

The Interactional Context of Problem-, Emotion-, and Relationship-Focused Coping: The Role of the Big Five Personality Factors

Tess Byrd O'Brien and Anita DeLongis
University of British Columbia

ABSTRACT This study examined the role that personality and situational factors play in three forms of coping responses: problem-, emotion- and relationship-focused. Coping responses were strongly associated with whether the situation involved a primarily agentic (work) or communal (interpersonal) stressor. Among communal stressors, the involvement of close versus distant others was also associated with coping responses. Situational factors were linked most strongly with the use of problem-focused (planful problem solving) and relationship-focused (empathic responding) modes of coping. Dimensions of personality derived from the five-factor model (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness) had important associations with coping responses. Coping responses were best predicted by models that included both the additive and multiplicative effects of person and situation factors. Taken together, the findings suggest that a model of coping that considers both agentic and communal dimensions of stressful situations, includes interpersonal dimensions of coping, and considers person-

The research for this article was supported by grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRCC 410-91-1596 and 410-94-1718) to the second author and fellowships from the Medical Research Council of Canada and the SSHRCC to the first author. This research was conducted as part of Tess O'Brien's master's thesis at the University of British Columbia. The authors would like to thank Darrin Lehman, Dimitri Papageorgis, Del Paulhus, Ron Pound, Melady Preece, and Jerry Wiggins for their suggestions and comments. Address correspondence to Anita DeLongis, Department of Psychology, University of British Columbia, 2136 West Mall, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6T 1Z4. E-mail may be sent to ADELONGIS@CORTEX.PSYCH.UBC.CA.

Journal of Personality 64:4, December 1996.
Copyright © 1996 by Duke University Press.

ality and situation factors in tandem is needed to increase the predictive utility of current models.

One of the central tenets of transactional-relational models of stress and coping (Aldwin, 1994; DeLongis & O'Brien, 1990; Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter, DeLongis, & Gruen, 1986) is that stress and coping processes unfold from a dynamic interplay of person and situation. However, little research has examined the interactional context of stress and coping processes. The role of personality in coping may depend, at least in part, on the context in which the stressor occurs. That is, the same personality trait may be expressed quite differently depending upon the constraints of the social context (Block, 1968; Buss, 1992; Sullivan, 1953; Wiggins & Trapnell, 1996). Further, other than the extensive body of research documenting the role of social support in adaptation to stress, relatively little is known about other ways in which stress, coping, and adjustment are influenced by dimensions of the social context (Coyne & DeLongis, 1986). Yet there is a growing recognition that interpersonal factors may influence virtually every aspect of the stress and coping process, including the occurrence and appraisal of stressful events, the selection and efficacy of coping strategies, and the impact of stress on well-being (e.g., Eckenrode, 1991; O'Brien & DeLongis, *in press*).

The present study examines the additive and interactive effects of the Big Five personality traits (i.e., Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness; Costa & McCrae, 1985; McCrae, 1992) and dimensions of the social context on three forms of coping: problem-focused, emotion-focused, and relationship-focused. We also describe a measure of relationship-focused coping, which taps coping efforts aimed at maintaining and protecting social relationships during times of stress (DeLongis & O'Brien, 1990; O'Brien & DeLongis, *in press*).

The Role of Personality in Coping

In the last decade, there have been a number of calls for research examining the role of personality in stress and coping processes (e.g., Costa & McCrae, 1990; Horowitz, 1990; Moos & Swindle, 1990). Concurrently, the five-factor model of personality has emerged as the predominant model for specifying personality structure (McCrae, 1992; Wiggins, 1996). Although these five factors have become widely accepted as being core dimensions of personality (see Block, 1995, for an opposing

view), relatively few studies have examined their role in coping, and fewer still have examined the independent effects of each of the five factors on coping. In fact, a review of the literature reveals that, for the most part, research has been limited to an examination of the role of Neuroticism and Extraversion in coping. Studies addressing the possibility that the effect of personality on coping may vary by situation are conspicuously absent. The present study sought to address these issues.

Neuroticism (N). Those high on N are characterized by a tendency to experience negative affect, such as anxiety, depression or sadness, hostility, and self-consciousness, as well as a tendency to be impulsive (for reviews, see McCrae, 1992; McCrae & Costa, 1987). The findings of several studies suggest that those who are high on N are less likely to engage in problem-focused coping (Endler & Parker, 1990; Hooker, Frazier, & Monahan, 1994; Parkes, 1986). Instead, they tend to rely on emotion-focused forms of coping, particularly ones that involve escape-avoidance and self-blame (Bolger, 1990; Endler & Parker, 1990; Hooker et al., 1994; McCrae & Costa, 1986; Terry, 1994). They are also more prone to endorse coping responses that indicate hostile reactions, passivity, and indecisiveness (McCrae & Costa, 1986).

Extraversion (E). Those high on E tend to experience positive emotions and to be warm, gregarious, fun-loving, and assertive (McCrae, 1992; McCrae & Costa, 1987). Studies examining associations between E and coping have found that those high on E engage in higher levels of problem-focused coping than those low on E (Hooker et al., 1994; McCrae & Costa, 1986; Parkes, 1986). Those high on E also engage in less avoidance and other maladaptive forms of emotion-focused coping. Instead, they are more inclined to employ what might be considered "adaptive" forms of emotion-focused coping (e.g., Hooker et al., 1994; McCrae & Costa, 1986). That is, they tend to engage in more support seeking (Hooker et al., 1994), positive thinking, substitution, and restraint (McCrae & Costa, 1986), but use less self-blame, wishful thinking, and avoidance than those low on E (Hooker et al., 1994). However, one study (Endler & Parker, 1990) found no significant relations between E and emotion-focused coping. For women only, there was a significant positive association between E and the use of task-focused coping.

Openness to Experience (O). Those high on O are inclined to be curious, imaginative, creative, original, artistic, psychologically minded, and

flexible. They tend to have differentiated emotions, aesthetic sensitivity, broad interests, a preference for variety, and unconventional values (McCrae, 1992; McCrae, 1993–94; McCrae & Costa, 1987; McCrae, Costa, & Piedmont, 1993; McCrae & John, 1992). Few studies have examined the role of O in coping, and the findings of these studies are inconsistent. Across two studies, McCrae and Costa (1986) found that those high on O were more likely to employ humor in the face of stress, whereas those low on O were more likely to rely upon faith to cope with stress. However, there were a number of forms of coping that were associated with scores on O in only one of the two studies. Open individuals were more likely to engage in hostile reaction, perseverance, positive thinking, drawing strength from adversity, indecisiveness, withdrawal, self-adaptation, escapist fantasy, distraction, sedation, substitution, and emotional expression. The only other study we are aware of that examined relations between O and coping (Hooker et al., 1994) found that O was unrelated to coping. This latter study examined coping with caregiving for a spouse with dementia, and it may be that differences between those high and low on O are not pulled for in coping with this relatively narrow band of stressors. However, because people high on O are described as creative, original, and imaginative (Costa & McCrae, 1985; McCrae, 1993–94), they might be expected to be particularly effective copers, able to utilize modes of coping, such as positive reappraisal, that have frequently been associated with positive outcomes (e.g., Folkman, Lazarus, Gruen, & DeLongis, 1986). Nonetheless, the mixed findings of the few published studies make it difficult to form firm expectations about how those high on O would be likely to cope with stress.

Agreeableness (A) and Conscientiousness (C). Agreeableness has been identified as the opposite pole of antagonism. It reflects a proclivity to be good-natured, acquiescent, courteous, helpful, and trusting. Conscientiousness has been identified as the opposite pole of undirectedness. Those high on C have been characterized as having a tendency to be habitually careful, reliable, hard-working, well-organized, and purposeful (McCrae, 1992; McCrae & Costa, 1987). To our knowledge, only one study (Hooker et al., 1994) has examined the role of A and C in coping. This study found that those high on A were more likely to cope via seeking support and less likely to utilize other forms of emotion-focused coping (i.e., self-blame, avoidance, and wishful thinking). Those high on C reported high use of problem-focused coping and low use of emotion-focused coping.

Collectively, these studies provide evidence that at least four of the five basic dimensions of personality (N, E, A, and C) play a role in determining the ways in which people cope with stress. However, the findings of a number of these studies may suffer from problems with retrospective contamination. For example, in McCrae and Costa's (1986) study, the stressful situation described could have occurred up to 21 months prior to assessment. Previous research has suggested that the more time that elapses between the event and the assessment, the more likely study participants will be biased toward giving dispositional reports of their behavior (Moore, Sherrod, Liv, & Underwood, 1979; Peterson, 1980), thus overestimating the relationship between personality and coping responses. Further, when recall periods are long, the retrospective contamination that may occur is likely to be systematically related to measures of personality. For example, those high on N may be more likely to have distorted memories and may be more biased toward the recollection of negatively toned information (Bolger & Schilling, 1991; Martin, Ward, & Clark, 1983; Young & Martin, 1981). Tennen and Herzberger (1985) have suggested that a recall period of 1 week or less be used in studies requesting respondents to report on specific coping responses. Few studies, however, have employed this relatively brief recommended recall period (for a notable exception, see Bolger, 1990).

The one study (Hooker et al., 1994) that examined the association of all dimensions of the five-factor model of personality with coping had no time frame at all for which participants were asked to recall their coping. Instead, participants were asked to report their coping with caring for a spouse with dementia "in general." Relationships between coping and personality are likely to be inflated in such studies, given that there are many ways in which retrospective contamination might bias such reports (DeLongis, Hemphill, & Lehman, 1992), including systematic error that might be introduced in how respondents aggregate across coping occasions to report a "general" coping style.

