person's general affective orientation (whether optimistic or pessimistic) may be more important in determining a person's self-presentational behavior than the extent to which their self-esteem is contingent on their relationships. A large body of literature on depressive realism has found that those who are not depressed hold positive illusions, whereas those who are depressed hold more realistic views of themselves (Taylor, & Brown, 1988). Thus, according to this theoretical perspective, one would hypothesize that those who are optimistic, would engage in more self-presentation, and those who are pessimistic would not. However, the findings from this study do not support such a hypothesis.

Self-esteem is not the only intrapersonal factor that plays a role in the extent to which one engages in self-presentation. Several aspects of insecure attachment were strongly related to self-presentation. Specifically, viewing relationships as secondary (avoidant attachment), feeling a need for approval from others and being preoccupied with relationships (both features of anxious attachment) strongly and significantly predicted engaging in self-presentation (overall, as well as both assertive and defensive self-presentation). Individuals who are avoidantly attached may engage in self-presentation as a means of self-protection; their main goal may be one of self-verification or assessment rather than impression management (Baumeister, 1985). Anxiously attached individuals, on the other hand, are concerned with the relationship in their lives (Feeney et al, 1994), and may engage in self-presentation as a means of securing the positive regard of others (Arkin, 1981).

The relationship between authenticity and self-presentation appears to be a complicated one as well. Of the 4 components composing the concept of authenticity, unbiased processing and behavior plays a primary role in predicting self-presentation. That is, being objective and authentic about self-relevant information (e.g. positive and negative aspects of the self) and behaving in accordance with one's attitudes, preferences and needs leads to less self-presentation. It may be that such individuals feel that by acting in accordance with what they know about themselves, their actions will reflect the desired impression. It may also be that such individuals do not feel the need to engage in impression management, because they feel secure in who they are. However, when combined with attachment, awareness was the only component of authenticity that uniquely predicted self-presentation. Being aware of one's thoughts, feelings, and motives, trusting those and desiring to learn more about them may provide the basis for being authentic with oneself and

with other. Interestingly, awareness was positively associated with self-presentation; the more self-aware one is, the more likely one is to engage in self-presentation. A potential explanation for this somewhat unexpected finding could be that individuals who are aware of their own thoughts and feeling are also more attuned to how others view them. Hence, they may be more likely to attempt to manage those impressions such that others hold positive impressions of them.

As self-presentation is an interpersonal behavior, one would expect that factors related to the relationship should be predictive of self-presentation. However, neither closeness nor self-disclosure was predictive of self-presentation. Only one aspect of trust was related to self-presentation; the extent to which individuals perceived a lack of predictability in the person was positively associated with self-presentation. Feeling uncertain about how another person thinks or will react may lead individuals to engage in more self-presentation in an attempt display their most favorable side and secure the other person's liking. The self-presentation may also serve the goal of guiding the other person's behavior (Arkin, 1981) in order to make their partner less unpredictable.

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

Although this study represents an important step in furthering our understanding of self-presentation, and the processes behind it, there are several limitations that should be considered.

For one, the design was a between subjects design. Participants were assigned to only one condition, self-presenting to either romantic partner or friend. By using a between-subjects design, one is unable to see whether self-presentation to different target audiences differ within person.

Furthermore, the design was cross-sectional. Using cross-sectional designs, one is unable to examine these processes over time. Cross-sectional data only examines relationships between variables, and does not provide causal inference. Future research should implement a longitudinal paradigm, as such paradigms would be able to shed light on the trajectory of self-presentation within different relationships in terms of various individual and relational predictors and outcomes.

In a related vein, the study employed self-report measures, which are pervious to social desirable responding. Participants may act differently than they say they do. For instance, individuals may not have endorsed such items as “I threaten my partner/friend when I think it will help me get what I want from him/her”, as such behaviors are socially frowned upon.

Future research should attempt to amend for these limitations. For instance, a within-subjects paradigm could be employed to examine whether self-presentation to different target persons differ within the person. Additionally, an observational study paradigm could be employed to amend for the weakness of self-report measure. By bringing dyads (friends and romantic partners) into the lab and having them discuss previous events, one is able to code the behaviors of the participants as they happen in naturalistic interactions. However, currently no such coding scheme exists.

