

Pursuing Goals for Us: Relationally Autonomous Reasons in Long-Term Goal Pursuit

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People pursue goals for a variety of reasons, including reasons that take into account close relationships (termed *relationally autonomous reasons*, or RARs). Two longitudinal studies examined the degree to which relational self-construal, RARs, and *personally autonomous reasons* (PARs) predicted goal attainment. In Study 1, 166 participants rated 7 goals on several goal outcomes at 2 sessions. Results revealed that self-construal was positively associated with RARs and that RARs predicted goal attainment, controlling for PARs. Study 2 ($N = 177$) added a 3rd follow-up to the Study 1 design, and results showed perceived progress toward one's goals predicted enhanced RARs but not enhanced PARs. Both studies showed that RARs are an effective motivational component in goal pursuit and attainment.

Keywords: relationally autonomous reasons, personally autonomous reasons, relational-interdependent self-construal, motivation, goals

Goals, whether trivial, routine, significant, or life altering, are a part of people's everyday lives. The likelihood of attaining these goals does not depend as much on the type of goal pursued as it does on the reasons for pursuing it (see Deci & Ryan, 1984; Sheldon & Elliot, 1998). The interests of close others are often considered when working to achieve goals, but using close others as a reason for attaining a goal (e.g., "because my parents want me to") is frequently perceived as conflicting with the individual's personal interests and therefore infringing on his or her needs.

Many of the studies now viewed as classics in social psychology have reflected an assumed tension between the individual and the social world. These studies have often been framed in terms of the negative consequences of conformity, obedience, and social influence (e.g., Asch, 1955; Hofling, Brozman, Dairymple, Graves, & Pierce, 1966; Milgram, 1965, 1974). Many theories of motivation and agency also assume that the real or true self is detached from or independent of others. For example, Maslow's (1971) theory of the self-actualizing person includes the characteristic of self-sufficiency, which has been described as the "quality of not needing anything other than itself in order to be itself; living by its own laws" (pp. 308–309). As Sampson (1988) explained, in this representation, the self is bounded and separate from representations of others: "That is, if one were to draw a circle marking off the region of self from the region of nonself, the circle would be drawn so as to exclude others from the region defined as belonging to the self" (p. 16). From this perspective, individuals are expected to select and pursue goals because of their own interest in or enjoy-

ment of them; the best forms of agency are untainted by the influence of others.

More recently, however, social theorists have suggested that agency or goal pursuit can be autonomous (or volitional) and relationally motivated at the same time. For example, cultural psychologists have found that East Asian populations do not perceive close relationships and social obligations to be opposed to individual preferences and wishes (see Miller, 2003, for a review). For example, when elementary school children were asked to work on anagram tasks that they either selected themselves or were told were selected by their mothers, European American children worked hardest on the self-selected tasks, but Asian American children worked hardest on the puzzles chosen by their mothers (Iyengar & Lepper, 1999). Miller and Bersoff (1994) found that Hindu Indians were more likely than European Americans to experience a sense of internalized agency when engaged in tasks that fulfilled social expectations and roles.

As Miller (2003) explained, the form of social motivation experienced by Hindu Indians

reflects a monistic stance in which behavior is experienced simultaneously as both subjectively endorsed and objectively required. . . . [This motivation derives] from the individuals' sense of themselves as inherently a member of a larger community, in which the social tends to be experienced as an expression of self rather than as an external force in tension with self. (p. 81)

These and other studies of Eastern cultures have suggested that a form of "endogenous social agency" (Miller, 2003, p. 81) may exist and direct behavior. This form of agency is not limited to Eastern cultures; it may also importantly influence behavior among members of Western cultures. For example, in self-determination theory, individuals can be both relationally and intrinsically motivated, what Deci and Ryan (1991) termed *autonomous interdependence* (p. 272). As Chirkov and his colleagues argued, "Because autonomy concerns volition, people who are strongly connected with others often function with those others' interests in mind. Put differently, if others are integrated within

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oneself . . . doing for or conforming to those others could be fully volitional" (Chirkov, Ryan, Kim, & Kaplan, 2003, p. 107; see also Kagitcibasi, 2005; Ryan & Deci, 2004). To date, however, there has been little empirical investigation of this form of social agency among Western populations. Thus, the goal of these studies was to examine the role of endogenous social agency (which we have termed *relationally autonomous reasons*, or RARs) in goal selection and pursuit.

Relationally Autonomous and Personally Autonomous Reasons for Goals

To examine the influence of RARs on goal pursuit more closely, we drew on the self-concordance model, articulated by Sheldon and Elliott (1998, 1999; see also Sheldon & Houser-Marko, 2001). Building on self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1984, 1991; Ryan & Connell, 1989), the self-concordance model addresses the role of the self in the pursuit of personal goals, from goal selection to goal attainment. Self-concordant reasons for goals are those that "express enduring interests and values" (Sheldon & Elliott, 1999, p. 482); they are perceived as owned or authored by the individual, creating a sense of autonomy. Self-concordance theory identifies two forms of personally autonomous reasons (PARs) for goals: reasons that reflect one's primary interests and the fun or enjoyment that comes from pursuing the goal (termed *intrinsic* reasons) and reasons that reflect the person's belief that the goal is important and derives from one's personal convictions (termed *identified* reasons). In contrast, many so-called personal goals can be pursued for nonautonomous or controlled reasons. For example, people may adopt goals to avoid feeling ashamed, anxious, or guilty (termed *introjected* reasons) or because they are required to by another person or the situation (termed *external* reasons). In contrast to the perceived internal locus of causality created by autonomously motivated goals, these extrinsically motivated goals are perceived as controlling the self. According to Sheldon and Elliot (1998), "goals undertaken for more intrinsic or identified (i.e., autonomous) reasons . . . are goals more in harmony with the 'I'" (p. 555).

Sheldon and Elliot's (1998, 1999) research has shown that self-concordant reasons for goals (or reasons that reflect high levels of autonomy and low levels of controlledness) elicit high levels of effort and so are more likely to be attained than are goals pursued for non-self-concordant reasons. Attainment of goals pursued for self-concordant reasons in turn predicts subjective well-being and positive psychological adjustment (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999; Sheldon & Houser-Marko, 2001). Sheldon and his colleagues have concluded that people work harder and longer on goals that reflect the true self, resulting in enhanced well-being (Sheldon & Elliot, 1998, 1999; Sheldon & Houser-Marko, 2001).

For some people, the true self is a connected, interdependent, or relational self; in such cases, close others are included in the self (Cross, Bacon, & Morris, 2000). Similarly, close relationships often involve including the other in the self, resulting in an overlap between representations of the self and the close other (Aron, Aron, Tudor, & Nelson, 1991). When close others are included in the self, the mental representation of the partner may overlap with one's self-representation so that the needs, wishes, or desires of the partner may become part of the self. Consequently, when people define themselves in terms of their close relationships, relatedness

concerns motivate many of their goals. For example, the personal goal to get in shape before the summer can be motivated by autonomous reasons that are either personal ("so that I can hike Mt. McKinley") or relational ("so that I can be more active with my children"). It is important to distinguish the reasons for pursuing a goal from the content of the goal. For example, a person may select an academic goal ("to graduate with honors") but pursue it for relational reasons ("to make my parents proud"). Thus, a variety of goals may be driven by both individual and relational reasons.

Although research on the self-concordance model has focused on autonomy in goal pursuit, autonomy and relatedness are equally important basic human needs in self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1984; Ryan & Deci, 2004). Autonomy motives often coincide with, rather than conflict with, relational motives. For example, autonomous functioning is associated with greater interpersonal openness (Hodgins, Koestner, & Duncan, 1996) and use of relationship-maintaining coping strategies (Knee, Patrick, Viator, Nanayakkara, & Neighbors, 2002). Researchers have investigated the role of a variety of motives in the pursuit of relationship goals, but the role of relational reasons in the pursuit of a wide variety of goals (not only relationship goals) has not yet been examined widely. Relational reasons for a goal can be high or low in autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 1991, 2000), but in Sheldon and Elliot's (1999) measurement of self-concordance, the explicit mention of other people is limited to controlled reasons ("You pursue this because somebody else wants you to or the situation demands it"). Absent from the items used to measure self-concordance is the conception that a goal can be pursued for a reason that is both relational and perceived as autonomous or intrinsic to the self. Thus, this study expands on self-concordance research by including RARs as an additional category of reasons for goal pursuit.