The Influence of the Stressful Situation on Coping

Numerous studies have provided evidence suggesting substantial specificity in coping across different types of stressors, and several reviews of the literature have concluded that coping is sensitive to situational constraints (e.g., Eckenrode, 1991; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Wethington & Kessler, 1991). Consistent across a number of studies is the finding

that similar situations tend to elicit similar patterns of coping and that diverse sources of stress elicit diverse patterns of coping. For example, Stone and Neale (1984) found that people showed moderate levels of within-person consistency when they were coping with the same problem over time. Similarly, Compas, Forsythe, and Wagner (1988) found that individuals exhibited a consistent pattern of coping when dealing with the same stressor over a period of time. However, when individual coping was evaluated across different types of stressors, these investigators found that levels of consistency were low.

The ability for researchers to determine the extent to which coping is situationally specific depends, at least in part, upon the ways that stressful situations are categorized. Research addressing the role of situation in coping has employed a number of ways of differentiating stressful situations, including grouping by event or stressor types (e.g., health, loss of a loved one, financial problem, interpersonal; Maitlin, Wethington, & Kessler, 1990), grouping by role domains (e.g., work, parenting, marital; Fleishman, 1984; Pearlin & Schooler, 1978), and classifying stressors by the cognitive appraisals they elicit (i.e., threat, loss, challenge; McCrae, 1984; McCrae & Costa, 1986).

Recently, the metaconstructs of agency and communion (Bakan, 1966; Helgeson, 1994; Wiggins & Trapnell, 1996) have been extended to characterize basic dimensions of situations (Moskowitz, 1993). These dimensions may have particular heuristic value for stress and coping research (O'Brien & DeLongis, *in press*). Agentic situations have been characterized as involving demands that are related to strivings for mastery, power, achievement, work performance, and instrumental task completion. In contrast, communal situations have been characterized as involving demands that are related to strivings for love, intimacy, friendship, affiliation, emotional relatedness, belongingness, mutuality, group cohesion, communality, and relationship maintenance. It has been posited that agentic situations elicit agentic acts and that communal situations elicit communal acts. Extending this notion to coping, the demands of agentic situations may pull for the use of agentic (i.e., task-oriented) forms of coping, whereas the demands of communal situations may pull for the use of communal (i.e., interpersonally oriented) forms of coping. The types of emotion-focused coping also may differ because agentic and communal situational demands may elicit distinctly different emotions (cf. Lazarus, 1991).

Previous stress and coping research has found situational consistencies in coping that can be categorized along agentic and communal

lines. For example, several studies have found that problem-focused strategies, such as planful problem solving and instrumental action, are used more for work stressors than for interpersonal stressors (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980; Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter et al., 1986; Terry, 1994). One study found that self-control was employed more for work stressors than for interpersonal stressors (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter et al., 1986). In contrast, previous research has indicated that seeking support, catharsis, confrontive coping, cautiousness, and seeking meaning are relied upon more when stressors are interpersonal in nature than when stressors are work-related (Compas et al., 1988; Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter et al., 1986; Terry, 1994).

Previous research also suggests that the effectiveness of particular strategies may differ in agentic and communal situations (Hart, 1991; Maitlin et al., 1990; Pearlin & Schooler, 1978). Further, there is increasing evidence to suggest that agentic and communal stressors have a differential impact on well-being. For example, Bolger, DeLongis, Kessler, and Schilling (1989) compared the impact of interpersonal stressors (e.g., conflicts or tension in social relationships) with work overload stressors (e.g., household and job demands) and found that interpersonal stressors accounted for more than 80% of the explained variance in daily mood. The results also indicated that the negative effects of interpersonal stressors tended to persist over several days, whereas emotional habituation typically ensued more rapidly in response to work overload stressors. These findings are consistent with those from a number of studies indicating that problems in social relationships can have serious implications for well-being (e.g., Brown & Harris, 1978; Burman & Margolin, 1992; Gotlib & Whiffen, 1989; Hammen, 1992). Moreover, Bolger et al. (1989) found that the impact of interpersonal stressors varied by the type of social relationship that was involved in the conflict. These data suggest that finer gradations of interpersonal stressors (i.e., differentiating stressors that involve close others from stressors that involve distant others) may be needed to increase the predictive utility of situation classifications for stress and coping studies.

Taken together, this evidence suggests that employing an agentic-communal typology to classify stressful situations may be a useful way of discriminating fundamental dimensions of situational demands. In the present study, we addressed the role of agentic and communal situations in coping. Further, in view of Bolger et al.'s (1989) finding that conflict involving close versus more distant others differentially impacts

on the stress process, we distinguished communal stressors that involve someone close to the participant (e.g., significant others, family members, close friends) from interpersonal stressors with someone who is not close to the participant (e.g., coworkers, acquaintances).

Interpersonal dimensions of coping. Despite accumulating evidence indicating the harmful impact of interpersonal stressors, available coping measures contain few items that tap ways of coping with the interpersonal dimensions of stressors. Confrontive coping and seeking social support are among the only interpersonally oriented modes typically found on measures of coping. To date, most research has focused on two functions of coping: problem-focused (coping strategies geared toward changing the stressful situation itself) and emotion-focused (coping strategies geared toward managing the negative emotions often generated by stressful circumstances). However, the conceptualization of coping has recently been expanded to include coping efforts that serve an interpersonal regulation function. This function has been termed relationship-focused coping (Coyne & Smith, 1991; DeLongis & O'Brien, 1990; O'Brien & DeLongis, in press) and refers to modes of coping aimed at managing, regulating, or preserving relationships during stressful periods. Successful coping may not only involve solving problems and managing emotions but may also involve maintaining and protecting social relationships, particularly when stressors occur in interpersonal contexts.

A number of studies have found that there tends to be a heavy cost exacted in caring for others who are chronically ill or distressed (Gottlieb, in press; Kessler, McLeod, & Wethington, 1985; Revenson, 1994; Stephens, Crowther, Hobfoll, & Tennenbaum, 1990). However, recent research suggests that some forms of relationship-focused coping may serve to protect people from these negative effects. For example, Kramer (1993) studied caregivers of Alzheimer's patients and examined both positive relationship-focused coping strategies (i.e., empathy, support provision, compromise) and negative relationship-focused coping strategies (i.e., confronting, ignoring, blaming, and withdrawal). She found that the use of positive relationship-focused strategies was associated with higher caregiver satisfaction and that the use of negative relationship-focused coping strategies was associated with higher levels of caregiver depression.

The present study focuses upon one mode of relationship-focused coping that we have identified as being potentially important to the man-

agement and resolution of interpersonal stressors: empathic responding (DeLongis & O'Brien, 1990; O'Brien & DeLongis, in press). Although empathy was identified long ago as a form of coping (Haan, 1977), it has rarely been considered in current models of stress and coping. Nonetheless, empathy is a key determinant of prosocial behavior, propelling caring, supportive actions between people (for reviews, see Clark, 1991; Eisenberg & Miller, 1987). Drawn from previous research regarding empathy (for reviews, see Goldstein & Michaels, 1985; Strayer, 1987), empathic responding can be seen as involving the following dimensions: (a) efforts to engage in perspective taking or to take the role of the other by attempting to view the world as the other sees it; (b) efforts to vicariously experience the involved other's feelings and concerns and to evoke one's own affective and cognitive associations to that experience; (c) efforts to interpret the psychological states underlying the other's verbal and nonverbal communication; and (d) efforts to respond sensitively to another person out of a state of concern or to express caring or understanding in an accepting, nonjudgmental, emotionally validating manner.

Previous research suggests that individuals who use empathically based strategies in responding to others who are distressed experience less upset than those who use less sensitive interpersonal strategies (e.g., trying to cheer the other person up, minimizing others' feelings and concerns, telling others what they should feel and think) (Burlinson, 1985, 1990; Notarius & Herrick, 1988). Those who use less sensitive strategies in facing the overt displays of another's distress have been found to be more anxious and depressed following social interactions than those who use more empathic responses. The users of empathic strategies also are perceived more positively by others than those using less sensitive strategies (Burlinson & Samter, 1985). A lack of empathic responding may contribute to the etiology and maintenance of disturbed social relationships; conversely, the ability to respond empathically during times of stress may serve to create and maintain satisfying and meaningful relationships (e.g., Beach, Sandeen, & O'Leary, 1990; Dix, 1991; Safran & Segal, 1990; Tune, Lucas-Blaustein, & Rovner, 1988).

There are individual differences in tendencies and abilities to engage in empathy (Eisenberg et al., 1994; Strayer, 1987). Nonetheless, empathy may also be viewed in more process-oriented terms (Buck, 1989; Lazarus, 1991; Strayer, 1987). For example, the presence of close others has been found to elicit empathic responding (Burlinson, 1985; Cramer, 1985, 1987). Conversely, high levels of personal distress and

high intensities of anxiety or alarm have been found to inhibit empathic processes (Batson, Fultz, & Schoenrade, 1987; Lehman, Ellard, & Wortman, 1986). Taken together, these findings suggest that the use of empathic responding to cope with stress may be best predicted by the person in situ. That is, those individuals who experience high levels of personal distress when interacting with others may be less inclined to use empathic responding than those who experience low distress. Instead, the former may rely on the use of emotion-focused forms of coping to regulate their feelings of alarm and anxiety.

Specificity in the Influence of Personality on Coping Responses

It has long been recognized that the behavioral expression of various personality traits may differ depending upon situational factors (Snyder & Ickes, 1985). However, the extent to which the role of personality in coping varies by situation remains relatively unexamined in the coping literature. Nonetheless, there is some evidence for situational specificity in the effect of personality on coping. For example, Fleishman (1984) found that the trait of mastery was associated with problem-focused coping (i.e., direct action) in work contexts but was not associated with problem-focused coping (i.e., negotiation and discipline) in marital and parenting contexts. Further, Parkes (1986) examined relations between N and the use of direct action under conditions of low, moderate, and high work demands. For those low on N, the use of direct action was highest when work demands were at a moderate level. For those high on N, the use of direct action was not affected by work demands.

