

THE ROLE OF COPING POTENTIAL ON REGULATING RESOLVED VS. UNRESOLVED SADNESS

By Alisha Petrouske

Emotional events are appraised primarily through their implications to an individual's well-being and the person's capabilities for coping with the event (Mesquita & Frijda, 1992). Previous research found when dealing with an unresolved sad event, people are more likely to choose happy, upbeat music as a regulation strategy, potentially because individuals dealing with unresolved sadness are motivated to regulate the sadness (Tahlier, Miron & Rauscher, 2012). However, more research is needed to determine what underlies this process of regulation of unresolved emotions. Coping potential may be a particularly important factor in sadness regulation because it is the precursor to motivation, which may determine whether the person will engage in the regulation.

The current study aimed to investigate the role of perceived coping potential as a causal determinant of the motivation to choose happy, active music to regulate sadness, depending on the resolved or unresolved nature of the sadness. It was hypothesized that those in the unresolved sadness condition who believe they have the ability to successfully cope with emotional events would be most likely to choose to listen to the happy, upbeat music.

Results revealed that, unexpectedly, those in the unresolved *low* coping potential condition chose to listen to happy, upbeat music to a greater degree than those in the unresolved high coping potential condition. An explanation for this unexpected pattern focusing on coping flexibility was offered. These results suggest that coping potential can be important in influencing the regulation strategy choices of individuals dealing with an unresolved sad event. Future work studying emotion regulation processes should take this factor into account.

THE ROLE OF COPING POTENTIAL ON REGULATING RESOLVED VS. UNRESOLVED
SADNESS

by

Alisha Petrouske

A Thesis Submitted
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of

Master of Science-Psychology

Cognitive & Affective Science

at

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh
Oshkosh WI 54901-8621

May 2014

COMMITTEE APPROVAL

Alisha Advisor

5/9/2014 Date Approved

P. Down Member

5/9/2014 Date Approved

[Signature] Member

5/9/14 Date Approved

DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Susan Aamer

6/5/14 Date Approved

FORMAT APPROVAL

Mari Hoffman

5/30/14 Date Approved

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES.....	iii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	vi
INTRODUCTION.....	1
METHOD	13
RESULTS	17
DISCUSSION.....	27
APPENDICES	
A. Consent Form.....	37
B. Introduction	40
C. Sad Event Manipulation.....	42
D. Coping Questionnaire.....	44
E. Coping Potential Manipulation.....	46
F. Sad Event Reminder	48
G. Music Questionnaire	50
H. Mood Questionnaire	55
I. Debriefing Procedure.....	58
REFERENCES	62

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.	Predictions for the Intensity of Happy and Upbeat Music Choice.....	12
Table 2.	Factor Analysis of all Music Valence and Intensity Items	19
Table 3.	Sad Event Characteristics by Condition	21
Table 4.	Means and Standard Deviations across Conditions for Coping Manipulation Questions.....	22
Table 5.	Means and Standard Deviations across Conditions for Music Choice Indices.....	24
Table 6.	Correlations Between Self-perceived Emotional Coping and Music Choice.....	26

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.	Model of Appraisal Process	6
Figure 2.	Happy and Upbeat Music Choice by Condition	25

Introduction

The role of coping potential in regulating emotions has been largely ignored in prior research. The current study aimed to examine the role of coping potential in the case of one of the most elusive and under-studied emotions—sadness.

Moreover, the distinction between resolved and unresolved sadness has only recently been considered in research and needs further elaboration (Tahlier et al., 2012). Previous research has illustrated that when dealing with an unresolved sad event, people are more likely to choose happy, upbeat music (Tahlier et al., 2012) but more work needs to be done to determine what motivational mechanisms underlie this process. Coping potential may determine whether or not individuals engage in emotion regulation because the appraisal of an individual's capabilities to deal with the emotion may affect the motivation to regulate it. The current study investigated the influence of coping potential on regulating resolved versus unresolved sadness through music choice.

Sadness Regulation

Emotion regulation refers to the processes by which individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they experience and express these emotions (Gross, 1998). More research on discrete emotions and their corresponding regulation processes is needed because regulation attempts and

strategies vary with each emotion (Rivers, Brackett, Katulak, & Salovey, 2006; Tahlier et al., 2012; Thayer, Newman, & McClain, 1994).

General emotion regulation strategies and the processes underlying them may not be generalizable in the case of sadness, because sadness does not have clear action tendencies as other emotions do (Lazarus, 1991). That is, it is unclear what sadness makes us do and research on this topic is contradictory. For instance, some research has shown that sadness leads to inactivity and sluggishness (Averill, 1969; Schwartz, Weinberger, & Singer, 1981; Shields, 1984), while other research suggests that sadness leads to contemplation and resolution resulting from reflection of the past (Cunnigham, 1988; Frijda, 1986; Nesse, 2006; Stein & Levine, 1990).

Some emotional regulation strategies are generally effective for most emotions yet certain emotions may only respond to specific regulation strategies because of the unique processes under which they operate. In a previous study of regulation of sadness and anger, it was found that sadness regulation strategies were inconsistent and fewer in number than strategies for anger, which were diverse and followed a pattern (Rivers et al., 2006). In addition, sadness occurs when an individual experiences irrevocable loss. This experience of irrevocable loss generally instigates physiological inhibition and overall inactivity (Ekman, 2003; Lazarus, 1991). For most emotions, active mood management or seeking pleasurable activities/distraction were rated as the most effective regulation strategies (Thayer et al., 1994). However, sadness generally produces a withdrawn state so active regulation strategies may not be employed (Lazarus, 1991).