Furthermore, as self-presentation is an interpersonal behavior, future studies should examine the reciprocal nature of self-presentation. For instance, the actor-partner interdependence model could be used to examine actor and partner effects of self-presentation on various relationship outcomes, as well as their influence on the other person's self-presentation. And finally, a potentially valuable research avenue would be to examine

the relationship between a person's self-concept (in terms of personality characteristic, skills, achievements and preferred activities) and his self-presentational style.

## **Conclusion**

The findings from this study point towards a complicated view of the processes underlying self-presentation to different target audiences. In terms of intrapersonal factors influencing self-presentation, it appears that individuals who endorse a negative life orientation, contingent self-esteem, and insecure attachment are more likely to engage in self-presentation. From an interpersonal perspective, only predictability of the person (or rather, the lack thereof) appears to influence self-presentation in the direction of more self-presentation when one cannot anticipate the other person's thoughts or actions. This study provides an important first step towards understanding self-presentation within personal relationships. Building from these results, we should be able to further elucidate intrapersonal and interpersonal outcomes of self-presentation.

## Appendix A

### Introductory Instructions

#### **Romantic partner**

Please think of current/previous our romantic partner.

What is the name of the person, of whom you are thinking:

---

How long have you known this person:

---

How long have you been in a relationship with this person:

---

#### **Friend/close friend**

Please think of a person, whom you know very well. This person is someone you would call a friend, or a close friend.

What is the name of the person, of whom you are thinking:

---

How long have you known this person:

---

How long have you been friends with this person: -

---



## Appendix B

### Self-presentation Tactics Scale

On the following pages you will be asked a number of questions dealing with your perceptions of yourself. In responding to these items, please think of how you act when you are with your romantic partner. Please read the instructions carefully and try to respond to all the items as openly and honestly as possible. There are no right or wrong answers. In responding to the items, please circle the number on the scale which most closely represents your behavior.

Very infrequently 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Very frequently

#### **Defensive Self-presentation**

##### **Excuse**

- 39. With my partner/friend, when I am blamed for something, I make excuses.
- 48. With my partner/friend, I make up excuses for poor performance.
- 36. With my partner/friend, when things go wrong, I explain why I am not responsible.
- 62. To avoid being blamed, I let my partner/friend know that I did not intend any harm.
- 35. I try to convince my partner/friend that I am not responsible for negative events.

##### **Justification**

- 44. I offer socially acceptable reasons to justify behavior that my partner/friend might not like.
- 64. After a negative action, I try to make my partner/friend understand that if he/she had been in my position he/she would have done the same thing.
- 61. I offer good reasons for my behavior no matter how bad it may seem to my partner/friend.
- 45. When my partner/friend views my behavior as negative, I offer explanations so that he/she will understand that my behavior was justified.
- 05. I justify my behavior to reduce negative reactions from my partner/friend.

**Disclaimer**

04. I offer explanations before doing something that my partner/friend might think is wrong.
17. I try to get the approval of my partner/friend before doing something they might perceive negatively.
10. When I believe I will not perform well, I offer excuses to my partner/friend beforehand.
25. I justify beforehand actions my partner/friend may not like.
49. I offer an excuse to my partner/friend for possibly not performing well before taking a very difficult test.

**Self-handicapping**

58. Anxiety interferes with my performances.

*Anxiety interferes with my interactions with my partner/friend.*

53. I do not prepare well enough for exams because I get too involved in social activities.

*My relationship with my partner/friend is not going very well, because I get too involved with other people, or my work.*

57. I put obstacles in the way of my own success.

*I put obstacles in the way of my own relationship with my partner/friend.*

12. I get sick when under a lot of pressure to do well.

*I get sick when under a lot of pressure to do as my partner/friend to do something the way my partner/friend wants me to do it.*

42. Poor health has been responsible for my getting mediocre grades in school.

*Poor health has been responsible for me and my partner/friend having a less than close relationship*

**Apology**

13. I apologize to my partner/friend when I have done something wrong.
29. I accept blame in front of my partner/friend for bad behavior when it is clearly my fault.
50. I express remorse and guilt to my partner/friend when I do something wrong.
18. I try to make up for any harm I have done to my partner/friend.
03. If I harm my partner/friend, I apologize and promise not to do it again.