The findings of these initial studies suggest that the examination of Person \times Situation interactions in the prediction of coping responses to stress is a promising area for inquiry. Further, they suggest that work (agentic) and interpersonal (communal) dimensions of stressful situations may be particularly important in terms of their interactions with personality in determining coping responses.

The Present Study

Our central goal was to examine the roles of personality and the stressful situation in problem-, emotion-, and relationship-focused coping. A second goal was to develop a measure of relationship-focused coping and to assess its association with problem- and emotion-focused modes

of coping. We expected that dimensions of both personality and the stressful situation, as well as their interaction, would contribute significant variance to the prediction of coping.¹

Relation between Personality and Coping

As a set, we expected dimensions of the five-factor model to account for significant proportions of the variance in problem-focused coping (planful problem solving) and in two forms of emotion-focused coping, accepting responsibility and escape-avoidance. These predictions were made on the basis of previous findings suggesting an association at the bivariate level between N, E, A, and C with both escape-avoidance coping and accepting responsibility, and an association between N, E, and C with problem-focused coping. Although previous findings are mixed with respect to the role of personality in coping via support seeking and positive reappraisal, we examined the role of personality in these forms of coping as well. Expectations for support seeking and positive reappraisal are based on previous findings at the bivariate level indicating that E and A are related to support seeking and that E and O are related to positive reappraisal in at least one study.

Significant independent associations of specific personality dimensions with coping were also expected as a result of previous findings. We expected those higher on N to report using more escape-avoidance, accepting responsibility (self-blame), and confrontation, and less planful problem solving than those lower on N. We anticipated that those higher on E would report using more planful problem solving, support seeking, and positive reappraisal than those lower on E. We also anticipated that those higher on O would report higher levels of positive reappraisal than those lower on O. Like those higher in E, those higher on A were expected to report more seeking social support than those lower on A. Further, based on Hooker et al.'s (1994) findings indicating negative relations between E, A, and C and emotion-focused coping, at least at the bivariate level, we expected higher scores on these dimensions to be associated with lower use of escape-avoidance and accepting responsibility. Finally, based on trait descriptions of those high on A as sociable, helpful, and nonhostile in their interpersonal style (McCrae, 1992; McCrae & Costa, 1987), and given the hostile tone of many of the items used to tap confrontative coping (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-

1. In using the term "predict," we intend it in the statistical sense.

Schetter et al., 1986), we anticipated that those higher on A would report using less confrontation than those lower on A.

Relation between Situation and Coping

Based on previous research, we expected that planful problem solving would be used more in stressful agentic situations than in stressful communal situations. We anticipated that accepting responsibility would be used more in coping with agentic stressors than with communal stressors, given that it may be easier to attribute blame to someone else when the stressor is communal. In general, we hypothesized that the use of interpersonally oriented forms of coping, such as confrontation and empathic responding, would be higher in communal situations than in agentic situations. However, given the previous research suggesting that the presence of a close other elicits empathic processes, we predicted that the use of empathic responding would be highest in communal situations that involved close others.

Person \times Situation Interactions and Coping

We anticipated that for some forms of coping, the role of personality would vary by the type of stressful situation. Given the absence of previous literature examining such interactions, despite numerous suggestions in the literature that such interactions should be expected based on current models of coping (e.g., Aldwin, 1994), any hypotheses put forth must be tentative. First, previous findings suggest that those individuals who experience high levels of personal distress when interacting with others may be less inclined to use empathic responding than those who are low in distress. This suggests that those higher on N may be less likely to use empathic responding to manage interpersonal stressors and more likely to use emotion-focused modes of coping to regulate personal distress. Alternatively, those lower on N would be expected to increase their use of empathic responding in coping with interpersonal stressors. We therefore expected to find an N \times Stressor Type interaction in predicting empathic responding. We did not anticipate finding differences between those lower and higher on N in agentic situations because this situation was generally not likely to pull for empathic responding. Second, we predicted that in coping with communal stressors in close relationships, those higher on N would use more maladaptive emotion-focused forms of coping to deal with their higher levels of distress. Whereas those lower on N might deal with such stressors

by engaging in empathic coping, previous research suggests that those lower on "emotional stability" tend to engage in more coercive tactics, such as coercion, silent treatment, regression, and debasement in dealing with close others (Buss, 1992; Buss, Gomes, Higgins, & Lauterbach, 1987). We expected those higher on N to engage in more confrontation in coping with communal stressors that involved someone close as opposed to someone distant. Third, Marcia (1987) has suggested that the use of empathy requires the ability to be open to the emotional experiences of others. Given that those higher on O have been characterized as having an ability to be open to feelings (McCrae & Costa, 1987), we anticipated that those higher on O would have a greater ability to be open to the feelings of others and to engage in empathic responding than those lower on O. However, descriptions of O suggest that those high on this trait would be flexible in their coping, able to tailor their coping to the demands of the stressful situation. Thus, we postulated that the relationship between O and empathic coping would depend on the need for empathic coping. We anticipated that for those high on O, levels of empathic coping would be highest in close communal situations and lowest in agentic situations. Finally, given previous findings linking C to better work performance (Barrick & Mount, 1991), we expected those higher on C to engage in more planful problem solving in coping with agentic stressors than with communal stressors.

METHOD

Participants

The sample consisted of 270 undergraduate students (37% men, 63% women) from a large public university. Participants were awarded extra credit for taking part in the study. The mean age of the participants was 21 years, with a range from 18 to 50 years.

Procedure

Participants were asked to complete a series of self-report questionnaires, assessing personality, stressful situation, coping, and social desirability. Only those measures used in the current study are reported here.

Measures

Stressful situation. The stressful situation was coded from participant responses to the following: "Considering all of your experiences in the past week, please

tell us about the event or experience that was *most* stressful for you. This may have been some problem or tension with your family, something involving your work or friends, or even something as minor as getting caught in a traffic jam. Describe what happened and what was stressful about it." Responses were coded into one of four categories: agentic, close communal, other communal, or miscellaneous other stressors. Events or experiences that were described as occurring in the situation of job or school that were not primarily interpersonal in nature were coded as agentic stressors (39%). Events or experiences that were primarily interpersonal in nature were coded into one of two categories depending on how close the involved other was to the participant. Stressors described as involving a close friend, spouse, romantic partner, or family member were coded as close communal (33%). All other stressors that were described as primarily interpersonal in nature but not involving a close other, such as those involving acquaintances, classmates, or strangers, were coded as other communal (17%). Stressors that could not be coded into one of the previously described categories were coded as miscellaneous (e.g., car breaking down, waiting for medical test results; 11%). Seventy percent of the responses were independently coded by two raters (90% agreement). Discrepancies were resolved by the authors. Given the high level of agreement between coders, the remaining 30% were coded by one of the coders.

Due to the lack of coherence in the miscellaneous stressor categories (i.e., several different types of situations were coded into this category), this category was dropped from the analyses. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) indicated that there were no significant differences between the miscellaneous group and the other situation groups on personality scores, $F(3, 129.5) = .75, ns$.

Personality. Personality was assessed by the NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI; Costa & McCrae, 1989). Each of the 60 items was rated on a 7-point scale. The inventory assesses five personality dimensions: Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. These dimensions reflect the individual's "characteristic emotional, interpersonal, experiential, attitudinal, and motivational styles" (Costa & McCrae, 1989, p. 2). The substantial psychometric research conducted on this scale indicates that it has excellent psychometric properties (see Costa & McCrae, 1989, for a review).

The Ways of Coping (WOC) scale. The WOC (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter et al., 1986; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) was used to assess problem- and emotion-focused functions of coping. The scale taps a wide array of cognitive and behavioral coping strategies. Participants were asked to describe the ways in which they coped with the specific stressful experience they had described in response to the open-ended question. Consistent with the usage of the scale suggested by Tennen and Herzberger (1985), participants were

asked to recall their coping in response to an event that had occurred within the past week, thus reducing the potential for retrospective contamination. Participants rated the extent to which they used each of the coping strategies described in the 67 items that compose the WOC. Responses were rated on a 3-point scale. Previous factor analyses of the WOC have derived eight subscales (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter et al., 1986): distancing (efforts to detach oneself), self-controlling (efforts to control one's feelings), seeking social support (efforts to gain informational or emotional support), accepting responsibility (efforts to acknowledge one's own contribution to the problem), escape-avoidance (wishful thinking and behavioral efforts to escape or avoid the problem), positive reappraisal (efforts to create a positive meaning in terms of personal growth and efforts to use faith), confrontative coping (aggressive attempts to change the situation), and planful problem solving (analytic efforts to formulate plans of action and behavioral instrumental actions to alter the situation). Scores on the subscales have been shown to be related to adaptational outcomes in a number of studies (e.g., Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter et al., 1986; Folkman, Lazarus, Gruen et al., 1986; Folkman, Chesney, Pollack, & Coates, 1993). Therefore, these subscales were used in the present study to increase comparability to other research that has used this scale.

Unless otherwise noted, coping subscale scores reported here were proportional (i.e., relative scores). These were determined by dividing the raw score mean for each subscale by the sum of all coping subscale means. Vitaliano and his colleagues (Vitaliano, Maiuro, Russo, & Becker, 1987) argue that raw scores are confounded with the amount of effort put forth. For example, a person facing a very serious stressor would be expected to endorse many more items than someone facing a more easily managed stressor. Using proportional scores allows us to control for differences in coping effort, facilitating an examination of coping pattern that is not confounded with overall effort.²

Relationship-focused (RF) coping. Relationship-focused coping was assessed with a 10-item Empathic Responding scale (see Table 1) that taps two facets of empathic responding: cognitive/affective strategies (perspective taking and vicarious experiencing of another's concerns and feelings) and behavioral strategies (listening, providing comfort or support). These two facets were expected to be used in tandem. Items were rated on a 3-point scale. The internal reliability of the relationship-focused coping scale was high ($\alpha = .93$).