This suggests that more research needs to be carried out to learn how discrete emotions, and sadness in particular, differ in their regulation processes. The inconsistencies found in sadness regulation may be due to a lack of theoretical distinction between various types of sadness individuals may experience. One such distinction may be between resolved and unresolved sadness.

Resolved and Unresolved Sad Events

A recent study looked at music choice as a regulation strategy for resolved and unresolved sad events (Tahlier et al., 2012). The distinction between resolved and unresolved sad events lies in whether the individual has come to terms with what has happened or not. This previous study found that in the unresolved condition, individuals were more likely to choose happy music than those in the resolved condition. Tahlier et al. (2012) suggested that this might have occurred because the goal of sadness was already achieved in the resolved condition leaving no motivation to try to regulate it by choosing happy, upbeat music. In contrast, in the unresolved condition, individuals were motivated to choose happy music to cope with the emotional state.

To explain *why* people in the unresolved condition chose happier music, Tahlier et al. (2012) manipulated in Study 2, the information given to the participants on stability of the sad feelings they were experiencing. Some thought their mood was unchangeable, others thought it was malleable and a third group received no mood information. This was accomplished by having the participants in

the unchangeable mood condition taste snack foods and rate them. Then they received information indicating that eating prolongs their current mood irrespective of what they do after eating. Those in the malleable condition tasted and rated the snacks with no information following, while individuals in the no information condition rated the food without tasting it. Tahlier et al. (2012) used this procedure to test whether people would still choose happy music if they believe the strategy (music choice) would be effective (or not) in changing their feelings.

The results revealed that participants in the unresolved/malleable and unresolved/no information condition were most likely to choose happy, active music (Tahlier et al., 2012). This suggests that individuals' perception of ability to change their mood may have caused the difference in regulatory outcomes. Thus, the perceived capability to effectively regulate unresolved sadness may drive the motivation to actually regulate sadness thereby causing individuals to employ strategies to cope with the feelings of sadness. In this previous work, there were no differences found in mood between conditions, which is why the current study focused on the differences in the sad event resolution rather than internal mood states. The presence of an ending and evidence of coping success were the only differences in sad event writings previously identified by Tahlier and her colleagues (2012): Participants in the Resolved Sad Event condition were more likely to write narratives that included an ending and that indicated a sense of self-mastery. This suggests that presence of an ending or resolution is the defining feature in the distinction between resolved and unresolved sad events.

This previous work is important because it has shown that the distinction between resolved and unresolved sadness is important for understanding the conditions under which individuals will engage in sadness regulation processes. What is needed is a direct test of the motivational mechanism that underlies the distinction between resolved and unresolved sadness. One such mechanism is whether the individual experiencing sadness *has the coping ability* to regulate his or her sadness and to come to terms with the experienced sad event.

Coping Potential

Lazarus (1991) proposes that the appraisal process is primarily categorized into two major parts. *Primary appraisal* refers to the situations relevance to the individual. *Secondary appraisal* refers generally to the prospects of coping with the instigating event. Coping potential is housed under secondary appraisal and refers to whether and how a person can manage the demands of the instigating event. To clarify, coping potential is not an evaluation of any real coping activity, it is rather an pre-evaluation by the individual regarding what they can do about the situation. In other words they ask themselves, "What is achievable here?"

Different experienced emotions may alter the appraisal process because not every component of the appraisal process is relevant to each emotion (Lazarus, 1991). Depicted in Figure 1, it is illustrated that coping potential feeds into the secondary appraisal process for unresolved sadness. In this figure, adapted after Lazarus's general appraisal model, the event is evaluated through the primary

appraisal process first to determine how it affects the individual. Then, to resolve the event, the individual engages in secondary appraisal to determine what should be done, if anything, to change the negative emotion. At this point, it is suggested that the perceived coping potential will influence the secondary appraisal process and subsequently the activity that results from this process.