RARs for goals are based on needs, desires, and commitments within a close relationship. RARs emphasize the involvement of *us* in goal pursuit; they focus on the sense that important relationships provide an additional degree of commitment and investment in a goal. In this first approach to defining this form of endogenous social motivation, we have followed the example of Sheldon and Elliot (1998, 1999) and have focused on how relational reasons for goals may reflect volitional sources of motivation as well as controlled sources. Goals and activities pursued for autonomous relational reasons are inherently enjoyable because of the involvement of others, or they represent important commitments within the relationship or to relationship partners. When a close other is included in the self, not only the other's characteristics (as shown by Aron et al., 1991) but also the other's goals and desires may become one's own (see also Shah, 2003). In other words, autonomous relational reasons for goal pursuit represent a desire to attain outcomes that are in the interest of both members of a relationship or of the relationship itself.

In contrast, close others can be intrusive to goal pursuit if, for example, the demands of one partner are in conflict with the interests of the other. Controlled relational goals are pursued because they are expected or demanded by a relationship partner; they also may reflect a desire to avoid negative consequences from relationship partners, such as their anger, disappointment, or rejection. In these studies, we have created an index of RARs by combining ratings of autonomous relational reasons for pursuing goals and subtracting controlled relational reasons. Thus, follow-

ing the example of the self-concordance model, we define RARs as the relative autonomy of relational reasons for goal pursuit. Reasons for goals that reflect intrinsic interests or commitments but are not associated with close relationships have been termed PARs¹ in this research.

From the perspective of the self-concordance model, one might argue that a relationship that has become self-defining reflects one's core interests and values; thus, pursuing a goal for a reason that involves the interests and values of a self-defining relationship is no different from other intrinsic or identified reasons. Empirically, this suggests that the measure of RARs for goals should be highly correlated with the measure of PARs. More important to note is that if the most important factor in people's RARs is their personal involvement, then RARs should not predict unique variance in goal outcome variables after controlling for the variance explained by PARs. We suggest instead that RARs represent an important dimension of goal pursuit that taps into a wider range of reasons than do PARs. Consequently, we hypothesized that a measure of RARs would predict goal attainment over an extended period of time after controlling for the variance explained by PARs. In contrast, if people perceive themselves to be externally controlled when they pursue goals for the sake of a close relationship, then their reports of relational reasons for goals should be either negatively related or unrelated to goal attainment.

Relationally Autonomous Reasons and Relational Self- Construal

People are social creatures; thus, almost everyone pursues some goals for relational reasons. People who tend to define themselves in terms of close relationships, however, may be more likely than others to have relational reasons for their goals. In this form of self-definition (termed *relational self-construal*; Cross et al., 2000), representations of close relationship partners are integrated with self-representations. For these persons, close relationships allow expression of the authentic or real self (Cross, Gore, & Morris, 2003), serve as grounds for self-definition, and provide opportunities for self-enhancement. Thus, highly relational persons are expected to be motivated to develop, enhance, and maintain close relationships. In support of this hypothesis, previous research has shown that individuals with chronically high relational self-construal are more likely than others to consider the needs and wishes of close others when they make plans for the future (Cross et al., 2000). Highly relational individuals also tend to have elaborate cognitive networks for relationships and to have better memory for relationship information than do low relationals (Cross, Morris, & Gore, 2002). Although individuals with a highly relational self-construal may have many relationship-focused goals (e.g., "spending more time with my friends"), the focus of this research was not relational content of goals but, rather, relational reasons for goals (e.g., "seeking a career that allows me to stay close to my family"). High relationals' cognitive representations of self and close others tend to overlap so that their interests tend to coincide with, rather than conflict with, the other's interests. Thus, we hypothesized that persons with a highly relational self-construal would be more likely to endorse RARs than relationally controlled reasons for their goals.

Goal Effort, Progress, and Well-Being

People who select goals because they reflect their interests, values, and commitments exert effort toward those goals and make progress toward or attain their goals. Goal attainment, in turn, contributes to individual well-being (see Emmons, 1996, for a review). Research on goal pursuit and well-being has shown that happiness is related to goal efficacy (or confidence of attaining one's goals), whereas global feelings of purpose are associated with the personal meaning of goals (McGregor & Little, 1998; Ryff & Singer, 1998). RARs and PARs are constructs that define the meaning of goals rather than one's confidence of attaining goals; therefore, a sense of purpose in life should accrue from progress toward self-concordant or relationally motivated goals. In addition, many goals require continued pursuit over time (e.g., "to provide for my family"), so we also included planned future effort as a goal outcome of interest. We expected that both amount of current effort exerted toward the goal and sense of purpose would predict how much the individual plans to pursue the goal in the future. In summary, this research extends the self-concordance model by including RARs as a predictor of goal-directed effort, progress toward goals, purpose in life, and planned future effort toward goals.

Overview of Studies

We began to investigate these predictions in an earlier study (Gore, Cross, & Kanagawa, 2005). That study showed that relational self-construal predicts RARs for one's goals. In addition, RARs significantly predict goal effort, controlling for PARs. Unfortunately, the Gore et al. (2005) study was cross-sectional, so it could not speak to the duration of these associations.

The current studies used a prospective design to examine the effectiveness of RARs in goal pursuit. Sheldon and Elliot (1998) showed that both autonomous and controlled reasons for goals elicit effort but that controlled reasons for goals are less likely to yield sustained effort over a long period of time. That study assessed the relative autonomy of personal reasons for goals but did not assess the relative autonomy of reasons for goals that take into account close relationships. The current studies examined the hypothesis that RARs would be positively associated with effort and progress toward goals, controlling for PARs. In contrast, if people's relational reasons for goals are based more on the coercive, controlled influence of others rather than on their volitional, autonomous influence, then reasons that reflect relational influences should not predict sustained effort (or expectations of future effort) exerted toward the goal. In addition, these studies investigated the extent to which RARs provide an enduring impetus for one's goals and predict ongoing goal effort. Thus, in the current research, participants' evaluations of their effort and progress toward their goals, as well as reports of their well-being, were assessed multiple times. These studies sought to replicate our previous findings that RARs predict goal effort, controlling for PARs; they examined these effects over a 1-month period in Study 1 and over a 2-month period in Study 2. If RARs do predict goal

¹ We use the term *autonomous* here to mean volitional or self-chosen (as have the self-concordance and self-determination theorists), not to mean separate or independent.

effort and attainment in these periods, then we can begin to examine how these motives serve a distinct and positive function in longer term goal pursuit.

Study 1

Study 1 tested a two-wave model of goal pursuit including both RARs and PARs as motivational components. As shown in Figure 1, relational self-construal was expected to predict the use of RARs, and pursuing goals for these reasons was expected to predict goal effort independent of PARs. Our previous study (Gore et al., 2005) also revealed a direct association between PARs and purpose in life, which we included in the current model. We hypothesized that Time 1 reports of effort and Time 2 reports of progress would predict changes in purpose in life over the 4-week period and that Time 2 purpose in life would predict expectations of future effort. The role of RARs in this process could be ascertained from the size of their direct and total effects on current effort, progress, and planned future effort.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were 190 undergraduates (55 men, 129 women, 6 unspecified) from Iowa State University, Ames, IA, who participated in exchange for extra course credit. Participants who were not United States citizens and participants who were not native speakers of English were dropped from the analyses because of previous findings of confounding effects of culture on relational self-construal. Two additional participants were dropped because of being outliers (Z score > 3.29 or < -3.29) on more than three of the measures, suggesting they had response biases toward the extremes and were not giving much thought to the individual items (see Fidell & Tabachnick, 2003, for cutoff criteria). These eliminations resulted in an overall sample of 166 participants (47 men, 117 women, 2 unspecified).

On arrival at the laboratory, participants were greeted and asked to provide informed consent. They then completed measures of relational self-construal and purpose in life. Participants listed seven goals that they were currently working on or planned to start working on in the near future and rated their effort and progress for each. Next, they rated the degree to

which they had personal and relational reasons for goals. On completion, participants were reminded of the second session, which would take place 4 weeks after the first session, and dismissed.