Social desirability. Social desirability was assessed by the Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR; Paulhus, 1991). This 40-item measure con-

2. Problems with the use of proportionately scored coping scales (Lapp & Collins, 1993) have been raised when scale scores are entered simultaneously as predictor variables in a regression model. This criticism of their use does not apply here since coping scores are treated as outcome variables in our regression analyses.

Table 1
Relationship-Focused Coping Items

Empathic responding ($\alpha = .93$)

Item

1. Tried to understand the other person's concerns.
 2. Tried to understand how the other person felt.
 3. Tried to experience what the other person was feeling.
 4. Imagined myself in the other person's shoes.
 5. Tried to see things from the other person's point of view.
 6. Tried to accept the other person(s) as they are now.
 7. Tried to help the other person(s) involved by listening to them.
 8. Tried to help the other person(s) involved by doing something for them.
 9. Tried to figure out what would make the other person feel better.
 10. Tried to provide comfort to the other person(s) involved by telling them about my positive feelings for them.
-

tains two subscales: (a) Self-Deceptive Enhancement (SDE), which assesses the tendency to give honest, but positively biased, self-reports; and (b) Impression Management (IM), which taps the tendency to overreport positive behaviors and to underreport negative behaviors in a deliberate attempt to positively influence other people's impressions. The measure has high internal and test-retest reliability. Further, scores on the scales have been found to be highly correlated with other standard measures of socially desirable responding (Paulhus, 1991). The BIDR was used to address a potential confound in assessing relationship-focused modes of coping, which is that scores on the relationship-focused scales might reflect social desirability.

Relative relationship-focused coping scores were not significantly correlated with impression management scores ($r = .07, p > .10$) or with self-deception enhancement scores ($r = .03, p > .10$). Raw relationship-focused coping scores also were not significantly correlated with impression management scores ($r = .04, p > .10$) or with self-deception enhancement scores ($r = .01, p > .10$). These findings indicate that the endorsement of relationship-focused coping is not simply a function of a socially desirable response set.

RESULTS

We present our findings in two sections. The first summarizes univariate and bivariate analyses for study variables. The second presents hier-

archical regression analyses using coping as the criterion variable and personality and situational factors as predictor variables.

Coping. The means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among the various coping subscales are shown in Table 2. Because proportional coping scores are not linearly independent, the intercorrelations are based on raw coping scores (i.e., subscale means). Consistent with previous findings (Aldwin & Revenson, 1987; Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter et al., 1986; Terry, 1994), low to moderate intercorrelations among coping subscales were found. These results are consistent with the transactional model of coping which suggests that individuals will use a variety of strategies in managing a stressful episode (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter et al., 1986).

Personality. Table 3 presents the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among the five personality dimensions. Consistent with past research, the personality factors had low to moderate intercorrelations (Costa & McCrae, 1989). An inspection of Table 3 reveals that higher scores on N were significantly related to lower scores on E, A, and C. Higher scores on E were significantly related to higher scores on A and C.

Relations between personality and situational factors. To examine whether there were significant differences in personality dimensions between the situation groups, we conducted a MANOVA. No significant differences in personality indexes between situation groups were found, $F(2, 115) = 1.00, p = .44$. Similarly, no significant differences were found at the univariate level. This suggests that the type of stressful situation that participants described was not related to the participants' scores on the Big Five personality traits. The lack of significant relations between situation and personality may be because we sampled only a single event from each participant's life. An additional factor that may have constrained any relationship from emerging between personality and event type is that there was limited variability in the sorts of events that participants reported, perhaps due to similarities in the lifestyles and life histories of the students sampled.

Relations between personality and coping. The magnitude ($-.33$ to $.24$) of the correlations between personality and coping obtained in this study is similar to that found in other studies of personality and coping

Table 2
Pearson Correlations among Coping Scales (Raw Scores)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. CF	—								
2. PPS	.12	—							
3. SS	.29***	.15*	—						
4. PR	.29***	.28***	.30***	—					
5. SC	.32***	.18**	.23***	.44***	—				
6. AR	.16*	.12	-.01	.21**	.09	—			
7. EA	.29***	.14*	.16*	.26***	.24***	.28***	—		
8. D	.14*	.00	.12	.14*	.40***	-.02	.11	—	
9. ER	.36***	-.08	.23***	.38***	.39***	-.02	.08	.20**	—
Mean	1.50	1.98	1.68	1.49	1.75	1.74	1.55	1.62	1.64
SD	.39	.47	.50	.41	.41	.53	.34	.43	.64

Note. CF = confrontative coping; PPS = planful problem solving; SS = support seeking; PR = positive reappraisal; SC = self-control; AR = accepting responsibility; EA = escape-avoidance; D = distancing; ER = empathic responding.

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$.

Table 3
Intercorrelations: Personality Dimensions

	N	E	O	A	C
Neuroticism (N)	—				
Extraversion (E)	-.34***	—			
Openness (O)	-.12	-.03	—		
Agreeableness (A)	-.13*	.27***	.01	—	
Conscientiousness (C)	-.35***	.20**	9.03	.10	—
Mean	47.52	55.68	56.04	59.04	58.95
SD	12.72	9.66	9.54	9.15	10.57

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$.

(McCrae & Costa, 1986; Terry, 1994) (see Table 4). An examination of the significant bivariate relations between personality and coping suggests the following conclusions. Compared to those lower on N, those higher on N reported relatively less planful problem solving and relatively more accepting responsibility. Those higher on E reported relatively more support seeking and relatively less accepting responsibility than those lower on E. In comparison to those lower on O, those higher on O reported relatively more positive reappraisal and relatively less escape-avoidance. Those higher on A reported relatively more support seeking and relatively less confrontative coping than those lower on A. Compared to those lower on C, those higher on C reported relatively more empathic responding and relatively less accepting responsibility and escape-avoidance.

Stressful situations and coping. The means and standard deviations of each form of coping for the total sample and for each situational group are shown in Table 5. Situational differences in coping were assessed in regression analyses and will be discussed subsequently.

Multiple Regression Analyses of Coping on Person and Situation Variables

Hierarchical regression analyses were conducted to allow an examination of the variance in coping accounted for by personality, stressful situation, and the interaction of Person \times Situation variables (see

Table 4
Pearson Correlations between Coping and Personality Variables

Coping method	Personality Variables				
	N	E	O	A	C
Confrontative	.12	-.04	.01	-.14*	.06
Planful problem solving	-.18**	.06	.03	.02	.12
Support seeking	-.07	.15*	-.03	.18**	.02
Positive reappraisal	-.11	-.02	.22**	.08	.02
Self-control	-.06	.01	.09	-.07	.12
Accepting responsibility	.17*	-.15*	-.07	-.07	-.33***
Escape-avoidance	.24***	-.11	-.15*	-.09	-.24***
Distancing	-.05	-.01	-.10	-.11	.08
Empathic responding	-.02	.07	.04	.11	.14*

Note. N = Neuroticism; E = Extraversion; O = Openness to Experience; A = Agreeableness; C = Conscientiousness.

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$.

Table 6). The five personality traits were entered as a block on Step 1. Situational variables were entered as a block on Step 2. Interaction terms were entered as a block on Step 3. To reduce the amount of collinearity that is introduced when interaction terms are entered into regression analyses with main effect terms, the scores for personality were centered (Aiken & West, 1991). Following procedures described by Aiken and West, the categorical variables were not centered to allow a more meaningful assessment of situational differences.

Regression of coping on personality. As shown in Table 6, the coping variance explained by the block of personality traits when entered as the first step in the regression equation ranged from 3% ($p > .10$) to 12% ($p < .0001$). These personality dimensions accounted for a significant proportion of variance in positive reappraisal, accepting responsibility, and escape-avoidance. Contrary to expectation, the set of five personality dimensions did not account for a significant proportion of the variance in either planful problem solving or support seeking. An examination of specific betas for each personality dimension follows and provides a more complete picture of the relation of personality to coping.

Table 5
Means and Standard Deviations (In Parentheses) of Coping
by Stressful Situation

Coping method	Stressful situation			
	Total sample	Agentic	Close communal	Other communal
Confrontative	.100 (.020)	.095 (.015)	.103 (.022)	.103 (.024)
Planful problem solving	.133 (.031)	.152 (.029)	.117 (.023)	.122 (.027)
Support seeking	.112 (.028)	.109 (.027)	.113 (.027)	.119 (.030)
Positive reappraisal	.099 (.019)	.102 (.017)	.100 (.022)	.092 (.019)
Self-control	.117 (.021)	.114 (.023)	.119 (.018)	.120 (.021)
Accept responsibility	.117 (.033)	.128 (.033)	.106 (.029)	.112 (.032)
Escape-avoidance	.104 (.020)	.111 (.021)	.100 (.020)	.099 (.016)
Distancing	.109 (.025)	.107 (.024)	.106 (.026)	.118 (.025)
Empathic responding	.108 (.034)	.082 (.017)	.136 (.030)	.112 (.027)

By entering scores on the five personality traits simultaneously into the equations, we assessed the relative importance of particular traits in the prediction of coping when the effects of the other traits were controlled. As shown in Table 6, four of the five traits (N, O, A, and C) demonstrated independent effects in the prediction of at least one form of coping. As expected, an independent effect of N on coping was found for confrontation, planful problem solving, and escape-avoidance. In concert with previous studies (e.g., Endler & Parker, 1990; Hooker et al., 1994; McCrae & Costa, 1986), those higher on N reported relatively less planful problem solving than those lower on N. Also con-