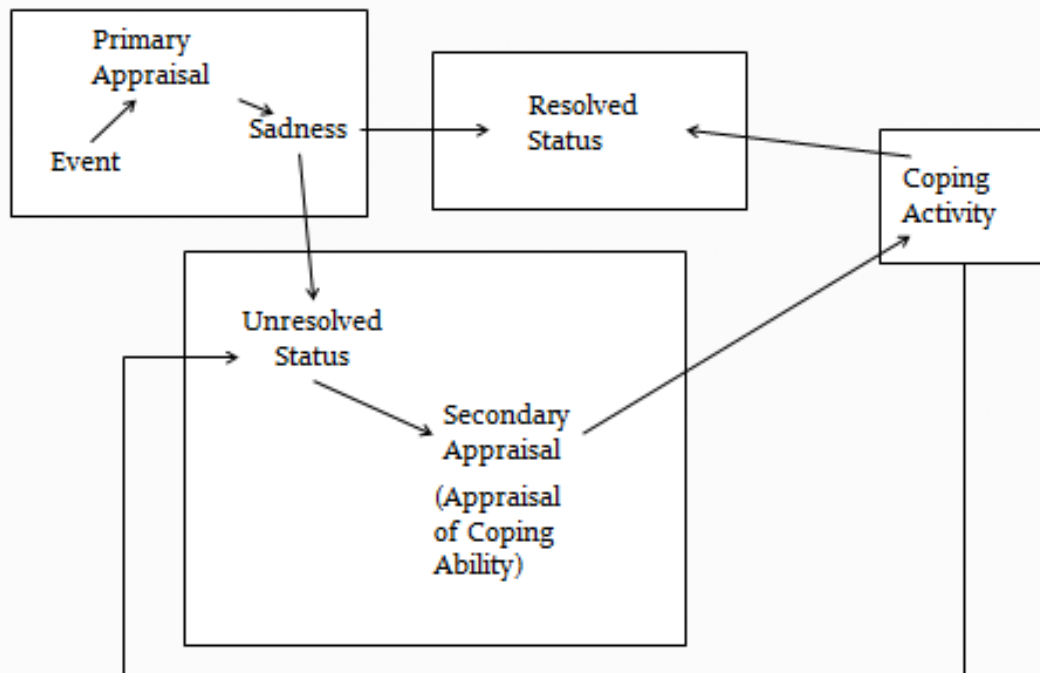


Figure 1. Model of appraisal process (adapted after Lazarus, 1991)

Events are appraised primarily through their implications to an individual's well-being and the possibilities for coping with the event (Mesquita & Frijda, 1992). Sadness is a unique emotion because it depends on coping potential to distinguish itself from other negative emotions (Lazarus, 1991). This is because if someone appraises the event as resolvable by external means then the experienced emotion will not be sadness because the loss is not irrevocable. Coping potential is a unique characteristic of sadness because there is little that an individual can do to change the sadness-instigating event so coping potential is important to motivate the individual to find other means to regulate the sad feelings. This model of sadness suggests that coping potential may be the essential mechanism by which sadness is regulated. Coping potential may be particularly important for sadness regulation because it is the precursor of motivation to employ regulation strategies.

Coping Potential's Impact

Coping potential is an evaluation by the individual to determine the prospects and consequences for coping with a particular situation (Scherer, 1984). Coping potential has been shown to be an important factor in the outcomes of various psychological treatments. For example, a recent study by McGinty, Goldenberg, and Jacobsen (2012) investigated breast cancer survivors and looked at the degree to which threat appraisal and coping appraisal accounted for differences in fear of cancer reoccurrence. Threat appraisal was defined as perceived risk and severity of a potential cancer recurrence. Coping appraisal was defined as perceived

self-efficacy to perform recommendations to reduce recurrence risk. This study found that survivors who reported high threat appraisal and low coping appraisal had the highest fear of cancer reoccurrence. This finding highlights the importance of addressing cancer survivors' coping appraisal particularly by increasing self-efficacy to increase various healthy behaviors. The above-mentioned self-efficacy concept is very similar to the notion of coping potential used in the current study. It is clearly important to investigate the influence of coping potential on emotion regulation because the self-perceived capabilities of utilizing strategies influence emotional outcomes.

Another study showed that an increase in self-efficacy fully mediated the effect of cognitive behavioral therapy on social anxiety reduction (Goldin et al., 2012). In this study, self-efficacy refers to the belief that people can successfully implement cognitive reappraisal when they desire to regulate their emotions. These results suggest that the most important factor that contributes to success in cognitive behavioral therapy for social anxiety lies in people's beliefs about their ability to succeed in implementing strategies. This is another example of the impact of coping potential on treatment outcomes, which may involve emotion regulation.

Indeed, manipulating coping potential produced differences in emotional behaviors of consumers during an ostensible evaluation of products (Nyers, 1997). In this study, participants were informed that they were to evaluate a computer system for use in a university computer lab. Goal relevance was manipulated through information that the computers were going to be funded with student

tuition or that the implementation of such computers would not be until after their graduation. Goal congruence was manipulated by feedback from the computers that the computers were functioning well or poorly. Coping potential was manipulated by telling participants that they would have ample opportunities to express any concerns about the computers and implementation or not. Measures of emotion were carried out after this procedure.

The results showed that when participants knew that expressing their concern was possible, they engaged in more positive and negative word of mouth behavior corresponding to their emotions (whether the emotions were positive or negative). The positive and negative word of mouth may be seen as coping activities or emotional outlets. In either case, when opportunities were afforded (individuals felt capable of expressing their praise/concern), the experienced emotion was more intense. This suggests that coping potential in a consumer situation alters the emotion people feel toward products and brands as well as how they *act* on those feelings. If manipulating coping potential in a consumer based situation resulted in differences in emotional behaviors, then manipulating coping potential in a personally relevant emotional situation should produce profound differences in regulation strategies.

Motivational Mechanisms of Emotion Regulation

Brehm and Self (1989) propose that total effort expended to achieve a goal is a function of motivational arousal and potential motivation. Motivational arousal

refers to the total amount of effort one is willing to afford to a goal dispersed through time. Potential motivation refers to a cost-benefit expectation that takes need, potential outcome, and perceived probability of successful implementation into account. When the difficulty of the instrumental behavior is beyond the individual's perceived capabilities, the individual will cease to be motivationally aroused (Brehm, Brummett, & Harvey, 1999). An instrumental behavior is any behavior that is employed in service of a given motive. In the case of regulating emotions, instrumental behaviors can be equated to coping activities used to change an emotional state. When motivational arousal plummets, no mobilization of energy will be afforded toward that goal (Brehm & Self, 1989; Kukla, 1974).