Participants received a message by e-mail 2 days before they were to return, reminding them of their second session. All 166 participants returned for the second session (return rate = 100%). On arrival, participants were again seated in a cubicle and reminded of their voluntary participation with a second consent form. After completing the Purpose in Life scale, the participants received their goal list from Time 1 and were asked to rate each goal for progress and planned future effort. Both sessions took 50 min or less to complete. On completion, participants were fully debriefed, thanked, and dismissed.

Materials

A 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*) was used for all measures; the mean of the items in each measure was obtained so that high scores reflected high levels of the construct. Composite reliabilities for the RAR and PAR measures were obtained by using the calculation described in Nunnally (1978). Tests of kurtosis showed that all of the variables were normally distributed ($ps > .10$). Descriptive statistics and reliability coefficients for all of the measures are listed in Table 1.

Relational self-construal. The 11-item Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal Scale (RISC; see Cross et al., 2000, for psychometric properties) was used to measure a person's tendency to include close relationships in his or her self-definition. An example item is "My close relationships are an important reflection of who I am." The scale correlates moderately with Clark, Ouellette, Powell, and Millberg's (1987) Communal Orientation Scale ($r = .41$), Singelis's (1994) Interdependent Self-Construal Scale ($r = .41$), and Davis's (1980) Empathic Concern Scale ($r = .34$; Cross et al., 2000). Cross et al. (2000) also found the RISC to have acceptable test-retest reliability ($r_s > .70$ over 1 month; $r_s > .60$ over 2 months) and discriminant validity with measures such as the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). Previous research utilizing the RISC revealed positive correlations with measures of social support and relationship closeness but little or no association with measures of self-esteem and psychological well-being (Cross et al., 2003; Cross & Morris, 2003).

Personally and relationally autonomous reasons. Participants were asked to rate several reasons for pursuing their goals with the instructions that multiple reasons could apply to each goal and that they should think of

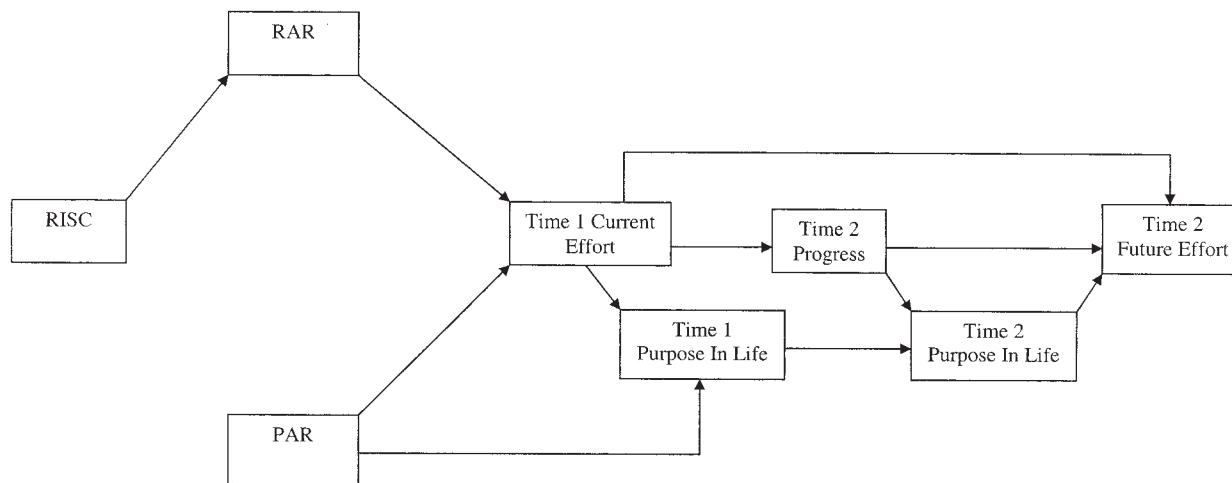


Figure 1. Proposed two-wave model of goal pursuit (Study 1). RISC = Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal Scale; RAR = relationally autonomous reasons; PAR = personally autonomous reasons.

Table 1
Correlation Matrix, Descriptive Statistics, and Reliability Coefficients of Variables (Study 1)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. RISC	—	.24**	.18*	.10	.07	.06	.06	.07
2. RARs		—	.42**	.34**	.22**	.20**	.20**	.23**
3. PARs			—	.28**	.28**	.17*	.23**	.22**
4. Time 1 current effort				—	.50**	.60**	.47**	.61**
5. Time 1 purpose in life					—	.30**	.79**	.59**
6. Time 2 progress						—	.39**	.54**
7. Time 2 purpose in life							—	.71**
8. Time 2 future effort								—
<i>M</i>	3.92	0.09	0.06	3.99	3.91	3.35	3.87	3.55
<i>SD</i>	0.48	0.92	1.00	0.44	0.55	0.58	0.77	0.40
α	.74	.85	.77	.66	.84	.84	.85	.90

Note. RISC = Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal Scale; RARs = relationally autonomous reasons; PARs = personally autonomous reasons.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

each reason as a possibility. PARs were measured using items adapted from Sheldon and Elliot (1999). The autonomous items were "I am pursuing this because of the fun and enjoyment it provides me" and "I am pursuing this because I really believe it is an important goal to have." The controlled items were "I am pursuing this because I would feel guilty, ashamed, or anxious if I did not" and "I am pursuing this goal because the situation demands it." References to specific relationships in the self-concordance items were excluded so as to reduce the overlap between the PAR and RAR measures. For example, an original PAR item read, "You are pursuing this goal because somebody else wants you to or because the situation demands it."

The measure for RARs was constructed in parallel to the PAR measure using items that assessed the relational equivalents of the self-concordance items (i.e., the relative autonomy of relational motives). Like the PAR items, the RAR items were categorized as assessing autonomous or controlled reasons for goals depending on the degree to which they reflected aspects that were intrinsically valuable to a relationship or viewed as coercive. The autonomous items were "I am pursuing this because the people involved make it fun and enjoyable" and "I am pursuing this because it is important to someone close to me." The controlled items were "I am pursuing this because I would let someone else down if I did not" and "I am pursuing this goal because other people expect me to." The PAR and RAR indices were constructed using the following procedure: The sum of the controlled items was subtracted from the sum of the autonomous items; then, this total was standardized to create the index.² Thus, both the PAR and RAR measures assessed the balance between autonomous and controlled reasons for goals, but they distinguished between whether the reasons were personally autonomous or relationally autonomous, respectively.

Table 2 displays the results of a confirmatory factor analysis of the four RAR items and the four PAR items, extracting four factors and using varimax rotation. The results of this test showed that the relational introjected and relational external items loaded onto Factor 1 (the relationally controlled factor) and that the relational intrinsic and relational identified items loaded onto Factor 2 (the relationally autonomous factor). In addition, the personal introjected and personal external items loaded onto Factor 3 (the personally controlled factor), and the personal intrinsic and personal identified items loaded onto Factor 4 (the personally autonomous factor). Thus, categorizing these eight items into the four specified dimensions was confirmed as valid.

Goal effort and progress. Several items were used to examine participants' effort and progress toward their goals. These statements were adopted from Emmons (1986) and Sheldon and Elliot (1998). Time 1 current effort was measured using five items that assessed the amount of

effort the individual currently exerted toward the goal (e.g., "I put a lot of effort every week to attain this goal"). Time 2 progress was measured using three items that assessed the individual's perceived progress toward attaining the goal (e.g., "The progress I've made toward this goal is close to where I think I should be"). Time 2 future effort was measured using five items that assessed the amount of effort the individual planned to exert toward the goal in the future (e.g., "I plan to continue working toward this goal in the future"). Because these measures were subjectively rated by the participants, they should be considered perceived effort and perceived progress, rather than objective measures of these outcomes.

Purpose in life. Ryff's (1989) 14-item Purpose in Life subscale was used to measure the degree to which a person has a sense of direction in life. Ryff and Keyes (1995) characterized high scorers on the Purpose in Life subscale as "Having a sense of directedness; feeling there is meaning to their present and past life; having aims and objectives for living" (p. 727). An example item is "I am an active person in carrying out the plans I set for myself." The scale shows strong convergent validity with Neugarten, Havighurst, and Tobin's (1961) Life Satisfaction Index ($r = .59$) and Rosenberg's (1965) Self-Esteem Scale ($r = .49$) and strong discriminant validity with Zung's (1965) Depression Scale ($r = -.60$; all $ps < .01$; Ryff, 1989; see also McGregor & Little, 1998; Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Schmutte & Ryff, 1997, for research utilizing this measure).