Table 6
Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analyses of Coping on Situation, Personality, and Person \times Situation Interactions

	CF	PPS	SS	PR	SC	AR	EA	D	ER
Step 1. Personality									
Neuroticism	.16*	-.16*	-.03	-.12	-.02	.03	.15*	-.04	.08
Extraversion	.02	.00	.10	-.07	.00	-.08	-.01	-.02	.02
Openness	.03	.01	-.03	.19**	.09	-.06	-.12	-.12	.04
Agreeableness	-.14*	-.01	.15*	.08	-.08	-.01	-.05	-.11	.11
Conscientiousness	.13	.06	-.03	-.02	.12	-.30***	-.18**	.08	.14*
R ² change	.05	.04	.05	.06**	.03	.12***	.10***	.03	.03
Step 2. Situation									
Close communal	.19**	-.54***	.06	-.05	.11	-.30***	-.24***	-.02	.75***
Other communal	.14*	-.36***	.16*	-.17*	.13	-.17**	-.24***	.16*	.34***
R ² change	.04*	.28***	.02	.03*	.02	.09***	.07***	.03*	.48***
Step 3. Interaction									
R ² change	.14***	.05*	.02	.03	.09*	.03	.02	.09*	.04*
Overall R ²	.22***	.37***	.09	.12*	.14**	.24***	.20***	.15**	.56***

Note. CF = confrontative coping; PPS = planful problem solving; SS = support seeking; PR = positive reappraisal; SC = self-control; AR = accepting responsibility; EA = escape-avoidance; D = distancing; ER = empathic responding. Standardized regression coefficients (betas) are given. In Step 2, the reference group is the agentic group. A significant beta on this step indicates a significant difference between the predictor group and the agentic group (Aiken & West, 1991).

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

**** $p < .0001$.

sistent with past research (e.g., Bolger, 1990; Endler & Parker, 1990; McCrae & Costa, 1986; Terry, 1994), those higher on N engaged in relatively more escape-avoidance than those lower on N. Participants who were higher on N also reported more confrontive coping than those lower on N, which is consonant with the findings of McCrae and Costa (1986). Contrary to expectations, we found no independent relationship between N and accepting responsibility once the effects of the other personality traits were controlled. However, at the bivariate level, there was a significant positive association between N and accepting responsibility.

Also, contrary to our expectations, we found no independent effects for E in the prediction of coping and found no evidence of independent effects for E in the prediction of planful problem solving and support seeking. However, we did find significant positive Pearson correlations between E and both support seeking and accepting responsibility in the hypothesized direction, as did Hooker et al. (1994). Results for O, however, were consistent with those reported by McCrae and Costa (1986). We found an independent effect of O on positive reappraisal, suggesting that those higher on O engaged in relatively more positive reappraisal than those lower on O. As we expected, the independent effects of coping on A indicated that those higher on A reported relatively less confrontative coping and relatively more support seeking than those lower on A. However, expectations based on the findings of Hooker et al. (1994) regarding the role of A in the emotion-focused coping strategies of accepting responsibility and escape-avoidance were not met.

Independent effects for C on coping were found for three forms of coping. Consistent with the results of Hooker et al. (1994), those higher on C reported relatively less escape-avoidance and accepting responsibility than those lower on C. In interpreting this finding, it should be noted that several of the items on the accepting responsibility subscale denote self-blaming strategies (e.g., "criticized or lectured myself"). Although we made no specific predictions about the role of C in the prediction of empathic responding, we found that those higher on C reported relatively more empathic responding than those lower on C.

Regression of coping on the stressful situation. Dummy codes representing dimensions of the stressful situation (i.e., close communal vs. all other; other communal vs. all other) were entered as a set in the second step of the equation (see Table 6). These two terms were entered in the

equation as a set so that the agentic group would serve as the reference group. When two dummy-coded variables are entered simultaneously, a significant beta reflects a significant difference between the communal group and the agentic group (Aiken & West, 1991). In instances in which regression analyses indicated that the situation as a block had a significant effect on coping, follow-up *t* tests were performed to test differences between the simple slopes for the close communal versus other communal situation groups (Aiken & West, 1991).

Controlling for the variance explained by personality, the amount of variance in coping accounted for by situational variables ranged from 2% ($p > .10$) to 48% ($p < .0001$). As shown in Table 6, situation accounted for a significant proportion of incremental variance for seven of the nine forms of coping examined: confrontative coping, planful problem solving, positive reappraisal, accepting responsibility, escape-avoidance, distancing, and empathic responding. Situation contributed a large proportion of the variance in problem-focused coping (i.e., planful problem solving) and relationship-focused coping (i.e., empathic responding) and a relatively small proportion of the variance in emotion-focused forms of coping.

Next, we turn to an examination of the betas for each of the nine forms of coping regressed on the two dummy-coded stressful situation variables: close communal and other communal. Table 6 shows that after controlling for the effect of the other stressful situations, each situation variable demonstrated independent effects in the prediction of particular forms of coping. Compared to the agentic situation type, both the close communal and other communal situation types were associated with higher proportions of empathic responding. Follow-up analyses indicated that the close communal situation was related to higher proportions of empathic responding than the other communal situation, $t(235, \text{close communal vs. other communal}) = 5.38$, $p < .0001$. Thus, although empathic coping was used more for communal situations than for agentic situations, the use of empathic coping was greater for stressors that involved someone close than for stressors that involved someone more distant. Paralleling past research (e.g., Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter et al., 1986), confrontative coping was positively related to communal situations and negatively related to agentic situations, indicating that confrontative coping was used more in response to communal stressors than in response to agentic stressors.

Consistent with prior research (e.g., Folkman & Lazarus, 1980; Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter et al., 1986; Hart, 1991; Terry, 1994),

compared to agentic situations, both close communal situations and other communal situations were related to lower proportions of planful problem solving. As hypothesized, both communal situations were associated with lower proportions of accepting responsibility when compared with agentic situations. Also as expected, close communal and other communal situations were associated with lower proportions of escape-avoidance in comparison with agentic situations. Hence, planful problem solving, accepting responsibility, and escape-avoidance tended to be used more for managing agentic stressors than for managing communal stressors.

We also found some situational differences in coping that were not hypothesized, which we interpret with caution. Although our analyses revealed many similarities in the effects of close communal and other communal situations on coping, we did find some forms of coping that displayed significant differences between these groups. Compared to agentic stressors, communal stressors involving someone distant were related to higher proportions of distancing. Follow-up analyses indicated that other communal stressors were also related to higher proportions of distancing in comparison with close communal stressors, $t(235, \text{other communal vs. close communal}) = 2.54, p < .05$. These results indicate that distancing was used more in response to stressful communal situations that involved someone distant than in response to the other types of stressful situations. In addition, compared to the agentic type of situation, the other communal type of situation was associated with lower proportions of positive reappraisal, indicating that positive reappraisal was used more for managing agentic stressors than for communal stressors that involve someone distant.

Regression of coping on Person \times Situation interactions. To test our general hypothesis that Personality \times Situation interactions would contribute significant variance to the prediction of coping, we entered 10 scores representing the interaction of each of the five dimensions of personality by each of the two dummy-coded situation dimensions (close communal vs. other and other communal vs. other) as a set on the third step of the equation. Because we were primarily concerned with examining the extent to which coping was best predicted by an additive or an interactive model, we focus here on the R^2 change for the 10 interaction terms as a set, as opposed to the significance of each term. Given this, we only report results regarding independent effects for the interactions that we hypothesized. These specific hypotheses were ex-

amined in terms of whether there were significant differences between the simple slopes among the Personality \times Situation groups (Aiken & West, 1991). Due to the paucity of relevant past research addressing the role of Person \times Situation interactions in coping, we made few specific hypotheses.

As shown in Table 6, the incremental coping variance explained by the set of interaction terms ranged from 2% ($p > .10$) to 14% ($p < .001$). The Person \times Situation interaction terms contributed a significant proportion of the variance in coping over and above the main effects of person and situation in five of nine forms of coping: confrontative coping, planful problem solving, self-control, distancing, and empathic responding. Follow-up analyses provided support for our specific hypotheses regarding person-situation interactions in the prediction of particular forms of coping.

Significant interactions were found between N and situation in the prediction of two forms of coping: confrontative coping and empathic responding. Compared to those with lower scores on N, those higher on N reported relatively less confrontative coping in other communal situations than in agentic situations, $t(230, \text{other communal vs. agentic}) = -2.83, p < .01$, or in close communal situations, $t(230, \text{other communal vs. close communal}) = -2.04, p < .05$. In sum, those higher on N tended to employ more confrontative coping when the stressor was agentic or when the stressor involved someone close than when the stressor involved someone more distant. Conversely, those lower on N tended to employ more confrontative coping when someone distant was involved in the situation than when someone close was involved or when the stressor was agentic.

Compared to those with lower scores on N, those with higher scores reported relatively less empathic responding in stressful close communal situations than in other communal situations, $t(230, \text{close communal vs. other communal}) = -2.32, p < .05$. Interestingly, those higher on N tended to use more empathic responding when the stressful situation involved someone distant than when it involved someone close. In contrast, those lower on N tended to employ more empathic responding when someone close was involved in the stressful situation than when someone distant was involved.

In the prediction of empathic coping, we also found a significant interaction between O and situation. Compared to those with lower scores on O, those with higher scores reported relatively more empathic responding in close communal situations than in stressful agentic situa-

tions, $t(230, \text{close communal vs. agentic}) = 2.15, p < .05$. Hence, those higher on O tended to employ more empathic coping in stressful situations that involved someone close than in stressful agentic situations.