## **Assertive Self-presentation**

### **Ingratiation**

- 52. When I want something from my partner/friend, I try to look good.
- 38. I tell my partner/friend about my positive qualities.
- 11. I use flattery to win the favor of my partner/friend.
- 63. I compliment my partner/friend to get him/her on my side.
- 09. I express the same attitudes as my partner/friend so he/she will accept me.
- 33. I express opinions that my partner/friend people will like.
- 28. I do favors for my partner/friend in order to get him/her to like me.
- 43. I help my partner/friend so he/she will help me.

### **Intimidation**

- 51. I intimidate my partner/friend.
- 01. I behave in ways that make my partner/friend afraid of me.
- 59. I do things to make my partner/friend afraid of me so that he/she will do what I want.
- 02. I use my size and strength to influence my partner/friend when I need to.
- 32. I threaten my partner/friend when I think it will help me get what I want from him/her.

### **Supplication**

- 08. I ask my partner/friend to help me.
- 54. I tell my partner/friend he/she is stronger or more competent than me in order to get him/her to do things for me.
- 14. I lead my partner/friend to believe that I cannot do something in order to get help.
- 31. I hesitate and hope my partner/friend will take responsibility for group tasks.
- 07. I use my weaknesses to get sympathy from my partner/friend.

### **Entitlement**

- 55. With my partner/friend, I claim credit for doing things I did not do.
- 40. I point out the positive things I do which my partner/friend people fail to notice.
- 23. I tell my partner/friend about my positive accomplishments.
- 46. When working on a project with my partner/friend I make my contribution seem greater than it is.
- 22. When telling my partner/friend about past events, I claim more credit for doing positive things than was warranted by the actual events.

**Enhancement**

- 60. When I succeed at a task, I emphasize to my partner/friend how important the task was.
- 30. When talking to my partner/friend I exaggerate the value of my accomplishments.
- 06. I tell my partner/friend when I do well at tasks my partner/friend find difficult.
- 19. In telling my partner/friend about things that I own, I also tell him/her of their value.
- 41. I do correct my partner/friend when he/she underestimate the value of gifts that I give to him/her.

**Blasting**

- 56. When talking to my partner/friend I make negative statements about people belonging to rival groups.
- 27. When talking to my partner/friend, I put others down in order to make myself look better.
- 34. When talking to my partner/friend, I say negative things about unpopular groups.
- 20. When talking to my partner/friend, I point out the incorrect positions of the opposing political party.
- 47. When talking to my partner/friend, I exaggerate the negative qualities of people who compete with me.

**Exemplification**

- 24. I try to set an example for my partner/friend to follow.
- 15. I try to serve as a model for how my partner/friend should behave.
- 26. I try to get my partner/friend to act in the same positive way I do.
- 37. I act in ways I think my partner/friend should act.
- 21. I try to induce imitation my partner/friend by serving as a positive example.

**Note.** Italized items represent items that were re-worded for the study.

## Appendix C

### Relationship-Contingent Self-Esteem

Listed below are a number of statements concerning how you feel about relationships.

Please read each statement carefully and consider the extent to which you think it is like you.

There are no right or wrong answers, so please answer as honestly as you can. Indicate the extent to which each statement is true of you according to the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all like me		Somewhat like me		Very much like me

1. I feel better about myself when it seems like my partner and I are getting along.
2. I feel better about myself when it seems like my partner and I are emotionally connected.
3. An important measure of my self-worth is how successful my relationship is.
4. My feelings of self-worth are based on how well things are going in my relationship.
5. When my relationship is going well, I feel better about myself overall.
6. If my relationship were to end tomorrow, I would not let it affect how I feel about myself.(r)
7. My self-worth is unaffected when things go wrong in my relationship. (r)
8. When my partner and I fight, I feel bad about myself in general.
9. When my relationship is going bad, my feelings of self-worth remain unaffected. (r)
10. I feel better about myself when others tell me that my partner and I have a good relationship.
11. When my partner criticizes me or seems disappointed in me, it makes me feel really bad.