Sex Differences

Independent-sample t tests showed that women scored higher than men on the RISC ($M_{\text{women}} = 4.02$, $SD = 0.48$; $M_{\text{men}} = 3.69$, $SD = 0.42$), $t(162) = 4.06$, $p < .01$. There were no other significant sex differences. Participant sex did not interact with any of the findings below ($p > .1$) and is not discussed further.

Results and Discussion

Relational Self-Construal and Reasons for Goals

RISC scores were positively correlated with RARs ($r = .17$, $p < .05$; see Table 1). Unexpectedly, RISC scores also correlated

² Table 1 shows the standard deviation of the PAR measure as 0.92 (standardized measures have a standard deviation of 1.00). The index was created and standardized before any participants were excluded from analyses, and the descriptive statistics for the index were obtained after this exclusion took place.

Table 2
Factor Matrix for Study 1 RAR and PAR Measures

Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Relational intrinsic	.09	.86	.21	.12
Relational identified	.36	.78	.24	.13
Relational introjected	.74	.33	.37	-.07
Relational external	.72	.38	.27	-.33
Personal intrinsic	.09	.28	.02	.88
Personal identified	.01	.17	.03	.94
Personal introjected	.37	.00	.79	.35
Personal external	.13	-.16	.82	.14

Note. This analysis used varimax rotation and confirmatory factor analysis, extracting 4 factors. Important loadings are highlighted in bold. RAR = relationally autonomous reason; PAR = personally autonomous reason.

positively with PARs ($r = .18, p < .05$). Although the RAR measure correlated positively with PARs ($r = .39, p < .01$), the magnitude of this correlation suggests they are distinct constructs. The PAR and RAR measures both correlated positively with all Time 1 and Time 2 goal outcomes and purpose in life variables ($ps < .05$)

Two-Wave Model of Goal Pursuit

To ascertain if any excluded paths in the proposed model should be added, we first tested the hypothesized associations shown in Figure 1 using linear regression analyses. On the basis of these analyses and the bivariate correlation analysis, we added the path between the RISC and PAR to the model. To test the two-wave model of goal pursuit, we estimated the paths specified in Figure 1 (and the additional path) along with the stability coefficient between Time 1 purpose in life and Time 2 purpose in life. This model fit the data well, $\chi^2(15, N = 166) = 40.13, p < .01$, goodness-of-fit index (GFI) = 0.95, comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.97, root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.06 (see Figure 2).³ Consistent with the hypothesized model, people with highly relational self-construal were more likely than lows to report that they pursued their goals for RARs. The results also showed that both RARs and PARs predicted the amount of effort exerted toward one's goals and that PARs were directly associated with a sense of purpose.

The rest of the results supported the proposed model. Effort exerted toward one's goals was associated with concurrent reports of purpose and with later reports of progress and planned future effort toward one's goals. Perception of successful progress was associated with enhanced feelings of purpose and with plans to continue working toward the goal. Positive change in one's sense of purpose also predicted the amount of effort planned in the future. In summary, the results showed that high relationals were more likely than lows to pursue their goals for RARs and that RARs predicted immediate goal outcomes, controlling for PARs. The degree to which RARs predicted long-term goal outcomes, however, required an examination of the total effects of both RARs and PARs.

Table 3 summarizes the total effects of the two motivation measures on the goal outcome measures (effort, progress, and purpose in life). The total effects of RARs and PARs on all Time

2 variables were significant, indicating that both were enduring motivation components over time. The total effects of the RISC on all other variables in the model were significant ($ps < .01$).

As hypothesized, people who define themselves on the basis of their relationships were more likely than others to pursue their goals for RARs. Contrary to prediction, high relationals also tended to use more PARs for goals than did lows. This suggests that relational self-construal may be associated with use of autonomous reasons (both personal and relational) rather than with autonomous relational reasons alone. Both RARs and PARs were associated with positive concurrent outcomes (Time 1 current effort and Time 1 purpose in life) as well as long-term outcomes (Time 2 progress, Time 2 purpose in life, and Time 2 future effort). Thus, RARs are an important factor in goal pursuit, explaining as much variance as or more variance than PARs in goal-directed effort and well-being.⁴

Despite the evidence these results provided for the importance of RARs on extended goal pursuit, some questions remained, such as, What is the role of RARs in the pursuit process over an even longer period of time, and how do RARs and goal outcomes influence each other? The degree to which RARs continued to predict goal outcomes over a more extended time period remained to be seen. In addition, Study 1 did not address how RARs are maintained throughout the goal pursuit process or whether successful progress toward goals would limit or enhance the involvement of RARs during future goal pursuit. In Study 2, we addressed these issues.

³ We also tested for any moderating effects of the RISC on subsequent paths in the model by conducting a stacked model analysis using people who scored high on the RISC as Group 1 and people who scored low on the RISC as Group 2 (determined by a median split). The results showed that the fit of the model in which the paths were allowed to vary between the groups was not significantly different from that of the model in which the paths between the groups were constrained to be equal, $\Delta\chi^2(9) = 14.04, ns$. This suggests that there are no associations in the model moderated by relational self-construal.

⁴ We also assessed social support for goals and initially included support as a predictor of effort along with RARs and PARs. To simplify the results in Study 1, however, we have excluded social support from the reported model and other results. Our previous research (Gore et al., 2005) showed that when social support was included in the model as a third predictor of effort, the association between RARs and effort remained significant but the association between PARs and effort became nonsignificant. Support was assessed in Study 1 using three items per goal (e.g., "A lot of people close to me support my pursuit of this goal") and included in a follow-up analysis of the two-wave model of goal pursuit as a third predictor of effort. This model fit the data well, $\chi^2(30, N = 166) = 57.12, p < .01$, GFI = 0.93, CFI = 0.97, RMSEA = 0.08 (see Figure 2). Consistent with our previous research, people with highly relational self-construal were more likely than lows to report that they had social support for their goals and that support predicted the amount of effort exerted toward one's goals. In contrast, and consistent with our previous research, there was no direct association between PARs and effort, but PARs were still directly associated with a sense of purpose. Of the three motivation variables, support also had the strongest total effects on the Time 2 variables. The rest of the results were virtually identical to what was found in the model without support. Thus, social support is an important motivational component in the model, but it is not redundant with RARs.

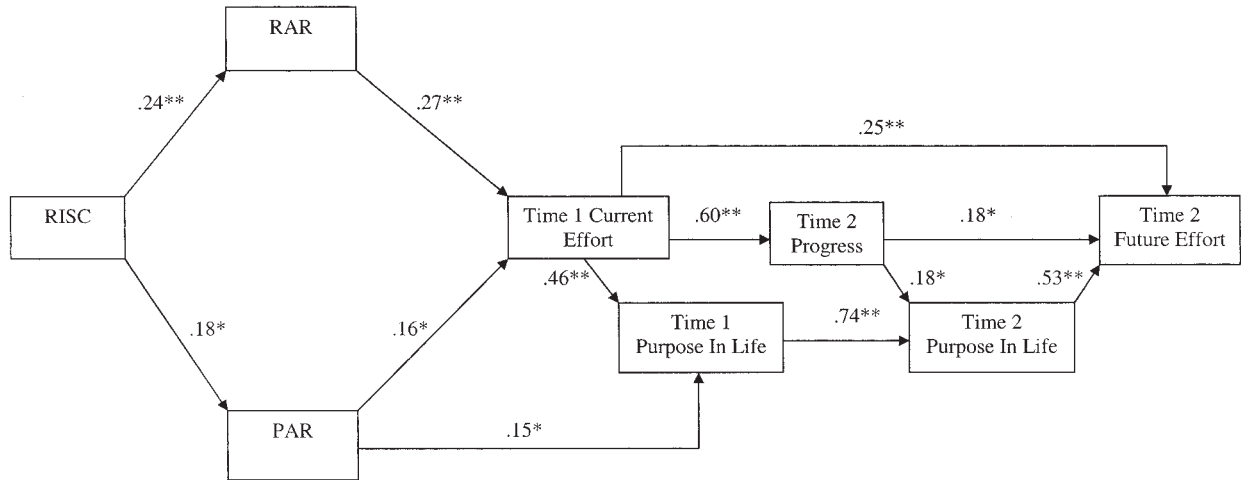


Figure 2. Two-wave model of goal pursuit (Study 1). RISC = Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal Scale; RAR = relationally autonomous reasons; PAR = personally autonomous reasons. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Study 2

In Study 1, participants' evaluations of their goals were separated by 4 weeks; this may not have been long enough to conclude that RARs are an enduring motivational component. By lengthening the amount of time that elapsed in the assessment of goal outcomes, we could determine whether it was a motivational component that persisted over time or if it was effective only during the initial stages of goal pursuit. To address this issue, we doubled Study 1's length of assessment to 8 weeks for Study 2 (three sessions with 4-week intervals between them).