To learn how perceptions of ability fit into Brehm's model of motivation, Wright, Wadley, Pharr, and Butler (1994) used a procedure that categorized individuals into high ability and low ability groups according to their perceived math ability. Participants were told that they could avoid a noise by solving math problems that were easy, difficult or very difficult. They then measured the blood pressure of the participants while they were presented with the news of the difficulty of the problems to measure their responsivity to the challenge. The results indicated that those who had high-perceived ability had increased responsivity as demand (difficulty) of the problems increased. Those with low perceived ability had higher responsivity for easy and difficult problems and yet had lower responsivity with very difficult problems. These results suggest that perceived ability influences

the relationship between difficulty of the task and actual efforts expended toward a goal (Wright, 1998).

Regarding sadness regulation, when an individual is coping with an unresolved event and believes he/she has low coping ability to deal with the event, the person's motivation to deal with the event will be low and no strategy will be employed. This may occur because when success seems implausible, expenditures of effort will be seen as futile (Wright, 1996; 2008). If the unresolved sad event is coupled with high coping potential, then individuals would be motivated to choose strategies (music) to help them cope because they have the ability to do something about their sadness. Therefore, coping potential may be responsible for the differences in motivation that precede regulation of unresolved sadness.

Current Study and Hypotheses

The current study sought to investigate the role of coping potential as a cause of choosing happy music to regulate sadness. More specifically, the manipulation of coping potential was expected to influence the extent to which participants would attempt to regulate their sadness. This was tested by having participants fill out a questionnaire that ostensibly measured their coping strategies. Then they wrote about a sad event that was resolved or unresolved. After they completed the writing task, they were given predetermined feedback (coping potential manipulation) about the previous coping questionnaire. Participants were randomly assigned to a sadness condition (resolved or unresolved), as well as to a perceived coping

potential condition (high, low, or no information). The measures of interest included valence and intensity of music choice as assessed by a questionnaire after the feedback manipulation was complete.

As shown in Table 1, it was hypothesized that individuals in the unresolved sadness/high coping potential condition would choose happy, upbeat music more often and would want to listen to more intense happy, upbeat music than those in all other conditions. This was because they would appraise themselves as highly capable of coping and therefore would be highly motivated to regulate their (unresolved) emotional state. The unresolved/low coping potential condition would choose happy, upbeat music to a lesser extent compared to those in all other conditions because they would appraise their ability to cope as insufficient so they may be less motivated to regulate their sadness with music. The resolved sadness conditions would not differ based on coping potential because their sad event was already resolved so there was no need for them to appraise their capabilities and engage in further emotion regulation.

Table 1. Predictions for the intensity of happy and upbeat music choice

	Resolved Sad Event	Unresolved Sad Event
High Coping Potential	Low	High
Low Coping Potential	Low	Very low
No Information		Moderately

Method

Participants

Participants were 99 undergraduate students enrolled in psychology courses at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh who received partial credit in exchange for their participation (78 women and 28 men).

Design

An incomplete 2x3 between-subjects design was utilized. The manipulations consisted of coping potential (high, low and no information) and type of sad event (resolved or unresolved). Self-perceived coping potential was manipulated through feedback to the participants about their previous choices on the coping strategy list. Type of sad event was manipulated by altering directions on the writing task to choose an event that they have come to terms with or not.

Procedure

All participants were run individually. Participants were met outside of the research cubicle and asked to come inside. Initially, two copies of the consent form (see Appendix A) and an MP3 player were found on the desk awaiting the participant. After consent was received, the MP3 player was removed. Participants were then told that there were three unrelated studies that were too short to be

conducted alone (see Appendix B). The first study was ostensibly about how college students cope with emotional events, the second study was ostensibly about how people remember events, while the third study ostensibly involved listening to music.

The procedure was administered individually starting with a questionnaire containing demographic information and a list of coping strategies that participants rank ordered in terms of frequency of use. Participants were randomly assigned to either the *high coping potential*, *low coping potential* or *no information* conditions. In the high and low coping conditions, they were led to believe that they were sufficient or insufficient at emotional coping based on their choices. Those in the no information condition were told they would receive feedback later. All coping potential manipulations occurred after the sad event writing task. Participants were then asked to write about a sad event, at which point they were randomly assigned to the resolved or unresolved sad event conditions. Keeping up with the cover story, participants were asked to then fill out a measure of what kind of music they would like to listen to later in the study. A manipulation check questionnaire was administered to see if the participants believed the coping potential manipulation. Participants were then thanked and fully debriefed about the nature of the study.

Manipulation of Sad Event

The resolved vs. unresolved sadness manipulation instructions were taken from Tahlier et al. (2012). Participants were asked to write about a sad event with

which they have come to terms or have not yet come to terms with. This writing task was performed alone while a researcher waited outside the room. The researcher then came inside the room when the participant opened the door. (Appendix C includes forms for the resolved vs. unresolved sadness manipulation).

Manipulation of Coping Potential

After participants chose and rank ordered their coping strategies via questionnaire (see Appendix D), the experimenter then supposedly gave them feedback about their coping effectiveness. The researcher's feedback stated that an index score based on their chosen strategies indicated that they are highly effective or ineffective for coping with emotional situations based on a recent previous study (see Appendix E). Those in the no information condition were told that they will receive feedback later in the study. This feedback occurred after the sad event writing task.