As anticipated, we found a significant interaction between C and situation in the prediction of planful problem solving. Compared to those with lower scores on C, those with higher scores reported relatively more planful problem solving in stressful agentic situations than in stressful communal situations, $t(230, \text{agentic vs. close communal}) = 1.98, p < .05$; $t(230, \text{agentic vs. other communal}) = 2.40, p < .05$. Therefore, those higher on C tended to use more planful problem solving in stressful agentic situations than in stressful communal situations.

DISCUSSION

Four central questions were addressed by this research: (a) Do dimensions of personality derived from the five-factor model predict coping responses? (b) How do coping responses differ as a function of the type of stressful situation? (c) Does the role of personality in the prediction of coping vary as a function of situational dimensions? and (d) How is our knowledge of coping processes enhanced by expanding our conceptualization of coping to include strategies that are geared toward the management and sustenance of social relationships?

Collectively, the results of this study regarding problem-, emotion-, and relationship-focused modes of coping indicate that personality, the stressful situation, and Person \times Situation interactions were all significant predictors of coping responses. Accordingly, this study supports the relational-transactional perspective that coping responses are a joint function of dispositional tendencies and situational demands (Lazarus, 1990).

In keeping with the notion that coping responses are best viewed within the larger social context (Coyne & Smith, 1991; DeLongis & O'Brien, 1990; Eckenrode, 1991; O'Brien & DeLongis, in press), the present investigation provides support for relationship-focused coping as an important function of coping and indicates the utility of a tripartite model of coping. The use of one form of relationship-focused coping, namely empathic responding, was strongly associated with stressful interpersonal situations. Stress occurring in social relationships tended to pull for empathic responding, particularly when a close family member or friend was involved. Taken together, these findings suggest that incorporating the construct of relationship-focused coping into current

models of stress and coping may enhance their comprehensiveness and predictive power.

The Role of Situation in Coping

We examined three types of stressful situations in this study: agentic (work) stressors, communal (interpersonal) stressors involving a close other, and communal stressors involving someone not close to the participant. Consistent with the growing evidence indicating situational specificity in coping responses (e.g., Compas et al., 1988; Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter et al., 1986; Maitlin et al., 1990; Pearlin & Schooler, 1978; Wethington & Kessler, 1991), we found that situation factors can be powerful predictors of the ways in which people cope. In seven of the nine forms of coping examined, type of stressful situation accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in coping responses, even after controlling for the effect of personality. In particular, situation factors were particularly striking predictors of problem-focused and relationship-focused coping, accounting for 28% of the variance in planful problem solving and for 48% of the variance in empathic responding. That so much of the variance in coping was accounted for by situational factors may, at least in part, be a reflection of the particular utility of the agentic versus communal typology we used for classifying stressful episodes.

For the most part, situational differences in coping fell out along agentic and communal lines, which supports the heuristic value of the constructs of agency and communion, particularly within the context of stress and coping. Communal situations (both those that involve someone close and those that involve someone more distant) tended to pull for a greater usage of empathic responding and confrontative coping, both of which are active in nature and interpersonally oriented. In contrast, agentic situations pulled for a greater reliance upon active modes of coping (i.e., planful problem solving) and upon more passive emotion-focused strategies (i.e., accepting responsibility and escape-avoidance). Taken together, these findings indicate that the ways in which people cope may be determined by the agentic and communal demands of the situation.

Although there were many similarities in coping with communal stressors involving close and distant others, there were also some differences. For example, those coping with communal stressors that involved someone more emotionally distant tended to use more distancing than

those coping with communal stressors that involved someone close. This finding may reflect the personal significance attached to close interpersonal relationships. The loss of a sense of communion in these situations may be too costly to one's self-esteem and sense of well-being. However, in stressful situations that involve others that one is not particularly close to it may be easier to distance oneself from the situation.

The Role of Personality in Coping

Taking all dimensions of the five-factor model together, the main effects of personality accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in three of the nine forms of coping. In assessing the independent effects of each personality dimension while controlling for the effects of the other four dimensions, this study provides a more stringent test of the role of personality in coping, as most previous studies (see Hooker et al., 1994, for an exception) have limited their analyses to the bivariate level. In general, our findings replicate the findings of previous studies examining the role of personality in coping. However, this investigation extends knowledge on the role of personality in coping by examining interactions between personality and situation. That Person \times Situation interactions accounted for significant variance in five of the nine forms of coping indicates that the use of many forms of coping is predicted best by considering the person in situ.

These differences in coping may be primarily due to differences in cognitive appraisals of stressful situations that occur as a function of Person \times Situation interactions. That is, some stressful situations may be so severe (e.g., war-related trauma) that virtually everyone appraises them as threatening, and their coping, in turn, reflects such appraisals. However, for most stressful situations, cognitive appraisals of stress may vary as a function of both dimensions of the stressor and of the person. For example, most of our participants reported higher levels of empathic responding when a close other was involved in the stressful situation. However, we found that those higher on N used less empathic responding when close others were involved, and this may be due to their greater tendency to appraise a conflict or tension with a close other as threatening. The greater distress generated by threat appraisals might account for our finding that those higher on N use less empathic responding when close others were involved than those lower on N. Findings such as these indicate a larger role of personality in coping

than has been previously documented. Such findings also suggest that if we are to increase our understanding of the role of personality in coping with interpersonal stressors, we need to consider the particular form of the social relationships among those involved in stressful encounters.

Neuroticism. One of the hallmarks of Neuroticism is that those high on this trait tend to experience more emotional distress (Watson & Clark, 1984, 1992). Those high on N have been found to report greater distress when faced with either work or home overload, or when faced with interpersonal stress, than those low on N (Bolger & Schilling, 1991). The findings of this study suggest that this may be due at least in part to their greater tendency to engage in modes of coping that create and maintain stress and their failure to engage in coping strategies that might resolve the problems they are facing. The results of this study suggest that across a variety of stressful situations those higher on N showed a greater dependence upon escape-avoidance coping and a lower inclination to employ planful problem solving than those lower on N. Although employing escape-avoidance to flee the demands of the situation may allow those higher on N to bring their aversive emotions under control, an overreliance upon escape-avoidance and a lack of planful problem-solving efforts may impede the resolution of problems (Lazarus, 1983; Suls & Fletcher, 1985). This study also provides evidence that those higher on N exhibit a greater tendency to engage in confrontation in coping with stressors in both close interpersonal and work contexts. Both escape-avoidance and confrontation have been found to be associated with a variety of negative outcomes across a number of studies (e.g., Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter et al., 1986; Hart, 1991; Holahan & Moos, 1987; Maitlin et al., 1990; Vitaliano et al., 1987). Taken together, these findings suggest that those higher on N may be more likely to cope with their elevated levels of personal distress in maladaptive ways—by either fleeing the stressful situation or by angrily venting their emotions.

Our findings regarding the use of relationship-focused coping also support the hypothesis that those higher on N tend to cope in ways that may be inappropriate for the demands of the situation. In stressful interpersonal situations involving someone close, those higher on N employed less empathic responding than those lower on N. Instead, those higher on N tended to use more empathic responding in stressful situations that involved someone more distant than those lower on N. These findings demonstrate that those higher on N are not lacking the ability to be empathic, but they find it more difficult to engage

in these processes when a stressful situation involves someone close. When coupled with our findings of higher confrontation in close interpersonal contexts among those higher on N, these findings suggest that the negative emotions that those higher on N experience in close interpersonal contexts may diminish their ability to be empathic with close others. It appears that in response to the distress that is characteristic of their personality style, those higher on N tend to deal with close others in negative, maladaptive ways that may serve to maintain or exacerbate interpersonal difficulties, which may, in turn, generate additional distress for them.

Our findings indicating that high levels of personal distress pull for the use of relationship-disrupting strategies while simultaneously curtailing the use of empathic responding and planful problem-solving efforts has important clinical implications. In constructing interventions for those high on N, it may be beneficial to initially target efforts toward ameliorating personal distress in ways that do not damage their relationships. When personal distress levels are lowered, those high on N may be better able to engage in modes of coping that could enhance their relationships, such as empathic responding.

Extraversion. Although an association between E and problem-focused coping is one of the most well-replicated findings in the literature, we found no evidence of this relationship. However, our findings are consistent with those of the only other study of which we are aware (Hooker et al., 1994) that examined the *independent* relation of E to problem-focused coping (that is, after partialling out the effect of other dimensions of personality). Taken together with the findings of Hooker et al. (1994), our findings suggest that previous findings regarding the relation between E and problem-focused coping may have been the result of a third variable, most likely N. Negative correlations are often reported between N and E, and there is a well-replicated finding of a negative association between N and problem-focused coping.

Also consistent with Hooker et al. (1994), at the bivariate level we found that E was positively related to seeking support and negatively related to at least one form of emotion-focused coping (accepting responsibility). However, neither of these relations was significant at the multivariate level. Again, these relations may be due at least in part to their interrelations with other dimensions of personality.

Openness to Experience. The distinctive openness to feelings and ideas associated with O is evident in the linkages found between O and coping

in this study. In concert with previous research linking O to coping via positive thinking (McCrae & Costa, 1986), we found that those higher on O engaged in more positive reappraisal than those lower on O. These findings are also consistent with descriptions of those high on O as being characterized by divergent thinking, reflectiveness, flexibility of thought, creativity, and originality (Costa & McCrae, 1989; Digman, 1990; Johnson & Ostendorf, 1993; McCrae, 1993–94) and suggest that such a cognitive style may facilitate an ability to take a broader, more creative view of stressful situations, to appraise stressful situations as challenging, growth-enhancing opportunities, and to derive meaning from adverse situations.