Study 1 found that RARs predict goal outcomes, but it did not address the possibility that goal outcomes could reinforce the reasons for pursuing one's goals. Sheldon and Houser-Marko (2001) proposed a self-concordance upward spiral model, which suggests that goals pursued for PARs have a higher rate of successful progress than goals pursued for reasons that are not personally autonomous. Progress leads to increased levels of positive well-being and reinforces the degree to which goals are pursued for PARs. This increase in PARs then leads to an increased rate of progress, which predicts further increases in

levels of well-being. Observing successful progress toward one's goals therefore reinforces PARs for those goals and results in an upward spiral trend with reasons and outcomes reinforcing each other.

Using the self-concordance upward spiral model as a starting point, Study 2 expanded the model derived in Study 1 to include multiple assessments of RARs and PARs, thus allowing for the examination of upward spiral effects of these two motivational components. This model is shown in Figure 3. In this model, we first sought to replicate the results of Study 1. As represented in the model, people with highly relational self-construals are expected to tend to pursue their goals for relational reasons (Path a) as well as for personal reasons (Path b), both of which are expected to predict how much current effort will be exerted toward the goal (Paths c and d). The degree to which goals are pursued for PARs and the degree of effort exerted toward the goals give the person a sense of purpose (Paths e and f) and increase the likelihood of perceived progress toward the goal at a later point in time (Path g). As in the Study 1 model, reported progress toward the goal is expected to predict change in purpose in life (Path h) and planned effort toward the goal in the future (Path i). To expand on the Study 1 findings, we also added follow-up assessments of RARs and PARs to this model. Multiple assessments allowed for the analysis of change in that variable when stability paths were estimated (e.g., Time 1 RARs predicting Time 2 RARs). Although these stability paths were included in the proposed model, they are not displayed in Figure 3 in the interest of simplicity. On the basis of the upward spiral hypothesis, we expected that progress would predict enhanced RARs and PARs at Time 2 (Paths j and k). We then expected that change in RARs would be associated with planned effort in the future (Path l) and that change in PARs would predict planned future effort indirectly through an increased sense of purpose (Paths m and n).

We expected that this pattern would then replicate at Time 3, demonstrating the upward spiral effect for both RARs and PARs. Specifically, we proposed that planned effort in the future at Time 2 would predict the amount of progress reported at Time 3 and that

Table 3
Standardized Total Effects of RARs and PARs on the Time 1 and Time 2 Goal Pursuit and Well-Being Variables in the Model (Study 1)

Variable	RARs	PARs
Time 1 current effort	.27**	.16**
Time 1 purpose in life	.12**	.23**
Time 2 progress	.16**	.10*
Time 2 purpose in life	.12**	.18**
Time 2 future effort	.16**	.16**

Note. RARs = relationally autonomous reasons; PARs = personally autonomous reasons.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

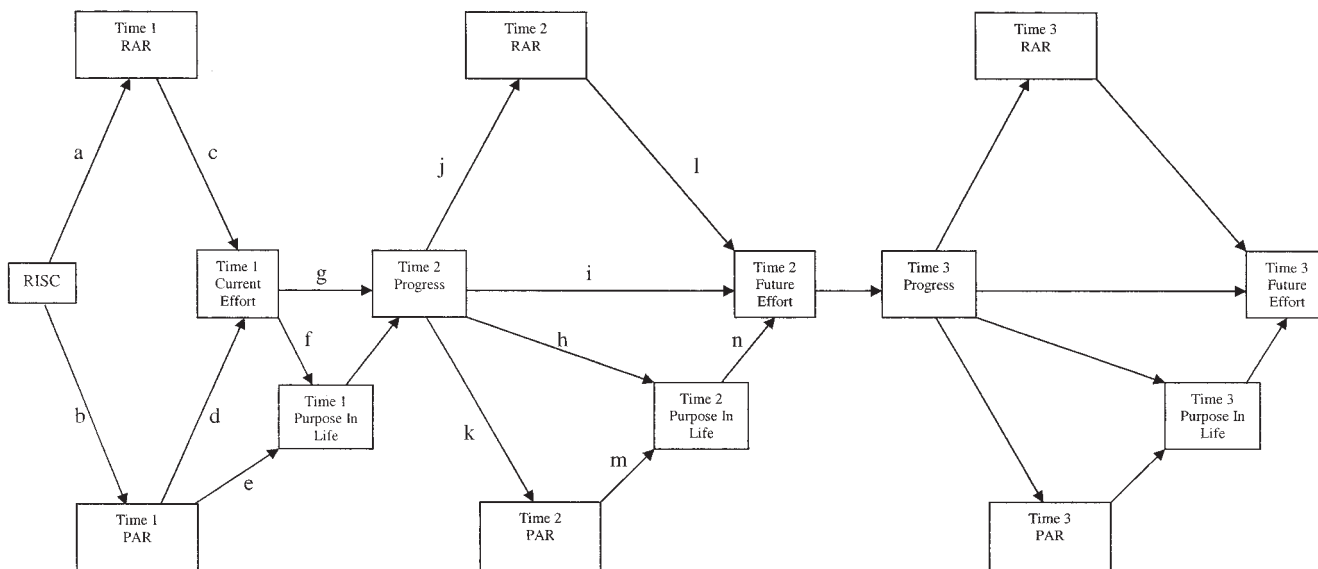


Figure 3. Proposed three-wave model of goal pursuit (Study 2). RISC = Relational-Interdependent Self-Constraint Scale; RAR = relationally autonomous reasons; PAR = personally autonomous reasons.

this pattern would repeat with the Time 3 measures. The purposes of this model were to (a) add RARs to the upward spiral model (Sheldon & Houser-Marko, 2001), (b) examine the extent to which RARs are an enduring motivational component over an extended period of time, and (c) investigate the degree to which RARs are reinforced by successful progress, thus displaying an upward spiral effect.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were 200 undergraduates (62 men, 129 women, 9 unspecified) from Iowa State University who participated in exchange for extra course credit. Again, participants who were not United States citizens and participants who were not native speakers of English were excluded from the analyses. This resulted in an overall sample of 172 participants (56 men, 114 women, 2 unspecified).

The procedure was the same as in Study 1 with a few exceptions. First, participants listed only four goals rather than seven. Second, participants returned for a second and third wave of data collection, each separated by 4 weeks (return rate = 84% for Time 2, 48 men, 95 women; return rate = 71% for Time 3 from the original Time 1 sample, 39 men, 81 women). Independent-sample *t* tests revealed no significant differences between participants who returned at Time 2 and participants who failed to return for any Time 1 measures; no significant differences were found between participants who returned at Time 3 and participants who failed to return for any Time 1 or Time 2 measures (all *ps* > .05). Third, participants completed measures of RARs, PARs, and purpose in life at all three time points and completed measures of progress and future effort at both the second and third sessions. As was the case in Study 1, each session lasted 50 min or less.