## Appendix D

### Friendship-Contingent Self-Esteem

Listed below are a number of statements concerning how you feel about friendships. Please read each statement carefully and consider the extent to which you think it is like you. There are no right or wrong answers, so please answer as honestly as you can. Indicate the extent to which each statement is true of you according to the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
Very little Like me				Very much like me

1. I only feel good about myself when things are going well in my friendships.
2. My overall feelings about myself are heavily influenced by how much my friends like me.
3. My feelings about myself are affected when my friendships are criticized.
4. How I feel about myself depends on how well I am getting along with my friends.
5. I can't feel good about myself if I feel rejected by my friends.
6. When my friends and I fight, I feel bad about myself in general.
7. It really affects the way I feel about myself when friendships fall apart.
8. When my friends and I have disagreements, I feel bad about myself.

## Appendix E

### The Authenticity Inventory

The following measure has a series of statements that involve people's perceptions about themselves. There are not right or wrong responses, so please answer honestly. Respond to each statement by writing the number from the scale below, which you feel most accurately characterizes your response to the statement.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

1. I am often confused about my feelings.
2. I frequently pretend to enjoy something when in actuality I really don't.
3. For better or for worse I am aware of who I truly am.
4. I understand why I believe the things I do about myself.
5. I want people with whom I am close to understand my strengths.
6. I actively try to understand which of my self-aspects fit together to form my core- or true-self.
7. I am very uncomfortable objectively considering my limitations and shortcomings.
8. I've often used my silence or head-nodding to convey agreement with someone else's statement or position even though I really disagree.
9. I have a very good understanding of why I do the things I do.
10. I am willing to change myself for others if the reward is desirable enough.
11. I find it easy to pretend to be something other than my true-self.
12. I want people with whom I am close to understand my weaknesses.
13. I find it very difficult to critically assess myself.
14. I am not in touch with my deepest thoughts and feelings.
15. I make it a point to express to close others how much I truly care for them.

16. I tend to have difficulty accepting my personal faults, so I try to cast them in a more positive way.
17. I tend to idealize close others rather than objectively see them as they truly are.
18. If asked, people I am close to can accurately describe what kind of person I am.
19. I prefer to ignore my darkest thoughts and feelings.
20. I am aware of when I am not being my true-self.
21. I am able to distinguish those self-aspects that are important to my core-or true-self from those that are unimportant.
22. People close to me would be shocked or surprised if they discovered what I keep inside me.
23. It is important for me to understand my close others' needs and desires.
24. I want close others to understand the real me rather than just my public persona or "image."
25. I try to act in a manner that is consistent with my personally held values, even if others criticize or reject me for doing so.
26. If a close other and I are in disagreement I would rather ignore the issue than constructively work it out.
27. I've often done things that I don't want to do merely not to disappoint people.
28. I find that my behavior typically expresses my values.
29. I actively attempt to understand myself as best as possible.
30. I'd rather feel good about myself than objectively assess my personal limitations and shortcomings.
31. I find that my behavior typically expresses my personal needs and desires.
32. I rarely if ever, put on a "false face" for others to see.
33. I spend a lot of energy pursuing goals that are very important to other people even though



they are unimportant to me.

34. I frequently am not in touch with what's important to me.

35. I try to block out any unpleasant feelings I might have about myself.

36. I often question whether I really know what I want to accomplish in my lifetime.

37. I often find that I am overly critical about myself.

38. I am in touch with my motives and desires.

39. I often deny the validity of any compliments that I receive.

40. In general, I place a good deal of importance on people I am close to understanding who I truly am.

41. I find it difficult to embrace and feel good about the things I have accomplished.

42. If someone points out or focuses on one of my shortcomings I quickly try to block it out of

my mind and forget it.

43. The people I am close to can count on me being who I am regardless of what setting we are

in.