Dependent Variables

When the writing task was over, participants were then given questionnaires containing the dependent measures. They completed the questionnaires alone, while the researcher waited outside the room in case there were questions.

Valence of Emotions in Music Choice.

Participants were asked to rate how much they would like to listen to happy, sad, angry, calm, uplifting, relaxing, upbeat, soothing, exciting, depressing, active,

passive, meditative, hostile, or sorrowful music currently. The responses were reflected in a 10-point scale ranging from 0 (*Not at all*) to 9 (*Extremely*).

Intensity of Emotions in Music Choice.

Participants were also asked *how* happy, sad, angry, calm, uplifting, relaxing, upbeat, soothing, exciting, depressing, active, passive, meditative, hostile, or sorrowful the music should be on 10-point scales ranging from 0 (*Not at all*) to 9 (*Extremely*) (see Appendix G).

Manipulation checks.

After the music choice measure was completed, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire indicating whether they believed the feedback they received with regard to their coping effectiveness. This question assessed the manipulation of coping potential. The questionnaire also asked questions about the sad event to measure whether the unresolved/resolved sadness event manipulation was successful. Participants were also asked about the state of their current emotion (to what extent are they are currently feeling various emotions), event characteristics (how recent the sad event was), and self-mastery. Self-mastery refers to the extent to which participants felt that they had some degree of control over the event (see Appendix H).

Results

Preliminary Analysis

Four participants were excluded from the analyses due to being extreme outliers (over 3 standard deviations away from the mean within conditions), leaving a total of 95 participants. To examine the internal structure of the measures of music choice, a factor analysis was conducted to determine which music valence and music intensity items clustered together.¹

Scree plot criterion suggested the presence of five factors with two additional music choice items that were best left independent. Rotated (Varimax) factor loadings are presented in Table 2. Based on the factor analysis, the music choice subscales were computed by averaging the corresponding items. The Sad index subscale consisted of Sad, Sad Intensity, Depressing, Depressing Intensity, Sorrowful and Sorrowful Intensity, $\alpha = .92$. The Upbeat index subscale included Upbeat, Upbeat Intensity, Exciting, Exciting Intensity, Active, and Active Intensity, $\alpha = .91$. The Relax index subscale included Relax, Relax Intensity, Calm, Calm Intensity, Soothing and Soothing Intensity, $\alpha = .90$. The Angry index subscale included Angry, Angry Intensity, Hostile and Hostile Intensity, $\alpha = .93$. The Happy index subscale included Happy, Happy Intensity, Uplift, and Uplift Intensity, $\alpha = .95$. Internal consistency for the subscales was satisfactory, with all Cronbach's alphas greater than .90, except

¹ Because of the lack of differences between valence and intensity subscales of music choice, they were collapsed together for simplicity of reporting.

for the Happy Factor in which Cronbach's $\alpha = .75$ for the subscale. The Meditative and Passive items were kept independent from a subscale consistent with the factor loadings.

Table 2.
Factor Analysis of all Music Valence and Intensity Items

<i>Items</i>	Factor Loadings						
	Sad	Upbeat	Relax	Angry	Happy	Meditative	Passive
Sad	.88						
Sorrowful	.86						
DepressingINT	.85						
Depressing	.83						
SorrowfulINT	.82						
SadINT	.77						
ActiveINT		.85					
Active		.82					
Exciting		.81					
ExcitingINT		.79					
UpbeatINT		.77					
Upbeat		.77					
RelaxINT							
CamlINT			.85				
Relax			.84				
Calm			.79				
SoothINT			.78				
Sooth			.68				
Hostile				.89			
Angry				.88			
HostileINT				.87			
AngryINT				.85			
Uplift					.73		
HappyINT					.70		
Happy					.68		
UpliftINT					.64		
MeditativeINT						.84	
Meditative						.84	
PassiveINT							.86
Passive							.83

Note. Factor loadings are based on Varimax rotation. Loadings < .50 are not shown. Items are sorted based on loadings' size.

Manipulation Checks

Participants were asked upon debriefing which sad event type they previously wrote about. A Chi-square analysis confirmed participants did not differ in their ability to correctly recall the sad event type, $\chi^2(4) = .58, p = .96$. The majority of participants correctly recalled the sad event type regardless of condition, 80 participants answering correctly and 15 participants who answered incorrectly. With the exception of one participant, across all conditions, participants were able to correctly recall the type of feedback they received.

Sad Event Characteristics

Means and standard deviations for sad event characteristics can be found in Table 3. There were no significant differences with regard to the characteristics of the reported sad event. The sad event was rated as equally important, of equal intensity, and had equal levels of sadness impact at the time of occurrence across all conditions, all $F_s < 1.35$ and all $p_s > .26$. There were also no differences found between conditions regarding the time at which the sad event occurred, $\chi^2(24) = 30.10, p = .18$. Across conditions, participants reported equivalent rates of how important it was that the sad event be resolved and the level of control they had over the event, all $F_s < 1.30$ and all $p_s > .28$. No mood differences were reported between conditions as all $F_s < 1.32$ and all $p_s > .27$.

Table 3.