We also found that those higher on O are able to respond empathically to close family members and friends, even during times of conflict and stress, which suggests that those higher on O may be not only more open to their own feelings (Costa & McCrae, 1989) but also more open and sensitive to the feelings of loved ones. Taken together with our findings indicating that those high on O engage in more positive reappraisal, it appears that such individuals may tend to be model copers, able to cognitively reframe stressful situations to advantage and to respond sensitively to close others during stressful times.

Agreeableness. In general, the prosocial nature that is ascribed to those high on A is reflected in our findings regarding the role of Agreeableness in coping. Across both agentic and communal situations, those higher on A reported engaging in more support seeking and less confrontation than those lower on A. The lower use of confrontation among those higher on A may serve both emotion-focused and relationship-focused functions. That is, those higher on A may eschew the use of confrontation in order to maintain both a better sense of emotional equilibrium and amicable relationships with others. For those who are agreeable by nature, engaging in interpersonal confrontation may be especially upsetting because they may place a higher value on having harmonious relationships with others than those lower on A.

Conscientiousness. Previous research regarding those high on C indicates that they tend to be more organized, thorough, careful, diligent, self-disciplined, dependable, and achievement-oriented (McCrae & Costa, 1987; McCrae et al., 1993; McCrae & John, 1992). Supporting this profile of C, our findings suggest that those higher on C used significantly less escape-avoidance and less self-blaming strate-

gies (i.e., accepting responsibility) in coping across stressful situations than those lower on C. Also conforming to the purposeful, industrious profile of C, those higher on C displayed a greater tendency to engage in planful problem solving to cope with agentic stressors than those lower on C. Taken together, these results may help explain previous research indicating that work performance is predicted by the trait of Conscientiousness (Barrick & Mount, 1991).

That those high on C appear to cope via planful problem solving while eschewing escape-avoidance may explain why they tend to be disinclined, perhaps rightly so, to accept responsibility for problems that do come up. The profile of the high C copier is one who faces the stressor straight on, figures out what needs to be done, and then carries the plan through to completion. Previous studies suggest that, at least in situations over which the person can have some control, this way of coping is likely to be quite effective (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter et al., 1986).

CONCLUSION

The distinction between agentic and communal sources of stress appears to be particularly useful, as these dimensions of the situation were strongly associated with coping responses. However, our results indicate that both situational and personal factors play an important role in determining coping. Moreover, our findings suggest that future research would do well to focus on the interplay between these two sets of factors. That is, it is the person *in situ* to whom researchers and clinicians must attend if they are to increase understanding of individual differences in coping responses.

This study represents an initial attempt to examine the person and situation antecedents of coping efforts that are geared to the sustenance of social relationships during stressful encounters, what we and others (Coyne & Smith, 1991) have termed relationship-focused coping. Future studies are needed to examine linkages between relationship-focused coping and outcomes. Future research should also specify the ways that relationship-focused coping may influence other aspects of the stress process.

Our examination of the role of personality in coping was limited to an examination of the extent of use of various strategies for coping. Although this is an important aspect of coping, the role of personality in coping may be larger than what was captured by this one dimension.

For instance, personality may also influence the order in which coping strategies are tried and may govern the extent to which the individual persists with a particular pattern of coping or shifts to other strategies when initial coping efforts are ineffectual. Personality may also affect coping to a greater extent during particular phases of the stressful encounter (Bolger, 1990). Another possibility is that personality influences the degree to which individuals are able to coordinate their coping efforts with others involved in stressful interpersonal situations.

Further, given the growing evidence that personality does play an important role in coping, future research needs to explore the underlying mechanisms of personality that produce different coping patterns and preferences. For example, different personality types may cope differently in similar situations because personality influences the kind of psychological demands that people face in particular situations (Shoda, Mischel, & Wright, 1993). Personality may also predict coping because it systematically influences appraisals, goals, expectancies, and social cognitive processes in stressful situations (Mischel & Shoda, 1994).

REFERENCES

- Aiken, L. S., & West, S. G. (1991). *Multiple regression: Testing and interpreting interactions*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Aldwin, C. (1994). *Stress, coping, and development: An integrative perspective*. New York: Guilford.
- Aldwin, C., & Revenson, T. A. (1987). Does coping help? A reexamination of the relation between coping and mental health. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *53*, 337-348.
- Bakan, D. (1966). *The duality of human existence*. Chicago: Rand McNally.
- Barrick, M. R., & Mount, M. K. (1991). The Big Five personality dimensions and job performance: A meta-analysis. *Personnel Psychology*, *44*, 1-26.
- Batson, C. D., Fultz, J., & Schoenrade, J. (1987). Adults' emotional reactions to the distress of others. In N. Eisenberg & J. Strayer (Eds.), *Empathy and its development* (pp. 163-184). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Beach, S. R. H., Sandeen, E. E., & O'Leary, K. D. (1990). *Depression in marriage: A model for etiology and treatment*. New York: Guilford.
- Block, J. (1968). Some reasons for the apparent inconsistency of personality. *Psychological Bulletin*, *70*, 210-212.
- Block, J. (1995). A contrarian view of the five-factor approach to personality description. *Psychological Bulletin*, *117*, 187-215.
- Bolger, N. (1990). Coping as a personality process: A prospective study. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *59*, 525-537.
- Bolger, N., DeLongis, A., Kessler, R. C., & Schilling, E. A. (1989). Effects of daily stress on negative mood. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *57*, 808-818.

- Bolger, N., & Schilling, E. A. (1991). Personality and the problems of everyday life: The role of Neuroticism in exposure and reactivity to daily stressors. *Journal of Personality*, **59**, 355–386.
- Brown, G. W., & Harris, T. (1978). *The social origins of depression*. New York: Raven.
- Buck, R. (1989). Emotional communication in personal relationships: A developmental-interactionist view. *Review of Personality and Social Psychology*, **10**, 144–163.
- Burleson, B. R. (1985). The production of comforting messages: Social-cognitive foundations. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, **4**, 253–273.
- Burleson, B. R. (1990). Comforting as social support: Relational consequences of supportive behaviors. In S. Duck (Ed.), *Personal relationships and support* (pp. 66–82). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Burleson, B. R., & Samter, W. (1985). Consistencies in theoretical and naive evaluations of comforting messages. *Communication Monographs*, **52**, 103–123.
- Burman, B., & Margolin, G. (1992). Analysis of the association between marital relationships and health problems: An interactional perspective. *Psychological Bulletin*, **112**, 39–63.
- Buss, D. M. (1992). Tactics of manipulation in close relationships: The Big Five personality factors in interactional context. *Journal of Personality*, **60**, 477–499.
- Buss, D. M., Gomes, M., Higgins, D. S., & Lauterbach, K. (1987). Tactics of manipulation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, **52**, 1219–1229.
- Clark, M. S. (Ed.). (1991). *Review of Personality and Social Psychology: Prosocial behavior*, **12**. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Compas, B. E., Forsythe, C. J., & Wagner, B. M. (1988). Consistency and variability in causal attributions and coping with stress. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, **12**, 305–320.
- Costa, P. T., Jr., & McCrae, R. R. (1985). *The NEO Personality Inventory manual*. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources.
- Costa, P. T., Jr., & McCrae, R. R. (1989). *The NEO-PI/NEO-FFI manual supplement*. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources.
- Costa, P. T., Jr., & McCrae, R. R. (1990). Personality: Another hidden factor in stress research. *Psychological Inquiry*, **1**, 22–24.
- Coyne, J. C., & DeLongis, A. (1986). Going beyond social support: The role of social relationships in adaptation. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, **54**, 454–460.
- Coyne, J. C., & Smith, D. A. F. (1991). Couples coping with a myocardial infarction: A contextual perspective on wives' distress. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, **61**, 404–412.
- Cramer, D. (1985). Psychological adjustment and the facilitative nature of close relationships. *British Journal of Medical Psychology*, **58**, 165–168.
- Cramer, D. (1987). Self-esteem, advice giving, and the facilitative nature of close relationships. *Person-Centered Review*, **2**, 99–110.
- DeLongis, A., Hemphill, K. J., & Lehman, D. R. (1992). A structured diary methodology for the study of daily events. In F. B. Bryant, J. Edwards, L. Heath, E. J. Posavac, R. S. Tinsdale, & E. Henderson (Eds.), *Methodological issues in applied social psychology* (pp. 81–109). New York: Plenum.
- DeLongis, A., & O'Brien, T. (1990). An interpersonal framework for stress and coping: An application to the families of Alzheimer's patients. In M. A. P. Stephens, J. H.