44. My openness and honesty in close relationships are extremely important to me.

45. I am willing to endure negative consequences by expressing my true beliefs about things.

## Appendix F

### Attachment Style Questionnaire

Show how much you agree with each of the following items by rating them on this scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6
Totally Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree	Totally Agree

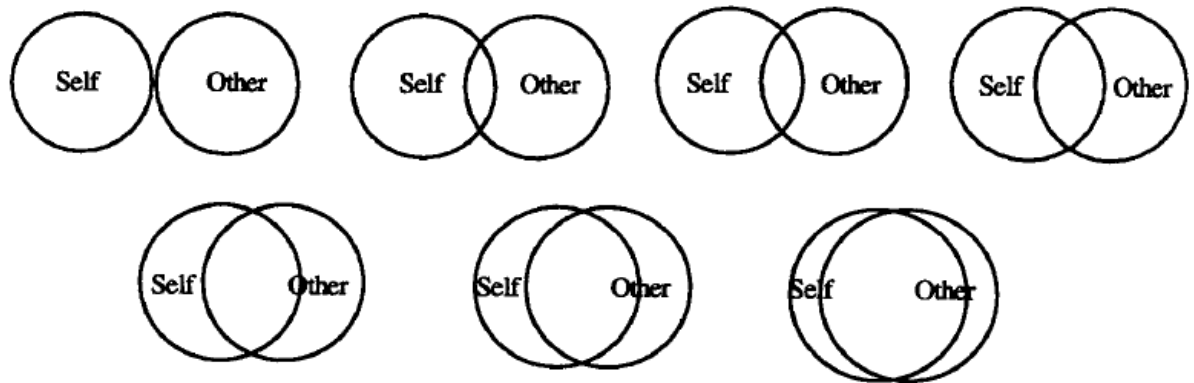
1. Overall, I am a worthwhile person.
2. I am easier to get to know than most people.
3. I feel confident that other people will be there for me when I need them.
4. I prefer to depend on myself rather than other people.
5. I prefer to keep to myself.
6. To ask for help is to admit that you're a failure.
7. People's worth should be judged by what they achieve.
8. Achieving things is more important than building relationships.
9. Doing your best is more important than getting on with others
10. If you've got a job to do, you should do it no matter who gets hurt.
11. It's important to me that others like me.
12. It's important to me to avoid doing things that others won't like.
13. I find it hard to make a decision unless I know what other people think.
14. My relationships with others are generally superficial.
15. 50metimes I think I am no good at all.
16. I find it hard to trust other people.

17. I find it difficult to depend on others.
18. I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like.
19. I find it relatively easy to get close to other people.
20. I find it easy to trust others. (R)
21. I feel comfortable depending on other people. (R)
22. I worry that others won't care about me as much as I care about them.
23. I worry about people getting too close.
24. I worry that I won't measure up to other people.
25. I have mixed feelings about being close to others.
26. While I want to get close to others, I feel uneasy about it.
27. I wonder why people would want to be involved with me.
28. It's very important to me to have a close relationship.
29. I worry a lot about my relationships.
30. I wonder how I would cope without someone to love me.
31. I feel confident about relating to others.
32. I often feel left out or alone.
33. I often worry that I do not really fit in with other people. (R)
34. Other people have their own problems, so I don't bother them with mine.
35. When I talk over my problems with others, I generally feel ashamed or foolish.
36. I am too busy with other activities to put much time into relationships.
37. If something is bothering me, others are generally aware and concerned.
38. I am confident that other people will like and respect me.
39. I get frustrated when others are not available when I need them.
40. Other people often disappoint me.