Sad Event Characteristics by Condition

	Importance	Intensity	Sadness	Recency
	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>
Resolved Low	7.85 (1.60)	7.60 (1.31)	8.55 (.76)	6.40 (1.14)
Resolved High	8.22 (1.06)	7.50 (1.46)	8.11(1.02)	6.11 (1.18)
Unresolved Low	7.31 (1.25)	6.59 (1.57)	7.89 (1.52)	4.79 (2.43)
Unresolved High	7.50 (1.73)	7.10 (1.68)	7.90 (1.97)	5.00 (2.17)
Unresolved No Info	7.89 (1.60)	7.28 (1.52)	8.05 (1.21)	5.00 (2.14)

Coping Potential Manipulation

All means and standard deviations from the questions regarding feedback and coping can be found in Table 4. Participants were asked on their final questionnaire how well they cope with stressful situations, to determine whether they believed the coping potential manipulation. Differences between conditions were observed and indicated that participants indeed believed the coping potential feedback, $F(4, 90) = 6.99, p < .001$. Similarly, when participants were asked on the final questionnaire how well they cope with emotional situations, the same pattern emerged indicating further evidence that they had believed the feedback, $F(4, 90) = 7.09, p < .001$. When asked on the final questionnaire if they agreed with the coping feedback, groups differed on the extent to which they agreed, $F(4, 86) = 12.81, p < .001$, with low coping feedback conditions agreeing less than those who received the high coping feedback. The participants who received low coping feedback had a combined mean of 4.40 on a 9 point scale ranging from 0-Strongly Disagree to 9-

Strongly Agree, while the participants who received high coping feedback had a combined mean of 6.73 indicating that participants who had high coping feedback were more likely to directly agree with the coping feedback.

Table 4.

Means and Standard Deviations across Conditions for Coping Manipulation Questions

	Coping Stress	Coping Emotional	Agree Feedback
	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>
Resolved Low	4.95 (1.82) _{ab}	4.45 (1.73) _{ab}	3.70 (1.69) _{ab}
Resolved High	5.78 (2.01) _{ac}	6.00 (1.64) _{ac}	6.17 (2.20) _{ac}
Unresolved Low	4.26 (2.02) _{cde}	4.21 (2.07) _{cde}	5.11 (1.28) _{cde}
Unresolved High	7.05 (1.23) _{bdf}	6.70 (1.42) _{bdf}	6.85 (1.34) _{bdf}
Unresolved No Info	6.11 (1.78) _{ef}	5.67 (1.81) _{ef}	4.53 (.49) _{ef}

Note. Column means with different subscripts denote significant mean differences at an alpha level of .05 or less. Numbers in parentheses reflect standard deviations.

Main Analyses

We predicted that individuals in the unresolved high coping potential condition would be the more likely to choose to listen to happy music than all other conditions. Because the design was an incomplete 2 x 3 design, conditions were recoded as 1 = Resolved/ Low Coping potential, 2 = Resolved/ High Coping potential, 3 = Unresolved / Low Coping potential, 4 = Unresolved / High Coping potential and 5 = Unresolved No Information.

Polynomial contrasts testing revealed significant differences in the

Happiness Index, when comparing the unresolved high coping potential condition to both resolved groups and the unresolved low coping potential condition (1 1 0 -3 1), $t(90) = 2.61, p = .01$. However, the differences were not in the direction predicted. It was found that participants in the unresolved high coping potential condition chose to listen to happy music to a lesser extent compared to participants in the resolved and unresolved low coping potential group. Similarly, participants in the unresolved high coping potential condition tended to choose upbeat music to a lesser extent when compared to both the resolved groups and the unresolved low conditions but only marginally so, $t(90) = 1.79, p = .08$. No other effects were significant when comparing the unresolved high to both resolved and unresolved low coping potential conditions (all $ts < .81$ and all $ps > .43$). Means and standard deviations for all music choice indices can be found in Table 5.

Table 5.

Means and Standard Deviations across Conditions for Music Choice Indices

	Happy	Upbeat	Angry	Sad	Relax
	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>
Res. Low	6.91 (1.30) _{cb}	6.23 (1.97)	2.06 (2.34)	2.50 (1.51)	5.82 (1.87)
Res. High	6.68 (1.01) _{cb}	6.52 (1.12)	2.03 (1.88)	3.01 (1.95)	5.78 (1.58)
Unres. Low	6.84 (.97) _a	6.32 (.92)	1.43 (1.92)	2.09 (1.61)	5.82 (1.52)
Unres. High	5.98 (1.56) _b	5.31 (2.49)	1.68 (2.23)	2.82 (2.20)	5.75 (1.87)
Unres. N. I.	6.12 (1.08) _{ab}	5.44 (1.67)	1.93 (2.37)	2.08 (1.79)	5.99 (2.08)

Note. Column means with different subscripts denote significant differences at the .05 level. Resolved groups are abbreviated as Res. Unresolved groups are abbreviated as Unres. No Information is abbreviated as N. I. Numbers in parentheses reflect standard deviations.

Post Hoc Analyses

In light of the above results, we conducted one pooled-variance comparison t-test. When comparing the unresolved high and unresolved low coping potential conditions (0 0 1 -1 0), it was found that participants in the unresolved low coping potential condition ($M = 6.84, SD = .98$) chose to listen to happy music to a higher degree than those in the unresolved high coping potential condition ($M = 5.99, SD = 1.56$), $t(90) = 2.19, p = .03$. Upbeat music was similarly chosen to a greater extent in the unresolved low coping potential condition ($M = 6.32, SD = .92$) than the unresolved high coping potential condition ($M = 5.31, SD = 2.49$). This effect was marginally

significant, $t(24.29) = 1.71, p = .10$. No other effects were significant when comparing the unresolved high and low coping potential conditions (all t s < 1.22 and all p s > .13). These results are further depicted in Figure 1.