Materials

The same 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*) was used for all measures. The items were averaged for an overall score so that high scores reflected high levels of the construct. Composite reliabilities for the RAR and PAR indices were obtained by using the calculation described in Nunnally (1978). The measures for relational

self-construal, PARs, RARs, current effort, purpose in life, progress, and future effort from Study 1 were used for this study.⁵ Tests of kurtosis showed that all of the variables were normally distributed (*ps* > .10). Descriptive statistics and reliability coefficients for all of

⁵ A point of concern from Study 1 was the wording of one of the items used to tap autonomous relational reasons. This item (“I am pursuing this goal because the other people involved make it fun”) might have been tapping into the individual’s sense of fun and enjoyment more than an aspect of the relationship. Thus, Study 2 included some additional assessments of autonomous relational reasons for goals that emphasized the extent to which relationships made the goal intrinsically valuable. These items, which we assessed at all three time points, were “I am pursuing this goal because it strengthens a relationship I have with a person I’m close to” (strengthens relationship), “I am pursuing this goal because someone I am close to thinks it is enjoyable” (fun for close other), and “I am pursuing this goal because someone I’m close to is pursuing the same goal, and we both enjoy it” (same goal). To test whether the original autonomous relational item (“I am pursuing this because the people involved make it fun and enjoyable”) was tapping a reason in the interest of both the individual and the other people involved, we conducted a series of bivariate correlation analyses. The results showed that this item was strongly associated with other items that explicitly tapped pursuing the goal in the interest of close others (*rs* = .64, .61, and .46 for the fun for close other, strengthens relationship, and same goal items, respectively; *ps* < .01). This item also correlated strongly with the other autonomous relational item (“I am pursuing this goal because it is important to someone close to me”; *r* = .47, *p* < .05) and positively, but less strongly, with the controlled RAR items (*r* = .36, *p* < .01) and the controlled PAR items (*r* = .21, *p* < .05). These correlations were replicated at Time 2 and Time 3. Thus, the item does not appear to capture the individual’s enjoyment alone but rather captures a sense of intrinsic interest based on the relationship. We also created three alternative indices of RARs using the alternative autonomous items rather than the original item (“I am pursuing this goal because the other people involved make it fun and enjoyable”). These alternative indices were then substituted into the model for the original RAR index. The results were virtually the same, showing the same patterns of direct and total effects on the effort, progress, and purpose in life variables.

Table 4
Correlation Matrix, Descriptive Statistics, and Reliability Coefficients of Variables (Study 2)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Time 1															
1. RISC	—	.16*	.04	.03	.01	.01	.09*	.00	.01	.02	.01	.06	.00	.01	.02
2. RARs		—	.46**	.21**	.17*	.10*	.59**	.32**	.16*	.17*	.10*	.39**	.25**	.17*	.17*
3. PARs			—	.10*	.28**	.10*	.28**	.69**	.28**	.12*	.08	.19**	.55**	.29**	.13*
4. Current effort				—	.26**	.36**	.18**	.08	.22**	.37**	.29**	.14*	.03	.24**	.29**
5. Purpose in life					—	.32**	.15*	.21**	.79**	.25**	.24**	.12*	.14*	.74**	.25**
Time 2															
6. Progress						—	.23**	.10	.30**	.26**	.62**	.21*	.02	.36**	.23*
7. RARs							—	.38**	.16*	.22*	.18*	.58**	.22*	.18*	.23*
8. PARs								—	.24*	.12	.08	.23*	.61**	.26*	.13
9. Purpose in life									—	.28**	.23*	.12	.16*	.84**	.28**
10. Future effort										—	.38**	.18*	.05	.29**	.73**
Time 3															
11. Progress											—	.23*	-.03	.36**	.30**
12. RARs												—	.30**	.17*	.23*
13. PARs													—	.21**	.08
14. Purpose in life														—	.31**
15. Future effort															—
<i>M</i>	3.83	0.03	0.08	3.94	4.02	3.46	0.01	0.07	4.04	4.37	3.62	0.02	0.06	4.07	4.35
<i>SD</i>	0.44	0.99	0.91	0.30	0.55	0.56	0.94	0.93	0.60	0.43	0.54	0.96	1.00	0.56	0.43
α	.84	.84	.78	.76	.89	.74	.85	.79	.90	.81	.76	.87	.77	.88	.78

Note. RISC = Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal Scale; RARs = relationally autonomous reasons; PARs = personally autonomous reasons.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

the measures are listed in Table 4. Table 5 displays the results of another confirmatory factor analysis on the four RAR items and four PAR items at Time 1, extracting four factors and using varimax rotation. The results of this test replicated the findings from Study 1, showing that the eight items loaded onto their respective factors. These findings were consistent across all three time points.

Sex Differences

Independent-sample *t* tests showed that women scored higher than men on Time 2 purpose in life ($M_{\text{women}} = 4.13, SD = 0.56; M_{\text{men}} = 3.84, SD = 0.64, t(140) = 2.79, p < .01$; Time 2 future effort ($M_{\text{women}} = 4.44, SD = 0.41; M_{\text{men}} = 4.24, SD = 0.44, t(140) = 2.68, p < .01$; Time 3 PARs ($M_{\text{women}} = 0.20, SD = 0.91; M_{\text{men}} = -0.19, SD = 0.94, t(119) = 2.17, p < .05$; Time 3 purpose in life ($M_{\text{women}} = 4.17, SD = 0.52; M_{\text{men}} = 3.84, SD = 0.60, t(119) = 3.13, p < .01$; and Time 3 future effort ($M_{\text{women}} = 4.44, SD = 0.41; M_{\text{men}} = 4.16, SD = 0.41, t(119) = 3.50, p < .01$). There were no other significant sex differences. Participant sex did not interact with any of the findings below ($p > .1$) and is not discussed further.

Results and Discussion

Relational Self-Construal and Reasons for Goals

RISC scores were positively correlated with Time 1 and Time 2 RARs ($r_s = .16$ and $.09, p_s < .05$; see Table 4) but not correlated with Time 3 RARs ($r = .06, ns$). Contrary to Study 2, the associations between RISC scores and the PAR measures were nonsignificant at all three time points ($p_s > .10$). Time 1 RARs and PARs correlated positively with all variables except that Time 1 PARs did not correlate significantly with Time 3 progress ($r = .08, ns$). Similarly, Time 2 RARs and PARs correlated positively with all Time 2 and Time 3 variables except that Time 2 PARs did not correlate significantly with Time 2 progress ($r = .10, ns$), Time 2 future effort ($r = .12, ns$), or Time 3 progress ($r = .08, ns$). Time 3 RARs and PARs correlated significantly with the Time 3 vari-

ables except that Time 3 PARs did not correlate significantly with Time 3 progress ($r = -.03, ns$) or Time 3 future effort ($r = .08, ns$).

Three-Wave Model of Goal Pursuit

Following the procedure used in Study 1, we used linear regression analyses to ascertain whether excluded paths in the proposed model should be added. On the basis of these analyses, none of the excluded paths yielded significant coefficients, so no paths were added to the model. To test this model, we estimated the paths specified in Figure 3 in addition to all of the stability coefficients among any repeated variables for all three time points (in the interest of simplicity, these paths are not indicated on the figure although all of them were positive and significant, $p_s < .05$). This model fit the data well, $\chi^2(67, N = 172) = 157.90, p < .01, GFI = 0.90, CFI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.06$ (see Figure 4).⁶

⁶ Again, we tested for the moderating effects of the RISC on subsequent paths in the model by conducting a stacked model analysis using the same procedure as in Study 1. The results showed that the fit of the model in which the paths were allowed to vary between the groups was significantly different from the model in which the paths between the groups were constrained to be equal, $\Delta\chi^2(28) = 57.69, p < .01$. This suggests that there are associations in the model moderated by relational self-construal. A path was considered moderated if an equality constraint of that path across the two groups resulted in a model fit that was significantly different from the fit of the model using no constraints. The results of these tests showed that two paths varied significantly between the two samples ($p < .05$): the association between Time 1 purpose in life and Time 2 progress ($\beta_{\text{high}} = .39, p < .01; \beta_{\text{low}} = .08, ns$) and the association between Time 1 PARs and Time 1 current effort ($\beta_{\text{high}} = -.11, ns; \beta_{\text{low}} = .29, p < .01$). This suggests that for high relationals, goals that are not integrated with the interests of their close relationships but instead are chosen apart from close relationships may not be pursued with as much vigor as those that are relationally motivated.

Table 5
Factor Matrix for Study 2 RAR and PAR Measures at Time 1

Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Relational intrinsic	.28	.82	.23	.03
Relational identified	.29	.83	.15	-.08
Relational introjected	.88	.09	.25	.05
Relational external	.63	.31	.44	-.08
Personal intrinsic	-.02	.25	-.06	.90
Personal identified	.05	.18	.12	.92
Personal introjected	.44	-.13	.67	.18
Personal external	.24	-.03	.88	.18

Note. This analysis used varimax rotation and confirmatory factor analysis, extracting 4 factors. Important loadings are highlighted in bold. RAR = relationally autonomous reason; PAR = personally autonomous reason.