- Crowther, S. E. Hobfoll, & D. L. Tennenbaum (Eds.), *Stress and coping in later life families* (pp. 221-239). Washington, DC: Hemisphere.
- Digman, J. M. (1990). Personality structure: Emergence of the five-factor model. *Annual Review of Psychology*, **41**, 417-440.
- Dix, T. (1991). The affective organization of parenting: Adaptive and maladaptive processes. *Psychological Bulletin*, **110**, 3-25.
- Eckenrode, J. (Ed.). (1991). *The social context of coping*. New York: Plenum.
- Eisenberg, N., Fabes, R. A., Murphy, B., Karbon, M., Maszk, P., Smith, M., O'Boyle, C., & Suh, K. (1994). The relations of emotionality and regulation to dispositional and situational empathy-related responding. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, **66**, 776-797.
- Eisenberg, N., & Miller, P. A. (1987). The relation of empathy to prosocial and related behaviors. *Psychological Bulletin*, **101**, 91-119.
- Endler, N. S., & Parker, J. D. A. (1990). Multidimensional assessment of coping: A critical evaluation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, **58**, 844-854.
- Fleishman, J. A. (1984). Personality characteristics and coping patterns. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, **25**, 229-244.
- Folkman, S., Chesney, M., Pollack, L., & Coates, T. (1993). Stress, control, coping, and depressed mood in immunodeficiency virus-positive and -negative gay men in San Francisco. *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, **181**, 409-416.
- Folkman, S., & Lazarus, R. S. (1980). An analysis of coping in a middle-aged community sample. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, **21**, 219-239.
- Folkman, S., Lazarus, R. S., Dunkel-Schetter, C., DeLongis, A., & Gruen, R. J. (1986). Dynamics of a stressful encounter: Cognitive appraisal, coping, and encounter outcomes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, **50**, 992-1003.
- Folkman, S., Lazarus, R. S., Gruen, R. J., & DeLongis, A. (1986). Appraisal, coping, health status, and psychological symptoms. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, **50**, 571-579.
- Goldstein, A. P., & Michaels, G. Y. (1985). *Empathy development, training, and consequences*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Gotlib, I. H., & Whiffen, V. E. (1989). Stress, coping, and marital satisfaction in couples with a depressed wife. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science*, **21**, 401-418.
- Gottlieb, B. H. (Ed.). (in press). *Coping with chronic stress*. New York: Plenum.
- Haan, N. (1977). *Coping and defending*. New York: Academic Press.
- Hammen, C. (1992). Cognitive, life stress, and interpersonal approaches to a developmental psychopathology model of depression. *Development and Psychopathology*, **4**, 189-206.
- Hart, K. E. (1991). Coping with anger-provoking situations: Adolescent coping in relation to anger reactivity. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, **6**, 357-370.
- Helgeson, V. F. (1994). Relation of agency and communion to well-being: Evidence and potential explanations. *Psychological Bulletin*, **116**, 412-428.
- Holahan, C. J., & Moos, R. H. (1987). Personal and contextual determinants of coping strategies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, **52**, 946-955.
- Hooker, K., Frazier, L. D., & Monahan, D. J. (1994). Personality and coping among caregivers of spouses with dementia. *The Gerontologist*, **34**, 386-392.
- Horowitz, M. J. (1990). Stress, states, and person schemas. *Psychological Inquiry*, **1**, 25-29.

- Johnson, J. A., & Ostendorf, F. (1993). Clarification of the five-factor model with the abridged Big Five dimensional circumplex. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *65*, 563-576.
- Kessler, R. C., McLeod, J. D., & Wethington, E. (1985). The costs of caring: A perspective on the relationship between sex and psychological distress. In I. G. Sarason & B. R. Sarason (Eds.), *Social support: Theory, research, and applications* (pp. 491-506). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff.
- Kramer, B. J. (1993). Expanding the conceptualization of caregiver coping: The importance of relationship-focused coping strategies. *Family Relations*, *42*, 383-391.
- Lapp, W. M., & Collins, R. L. (1993). Relative/proportional scoring of the Ways of Coping checklist: Is it advantageous or artifactual? *Multivariate Research*, *28*, 483-512.
- Lazarus, R. S. (1983). The costs and benefits of denial. In S. Breznitz (Ed.), *The denial of stress* (pp. 1-30). New York: International Universities Press.
- Lazarus, R. S. (1991). Progress on a cognitive-motivational-relational theory of emotion. *American Psychologist*, *46*, 819-834.
- Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal, and coping*. New York: Springer.
- Lehman, D. R., Ellard, J. H., & Wortman, C. B. (1986). Social support for the bereaved: Recipients' and providers' perspectives on what is helpful. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *54*, 438-446.
- Maitlin, J. A., Wethington, E., & Kessler, R. C. (1990). Situational determinants of coping and coping effectiveness. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, *31*, 103-122.
- Marcia, J. (1987). Empathy and psychotherapy. In N. Eisenberg & J. Strayer (Eds.), *Empathy and its development* (pp. 81-102). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Martin, M., Ward, J. C., & Clark, D. M. (1983). Neuroticism and the recall of positive and negative personality information. *Behavior Research and Therapy*, *21*, 495-503.
- McCrae, R. R. (1984). Situational determinants of coping responses: Loss, threat, and challenge. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *46*, 919-928.
- McCrae, R. R. (Ed.). (1992). The five-factor model: Issues and applications [Special issue]. *Journal of Personality*, *60*(2).
- McCrae, R. R. (1993-94). Openness to experience as a basic dimension of personality. *Imagination, Cognition and Personality*, *13*, 39-55.
- McCrae, R. R., & Costa, P. T., Jr. (1986). Personality, coping, and coping effectiveness in an adult sample. *Journal of Personality*, *54*, 385-405.
- McCrae, R. R., & Costa, P. T., Jr. (1987). Validation of the five-factor model of personality across instruments and observers. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *54*, 81-90.
- McCrae, R. R., Costa, P. T., Jr., & Piedmont, R. L. (1993). Folk concepts, natural language, and psychological constructs: The California Psychological Inventory and the five-factor model. *Journal of Personality*, *61*, 1-26.
- McCrae, R. R., & John, O. P. (1992). An introduction to the five-factor model and its applications. *Journal of Personality*, *60*, 175-215.
- Mischel, W., & Shoda, Y. (1994). Personality psychology has two goals: Must it be two fields? *Psychological Inquiry*, *5*, 156-158.
- Moore, B. S., Sherrod, D. R., Liv, T. J., & Underwood, B. (1979). The dispositional shift in attribution over time. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *15*, 553-569.

- Moos, R. H., & Swindle, R. W. (1990). Person-environment transactions and the stressor-appraisal-coping process. *Psychological Inquiry*, *1*, 30-32.
- Moskowitz, D. S. (1993). Cross-situational generality and the interpersonal circumplex. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *66*, 921-933.
- Notarius, C. I., & Herrick, L. R. (1988). Listener response strategies to a distressed other. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *5*, 97-108.
- O'Brien, T. B., & DeLongis, A. (in press). Coping with chronic stress: An interpersonal perspective. In B. H. Gottlieb (Ed.), *Coping with chronic stress*. New York: Plenum.
- Parke, K. R. (1986). Coping in stressful episodes: The role of individual differences, environmental factors, and situational characteristics. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *51*, 1277-1292.
- Paulhus, D. L. (1991). Measurement and control of response bias. In J. P. Robinson, P. Shaver, & L. S. Wrightman (Eds.), *Measures of personality and social attitudes* (pp. 17-60). San Diego: Academic Press.
- Pearlin, L. I., & Schooler, C. (1978). The structure of coping. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, *19*, 2-21.
- Peterson, C. (1980). Memory and the "dispositional shift." *Social Psychology Quarterly*, *43*, 372-380.
- Revenson, T. A. (1994). Social support and marital coping with chronic illness. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, *16*, 122-130.
- Safran, J. D., & Segal, Z. V. (1990). *Interpersonal process in cognitive therapy*. New York: Basic Books.
- Shoda, Y., Mischel, W., & Wright, J. C. (1993). Intraindividual stability in the organization and patterning of behavior: Incorporating psychological situations into the idiographic analysis of personality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *67*, 674-687.
- Snyder, M., & Ickes, W. (1985). Personality and social behavior. In G. Lindzey & E. Aaronson (Eds.), *The handbook of social psychology* (pp. 883-948). New York: Random House.
- Stephens, M. A. P., Crowther, J. H., Hobfoll, S. E., & Tennenbaum, D. L. (Eds.). (1990). *Stress and coping in later life families*. Washington, DC: Hemisphere.
- Stone, A. A., & Neale, J. M. (1984). New measure of daily coping: Development and preliminary results. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *46*, 892-906.
- Strayer, J. (1987). Affective and cognitive perspective on empathy. In N. Eisenberg & J. Strayer (Eds.), *Empathy and its development* (pp. 218-244). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Sullivan, H. S. (1953). *The interpersonal theory of psychiatry*. New York: Norton.
- Suls, J., & Fletcher, B. (1985). The relative efficacy of avoidant and nonavoidant coping strategies: A meta-analysis. *Health Psychology*, *4*, 249-288.
- Tennen, H., & Herzberger, S. (1985). Ways of Coping scale. In D. J. Keyser & R. C. Sweetland (Eds.), *Test critiques: Vol. 3* (pp. 686-697). Kansas City, MO: Test Corporation of America.
- Terry, D. J. (1994). Determinants of coping: The role of stable and situational factors. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *66*, 895-910.
- Tune, L. E., Lucas-Blaustein, M., & Rovner, B. W. (1988). Psychosocial interventions. In L. F. Jarvik & C. H. Winograd (Eds.), *Treatments for the Alzheimer patient: The long haul* (pp. 123-136). New York: Springer.

- Vitaliano, P. P., Maiuro, R. D., Russo, J., & Becker, J. (1987). Raw versus relative scores in the assessment of coping strategies. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, **10**, 1-18.
- Watson, D., & Clark, L. A. (1984). Negative affectivity: The disposition to experience aversive emotional states. *Psychological Bulletin*, **96**, 465-490.
- Watson, D., & Clark, L. A. (1992). On traits and temperament: General and specific factors of emotional experience and their relation to the five-factor model. *Journal of Personality*, **60**, 441-476.
- Wethington, E., & Kessler, R. C. (1991). Situations and processes in coping. In J. Eckenrode (Ed.), *The social context of coping* (pp. 13-29). New York: Plenum.
- Wiggins, J. S. (Ed.). (1996). *The five-factor model of personality: Theoretical perspectives*. New York: Guilford.
- Wiggins, J. S., & Trapnell, P. D. (1996). A dyadic-interactional perspective on the five-factor model. In J. S. Wiggins (Ed.), *The five-factor model of personality: Theoretical perspectives* (pp. 88-162). New York: Guilford.
- Young, G. C. D., & Martin, M. (1981). Processing of information about self by neurotics. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology*, **20**, 205-212.

This document is a scanned copy of a printed document. No warranty is given about the accuracy of the copy. Users should refer to the original published version of the material.