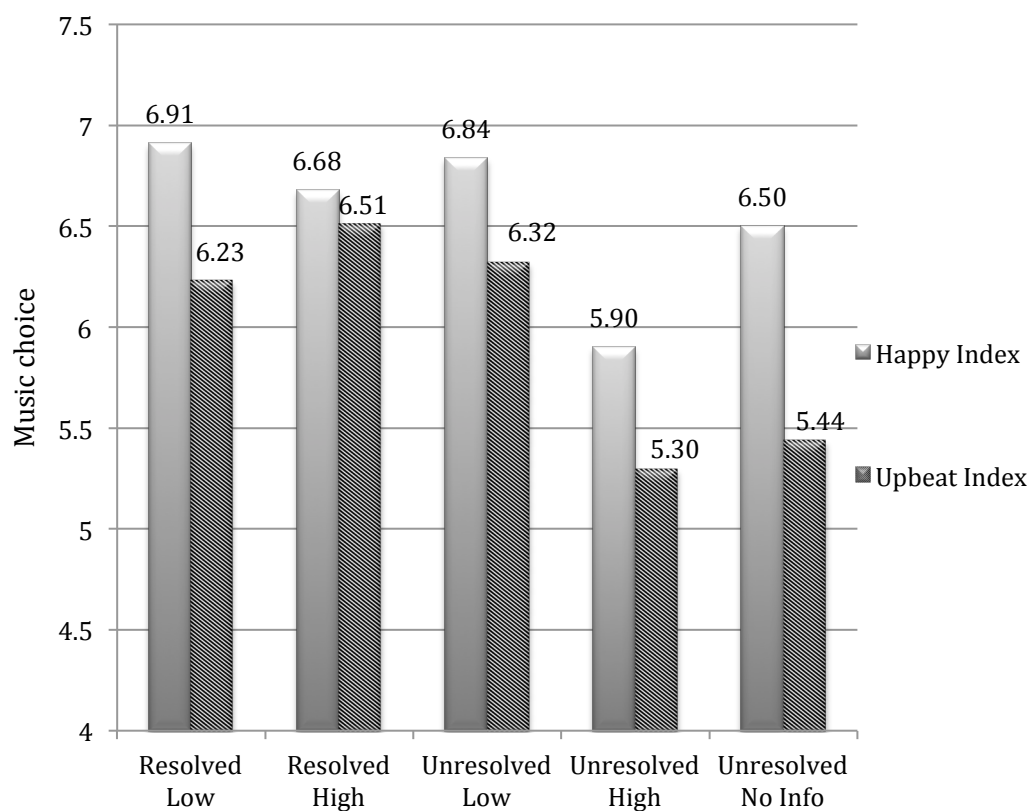


Figure 2. Happy and upbeat music choice by condition.

Within-group Correlations

To examine the relationship between music choice and self-perceived coping ability, correlations between the item that asked how well participants could cope with emotional situations and the music choice subscales were

computed for the unresolved low and unresolved high coping potential conditions (see Table 6 for *rs* and *ps*). These correlations were investigated to see if the direction of any patterns between the unresolved high and low coping potential conditions were similar or divergent. Similarity could be interpreted as different degrees of regulation attempts, while differences in direction may suggest different regulation approaches rather than a differing quantity of the same strategy. For both conditions, as self-perceived coping potential increases, happy music choice decreases, although the correlations are not significant. For the unresolved high coping potential condition, as coping potential increases, the music choice of upbeat and angry music decreases.

Table 6.

Correlations Between Self-perceived Emotional Coping and Music Choice

	Unresolved Low		Unresolved High	
	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
Happy Index	-.26	.13	-.23	.16
Angry Index	.13	.29	-.42*	.03
Upbeat Index	.17	.21	-.31†	.08
Sad Index	-.01	.49	.31†	.08
Relax Index	.09	.36	.16	.24
Meditative	.004	.49	.27	.12
Passive	.17	.24	.22	.17

Note. † indicates marginal significance, **p* < .05, 2-tailed.

Discussion

Prior work has shown that when dealing with an unresolved sad event, people are more likely to choose happy, upbeat music as a regulation strategy, potentially because individuals dealing with unresolved sadness are motivated to regulate the sadness (Tahlier et al., 2012). The current results suggest that coping potential is an important mechanism that influences the regulation strategy of individuals dealing with an unresolved sad event.

Specifically, participants in the unresolved low coping potential condition chose to listen to happy music to a greater extent than those in the unresolved high coping potential condition. The participants in the unresolved low coping potential condition also chose to listen to upbeat music to a greater extent than did participants in the unresolved high coping potential condition. This suggests that the manipulation of coping potential also affected an energy-specific music choice category. While the direction of these results is opposite of the prediction that unresolved high coping potential condition would display a higher degree of happy music choice, there are a few possibilities that would explain why these results would occur.

Potential Explanations for the Current Findings

One possibility is that those in the unresolved low coping potential condition may be more reliant on coping heuristics than those with no coping information or

those that received positive coping feedback. Heuristic processing of information uses general rules developed through past experiences to guide the decision-making process rather than the entire range of information available to them (Chaiken, 1980). Heuristics are used to cut down cognitive work, and people rely on them because these strategies have provided individuals with reliable decision-making in the past (Averbeck, Jones & Robertson, 2011).