Consistent with the hypothesized model, people with a highly relational self-construal pursued their goals for RARs, and these reasons for goal pursuit predicted how much effort they exerted toward their goals. In contrast to Study 1, RISC scores did not predict PARs, nor did PARs predict Time 1 effort. Both the degree to which the reasons for goal pursuit were personally autonomous and the amount of effort exerted toward the goal predicted feeling a sense of purpose, and both the amount of effort exerted toward the goal and sense of purpose predicted how much progress was reported at Time 2.

The rest of the model supported an upward spiral trend for RARs but not for PARs. The amount of reported progress toward the goal predicted change in RARs, but progress did not predict

change in PARs (or any other Time 2 variables). Enhanced RARs directly predicted the amount of planned effort for the future, whereas the amount of PARs reported at Time 2 predicted change in sense of purpose, which then predicted the amount of effort planned for the future. Planned future effort then predicted the amount of progress reported at Time 3, and the same patterns were found at Time 3 as had been found for Time 2 (except that Time 3 progress significantly predicted Time 3 purpose in life).

Table 6 summarizes total effects of the two motivation measures at Time 1 and Time 2 on subsequent variables in the model. These results show that both Time 1 RARs and Time 1 PARs were enduring motivation components over time; the total effects of Time 1 RARs and Time 1 PARs on all Time 2 and Time 3 variables were significant ($ps < .05$). Change in RARs from Time 1 to Time 2 significantly predicted change in future effort at Time 2 and Time 3; change in PARs from Time 1 to Time 2 predicted change in purpose in life at Time 2 and Time 3. The total effects of the RISC on the other variables in the model were significant except for its effects on purpose in life at all three time points ($ps > .10$).

These results show that (a) both PARs and RARs are enduring motivational components over time and (b) RARs display an upward spiral trend over time. Time 1 RARs were a significant predictor of all Time 2 and Time 3 variables; they had the strongest indirect effect on how much effort was planned for the future. Time 1 PARs were also a significant predictor of all Time 2 and Time 3 variables; they had the strongest indirect effect on purpose in life. In contrast to the findings for RARs, there was no evidence of an upward spiral effect for PARs. Thus, effort and progress toward goals enhance RARs, but not PARs, for goals.

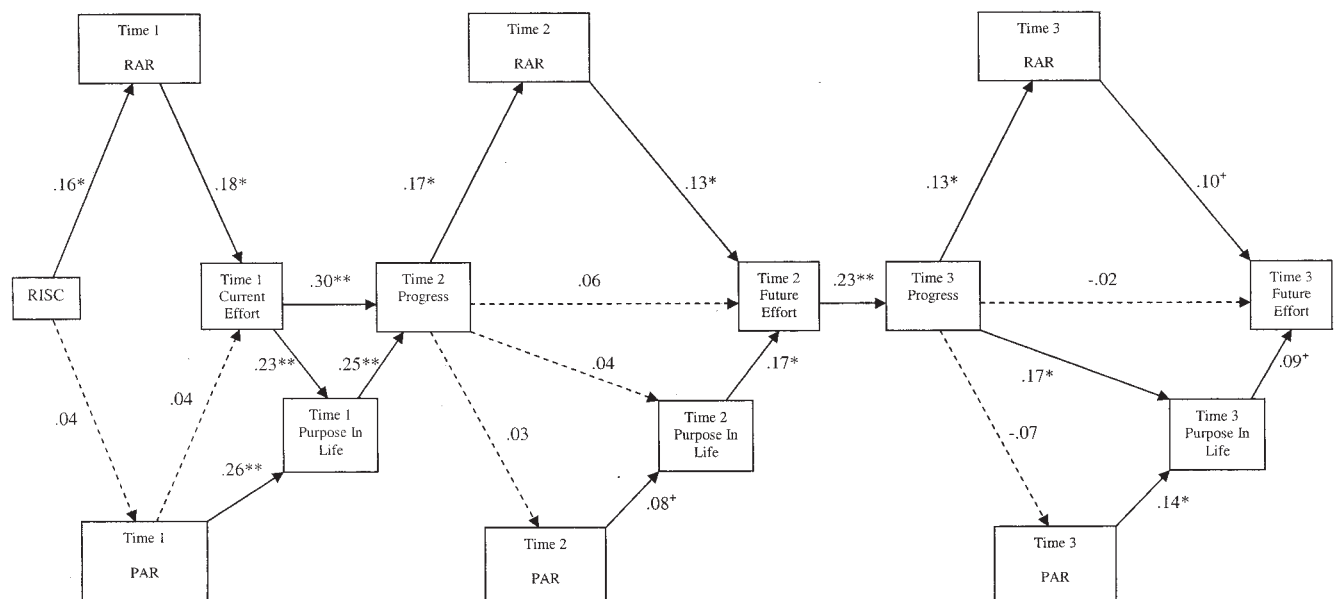


Figure 4. Three-wave model of goal pursuit (Study 2). The stability coefficients among measures assessed at multiple time points were estimated in this model but are not shown in the interest of clarity. All of the stability coefficients were significant and positive ($p < .05$). Solid arrow-lines represent paths that were statistically significant or marginally significant ($ps < .10$), and dotted arrow-lines represent paths that were nonsignificant ($ps > .10$ or ns). RISC = Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal Scale; RAR = relationally autonomous reasons; PAR = personally autonomous reasons. $^+p < .10$. $*p < .05$. $**p < .01$.

Table 6
Standardized Total Effects of RARs and PARs at Time 1 and Time 2 on the Time 1 and Time 2 Variables in the Upward Spiral Model (Study 2)

Variable	Time 1 RARs	Time 1 PARs	Time 2 RARs	Time 2 PARs
Time 1 current effort	.18**	.04		
Time 1 purpose in life	.04*	.27**		
Time 2 progress	.07*	.08*		
Time 2 purpose in life	.04*	.27**	—	.08**
Time 2 future effort	.14**	.07*	.13**	.01
Time 3 progress	.07**	.06*	.03†	.00
Time 3 purpose in life	.04*	.28**	.01	.09**
Time 3 future effort	.14**	.07*	.14**	.02

Note. RARs = relationally autonomous reasons; PARs = personally autonomous reasons.

† $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

General Discussion

PARs for pursuing one's goals are based on "enduring interests and values" (termed *self-concordant reasons* by Sheldon & Elliot, 1999, p. 482), or the relative autonomy of goal motives for the individual. RARs for pursuing one's goals are based on the needs, desires, and commitments of the self within a close relationship. Although the internalized interests of close others may be implied in the definition of PARs, relational reasons for goals have not been examined extensively in empirical research, nor have they been given adequate consideration as possibly autonomous or volitional motives.

Autonomous or volitional pursuit of relationships has been previously explored (e.g., Blais, Sabourin, Boucher, & Vallerand, 1990), as has autonomous engagement in collectivistic acts (e.g., Chirkov & Ryan, 2001; Chirkov et al., 2003), but no one has examined the relative autonomy of relational reasons for the pursuit of a wide range of goals. This research has shown that people pursue goals for reasons that are both personal and relational and that both are effective. Moreover, if reasons for a goal emphasize relational as well as volitional factors, those reasons energize the person rather than dilute his or her motivation to attain the goal.

We recognize that the interests of close others can be intrusive, particularly if their interests are in conflict with one's own, but close others' interests also can be an added positive source of drive. One of the main purposes of this research was to test the hypothesis that rationales for pursuing goals that both are autonomous and involve close relationships would be important factors in goal pursuit after controlling for autonomous reasons that are individualized. If the most important factor in people's RARs was their personal involvement, then RARs would not have predicted unique variance in goal outcome variables after controlling for the variance explained by PARs. In addition, if people perceived themselves as being controlled by others when they pursued a goal for the sake of a close relationship, then the RAR measure would not have predicted goal outcomes over an extended period of time. Both studies, however, showed the same general pattern in which RARs predicted both concurrent and long-term goal outcomes after controlling for variance explained by PARs. Thus, it is important to consider these constructs as two important categories of goal motivation.

These findings also demonstrate that RARs and PARs may have different roles in the goal pursuit process. In both studies, the degree to which a person pursued a goal for RARs directly predicted the amount of effort the person exerted toward his or her goal. In contrast, both studies revealed that pursuing goals for PARs directly predicted the amount of purpose the person felt. We suspect that PARs give people a sense of purpose because they feel they truly own the goal, which in turn promotes plans for future effort. This replicates findings from past studies on PARs and well-being (Chirkov & Ryan, 2001; Chirkov et al., 2003; Sheldon, Elliot, Kim, & Kasser, 2001; Sheldon, Ryan, Deci, & Kasser, 2004). Unfortunately, well-being is only one of several possible goal outcomes. Pursuing goals for personal reasons is not always associated with concurrent effort toward goals beyond that provided by relational reasons. In comparison, people gain a sense of purpose using RARs for their goals because they work hard to achieve them.