## Appendix G

### Inclusion of Other in Self Scale

Below are 7 pictures that describe Compared to all the people you know, please indicate which picture best describe how close you feel to your romantic partner/friend:



## Appendix H

### Trust in Close Relationships

Read each of the following statements and decide whether it is true of your beliefs about your partner/friend. Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree by choosing the appropriate response from the scale.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly disagree						Strongly
agree						

1. My partner/friend has proven to be trustworthy and I am willing to let him/her engage in activities which other partners/friends find too threatening. (D)
2. Even when I don't know how my partner/friend will react, I feel comfortable telling him/her anything about myself; even those things of which I am ashamed. (F)
3. Though times may change and the future is uncertain; I know my partner/friend will always be ready and willing to offer me strength and support. (F)
- 4\*. I am never certain that my partner/friend won't do something that I dislike or will embarrass me. (P)
- 5\*. My partner/friend is very unpredictable. I never know how he/she is going to act from one day to the next. (P)
- 6\*. I feel very uncomfortable when my partner/friend has to make decisions which will affect me personally. (P)
7. I have found that my partner/friend is unusually dependable, especially when it comes to things which are important to me. (D)
8. My partner/friend behaves in a very consistent manner. (P)

9. Whenever we have to make an important decision in a situation we have never encountered before, I know my partner/friend will be concerned about my welfare. (F)
10. Even if I have no reason to expect my partner/friend to share things with me, I still feel certain that he/she will. (F)
11. I can rely on my partner/friend to react in a positive way when I expose my weaknesses to him/her. (F)
12. When I share my problems with my partner/friend, I know he/she will respond in a loving way even before I say anything. (F)
13. I am certain that my partner/friend would not cheat on me/betray me, even if the opportunity arose and there was no chance that he/she would get caught. (D)
- 14\*. I sometimes avoid my partner/friend because he/she is unpredictable and I fear saying or doing something which might create conflict. (P)
15. I can rely on my partner/friend to keep the promises he/she makes to me. (D)
16. When I am with my partner/friend I feel secure in facing unknown new situations. (F)
17. Even when my partner/friend makes excuses which sound rather unlikely, I am confident that he/she is telling the truth. (D)

\*Denotes reserve-scoring

## Appendix I

### Self-disclosure index

Listed below are a number of statements concerning how much you tell your romantic partner/friend about yourself. Please read each statement carefully and consider the extent to which you think you talk about this with your partner/friend. There are no right or wrong answers, so please answer as honestly as you can. Indicate the extent to which each statement is true of you according to the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
Discuss not at all completely				Discuss fully and

1. My personal habits
2. Things I have done which I feel guilty about
3. Things I wouldn't do in public
4. My deepest feelings
5. What I like and dislike about myself
6. What is important to me in life
7. What makes me the person I am
8. My worst fears
9. Things I have done which I am proud of
10. My close relationships with other people

## Appendix J

### Life orientation scale – revised

Listed below are a number of statements dealing with your perceptions of yourself. Please read each statement carefully and consider the extent to which you think it is like you. There are no right or wrong answers, so please answer as honestly as you can. Indicate the extent to which each statement is true of you according to the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

1. In uncertain times, I usually expect the best.
2. It's easy for me to relax. (Filler item)
3. If something can go wrong for me, it will. (r)
4. I'm always optimistic about my future.
5. I enjoy my friends a lot. (Filler item)
6. It's important for me to keep busy. (Filler item)
7. I hardly ever expect things to go my way. (r)
8. I don't get upset too easily. (Filler item)
9. I rarely count on good things happening to me. (r)
10. Overall, I expect more good things to happen to me than bad.



## Appendix K

### Demographics

Please indicate your gender

- a) Male
- b) Female

Please indicate your age: \_\_\_\_\_

Which of the following terms best describes your ethnicity?

- a. African-American/Black
- b. Asian/Pacific Islander
- c. Hispanic/Latino
- d. Caucasian
- e. Native American
- f. Middle Eastern
- g. Multi-racial
- h. Other (please indicate) \_\_\_\_\_

What is your sexual orientation?

- a. Heterosexual
- b. Homosexual
- c. Bisexual
- d. Asexual

Please indicate your current relationship status:

- a. Single
- b. Casually Dating
- c. Serious Relationship
- d. Engaged
- e. Married
- f. Divorced
- g. Widowed

How long have you been with your partner? (open-ended)

Years: \_\_\_\_\_

Months: \_\_\_\_\_

How many romantic relationship partners (including any current relationships) have you had? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you currently living with your romantic partner?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Right now, approximately how many close friends do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

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