This research used the self-concordance upward spiral model of Sheldon and Houser-Marko (2001) as the starting place for the model in Study 2. An upward spiral effect describes a trend in which the use of particular reasons results in successful goal attainment, which in turn reinforces the use of those reasons and leads to further success. In other words, the reasons and outcomes reinforce each other. Although the conceptual structures of the two models are arguably quite similar, there are some important methodological differences. The well-being measures were different in scope (purpose in life in the current study; adjustment and sense of growth in the Sheldon and Houser-Marko, 2001, study), and the time intervals differed between assessments (4-week intervals in Study 2; several months in the Sheldon & Houser-Marko, 2001, study). Thus, comparisons of the two models should be made carefully. Despite these differences, the Study 2 model was consistent with the Sheldon and Houser-Marko study in that we asked students to reevaluate the reasons for their goals at Time 2 and Time 3. Thus, we were able to examine changes in PARs and RARs, as did Sheldon and Houser-Marko. In contrast to their study, we found no evidence of an upward spiral effect for PARs. Instead, Study 2 found an upward spiral pattern for RARs. The lack of evidence for an upward spiral for PARs could have resulted from the differing time span between our study and the Sheldon and Houser-Marko study. PARs may not change as rapidly as RARs, so longer intervals may be required to identify the upward spiral effects of PARs and goal attainment. In addition, our conceptualization of progress in these studies refers to the amount of progress perceived by the individual, rather than a more objective measure of attainment, such as was used by Sheldon and Houser-Marko. Future studies of the upward spiral model that include multiple motivational components assessed over longer periods of time and objective measures of progress will be useful in addressing these and other issues raised by these studies.

Consistent with motivation studies in Asian cultures (e.g., Baron & Miller, 2000; Heine & Lehman, 1997; Iyengar & Lepper, 1999; Kagitcibasi, 2005; Oishi & Diener, 2001; see Iyengar & Lepper, 2002, for a review), our studies point to the value of including relational sources of motivation in the examination of goal pursuit. These studies, however, examined RARs only in a Western cultural context, so we are unable to draw conclusions regarding the association between RARs and goal outcomes for members of other cultures. Because members of East Asian cultures construe

themselves as interdependent and connected with others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), we predict that relational reasons for goals may be more important in goal pursuit for members of East Asian cultures than for North Americans. We have begun to examine this hypothesis in an initial study of relational reasons for goals in a sample of students in Japan (Gore et al., 2005). This cross-sectional study revealed that the association between RARs and effort is stronger for Japanese than for Americans. These findings suggest that both autonomy and relatedness needs are satisfied when people use RARs for goal pursuit and that these needs are important for members of both Eastern and Western cultures. In addition, in other cross-cultural work, we are examining the relative importance of relatedness, autonomy, and competence in East Asians' goal-directed striving.

Many decisions to act take into account the impact such actions would have on close relationships, and pursuing goals with these relationships in mind is a recognition that close others are an important part of one's life. This perspective on RARs is consistent with other theoretical perspectives that afford relational processes a central role in cognition and motivation. For example, Baldwin and his colleagues have shown that relational schemas, defined as "cognitive structures representing regularities in patterns of interpersonal relatedness" (Baldwin, 1992, p. 461), influence information processing (Baldwin, Carrell, & Lopez, 1990) and self-esteem processes (Baldwin & Sinclair, 1996). Similarly, relational self-construal may be one component of working models of attachment (Collins & Read, 1994). As research in these theoretical domains has shown, close relationships are not always perceived as controlling the self but are often inextricably involved in self-directed action.

Self-determination theory recognizes that feeling connected to others and feeling competent and autonomous are fundamental human needs (Deci & Ryan, 1984, 1991; see also Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Reis, Sheldon, Gable, Roscoe, & Ryan, 2000; Ryan, Kuhl, & Deci, 1997). Some might argue that the impact RARs have on goal pursuit is simply restating the idea that people need to feel connected to others. We propose, instead, that the needs that goals satisfy and the reasons for pursuing goals are distinct components in the goal pursuit process. Both needs and reasons are involved in this process, but needs are associated with which goals are pursued (or goal content), whereas reasons are associated with why goals are pursued. For example, a person may fulfill his or her need for relatedness by helping others in the community (Carver & Baird, 1998; Sheldon & Elliot, 1999; Sheldon & Kasser, 1995), but this need could be satisfied for an individualized reason (e.g., "I believe it is good to help other people") or for a relational one (e.g., "I want to become closer to the people in my community"). In accordance with recent research showing the distinct importance of goal content and goal reasons (Carver & Baird, 1998; Sheldon et al., 2004; Srivastava, Locke, & Bartol, 2001; Vansteenkiste, Simons, Lens, Sheldon, & Deci, 2004), we argue that it is important to recognize the difference between the content of goals and the reasons why the individual is pursuing them to fully understand the effort exerted toward particular goals and the outcomes associated with that effort. This distinction emphasizes that although the type of goal pursued satisfies a particular need, it is the reason behind the goal's pursuit that provides the energy to strive toward it.

Implications for Self and Motivation Research

Examination of variations in self-definitions across individuals reveals that the self is motivated in diverse ways. Sheldon and Elliot (1998) argued that autonomously motivated goals that express the "core volitional self" (p. 546) are more likely to be attained than goals that are controlled by external influences or internalized sanctions. For many people, the self is best expressed in terms of *we*, and the involvement of others in one's actions may be experienced as agentic rather than coerced. If the self is construed as relational and interdependent with others, then RARs for goals also are important in goal pursuit. The results of the current research suggest that an expanded understanding of the nature of the self results in an expanded notion of beneficial reasons for goal pursuit.

What makes these self-defining relationships effective sources of motivation? If another person is included in the self, then that person's needs and wishes may be as important as one's own needs and wishes. As Aron et al. (1991) have shown, the other person's attributes may also be cognitively integrated with one's own. When cognitive representations of the self and a close other overlap, a goal that is shared by both members of the dyad or that is represented as a function of the relationship (rather than of the individual alone) may be perceived as volitional and self-expressive even though it includes a consideration of the other person. In the words of Rusbult and colleagues (Rusbult & Van Lange, 1996; Rusbult, Wieselquist, Foster, & Witcher, 1999), the motivation is transformed so that seeking the partner's happiness (usually defined as controlled motivation) becomes intrinsically rewarding. Thus, it is not simply relational reasons that prompt goal-directed action but relational reasons that are also viewed as volitional and intrinsic to the self (rather than controlled) that promote continuous efforts to accomplish one's goals (Deci & Ryan, 1991). To quote Chirkov et al. (2003) again, "if others are integrated within oneself . . . doing for or conforming to those others could be fully volitional" (p. 107).

Other motivational theories may require reexamination in light of the relational self and RARs. For example, recent research has shown that the desire to reduce cognitive dissonance among collectivists is dependent on the degree to which close others' interests are made salient (Kitayama, Snibbe, Markus, & Suzuki, 2004). Contrary to the predictions of self-evaluation maintenance theory (Tesser, 1988; Tesser, Miller, & Moore, 1988; Gardner, Gabriel, and Hochschild (2002) found that when relational self-construal was primed, people's self-esteem was less threatened when outperformed by a friend than by a stranger. Stapel and Koomen (2001) found that the activation of a *we* frame of reference (similar to the activation of relational self-construal) led to increased perceptions of similarity with close others rather than the differentiation of the self from others that many theories would predict (e.g., Brewer, 1991). As exploration into self-construal variation continues, self-relevant theories of motivation and behavior will expand and adapt to account for this diversity.

Conclusions

People pursue goals that can range from everyday chores to lifelong commitments. The reasons for pursuing these goals may be difficult for the individual to articulate, but more likely than not,

many of those reasons involve the consideration of friends, family, and colleagues. Other people, especially people with whom one has close relationships, can be important sources of motivation. This type of motivation can be just as strong as motivation that stems solely from the individual's personal beliefs and values.

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