It is possible that those who received positive feedback about their coping ability in the unresolved condition would rely less on the heuristic of “Listen to happy music when you are sad to cheer you up,” and in turn broaden their repertoire of coping possibilities by choosing more varied valences for their music choice. In the unresolved high coping potential condition, the positive feedback about their coping ability may have empowered participants to choose diversely because they have no reason to doubt their capabilities for resolution. Those in the unresolved low coping potential condition received negative feedback about their coping ability, which may have motivated a reliance on the common emotion heuristic. This is because the negative feedback may have induced a feeling of incompetence in the participants in the unresolved low coping potential condition, which in turn reduces their confidence to try other avenues and thereby sticking with the strategy that was readily available to them in the experimental situation. This explanation is consistent with the self-ratings of participants’ coping competency (see Table 3), where those in the low coping potential conditions rated

themselves lower than those in the high coping potential conditions on overall competency of coping with emotional and stressful situations.

Since those in the resolved conditions have already come to terms with their sad event, their incentives, risks, and motivation to choose music diversely for the sake of regulation may be diminished. The unresolved no information condition chose happy and upbeat music to a lesser degree than the unresolved low condition but to a higher degree than the unresolved high coping potential. This moderate choosing for those in the unresolved no information condition suggests that the manipulation of coping potential had an influence even on a constrained regulation strategy choice when dealing with an unresolved sad event. The regulation strategy choice of music is constrained given that music listening is not the only way to regulate emotion but was the only strategy made available to the participants at the time. However given that music listening was the only external strategy for participants at the time, this pattern of results may suggest that coping potential does influence the regulatory choices.

While further investigation of this possibility would be necessary, this explanation becomes more reasonable when looking at the standard deviations in the unresolved high and low coping potential conditions. The participants in the unresolved high coping potential condition had the majority of the highest standard deviations (1.56-2.49), which may mean that they had considerably more variability in responses than those in the unresolved low coping potential condition, who had the smallest standard deviations compared to all other conditions (.92-1.92).

Regarding the intergroup correlations, the unresolved high coping potential displayed marginal directionality indicating that as self-rated coping competency increases, angry and upbeat music choice increases. The unresolved low coping potential condition does not display such directionality with upbeat and angry music choice, since the correlations were far from significant. The reason that there were no such correlations in the unresolved low coping potential condition is because participants in that condition were more likely to follow common heuristics about coping and music and thus had to choose from limited categories. Another direction of interest is found in the unresolved high coping potential condition. In this condition, when self-perceived coping potential increases, sad, relax and meditative music choices also increase. This is not found in the unresolved low condition, which may again suggest that the participants in the unresolved high coping potential condition may be choosing more various options, while the unresolved low coping potential condition seems to be only adhering to one common category of music choice. While the majority of correlations were non-significant, the direction could suggest that the unresolved high coping potential condition may have less reliance on a given music type.

Support for this explanation comes from Cheng (2001), who measured perceptions about the kinds of coping strategies that people would use across different situations. She identified one group termed “flexible copers,” who altered their coping strategies systematically when responding to situational variation.

These flexible copers had consistently higher perceived coping effectiveness across two time periods compared to other participants. Adapting behavior flexibly across stressful situations may be more important than an individual's ability to use one given strategy (Bonanno & Burton, 2013).

This interpretation of the results of the current experiment could be further tested in a new experiment in which this kind of flexibility is induced in a constrained coping choice scenario. The current experiment gave coping feedback to participants and then measured only one type of coping activity available to them, music choice. One would expect that those in the unresolved high coping potential condition would respond more variably than the unresolved low coping potential condition under the coping flexibility framework because the feedback confirms that their previous choices were good or correct in some way. This is an advantage that the unresolved low coping potential condition did not have, coupled with feelings that their ability is compromised in some way.

As the coping flexibility hypothesis would suggest, those in the unresolved low coping potential condition may not respond flexibly in their sadness coping attempts. This coping flexibility may be particularly important in the case of sadness because sadness does not have clear action tendencies as other emotions do (Lazarus, 1991). Since sadness does not have an established action tendency, inner perceptions of coping potential may be a "guide" for individuals to gauge how likely they are to succeed in their coping endeavors. Those who feel confident in their abilities would employ more diverse strategies (various music choices) based on the

flexible coping hypothesis than those whose abilities are in question. Experiencing an emotion with a lack of established action tendencies coupled with the news that questions your coping competency might cause those in the unresolved low coping potential condition to choose more uniformly to choices that culture has reinforced, and in other words to follow the emotional heuristic of 'listen to happy music when you are blue.'

A second potential interpretation focuses on the difference in active versus passive coping strategies chosen by those who perceive themselves as good versus poor copers. It is possible that those in the unresolved high coping potential condition did not consider music to be an effective coping strategy and therefore did not choose music similarly compared to participants in the other conditions. In other words, music listening may not be perceived by a high-efficacy coper as an effective strategy of regulating sadness.

Indeed, in a recent study of mothers of developmentally disabled children it was found that greater parenting efficacy was associated with greater use of active coping strategies (Woodman & Hauser-Cram, 2013). It could be possible that because of their higher coping efficacy beliefs at the time of the experiment, participants in the unresolved high coping potential condition were seeking an active strategy (e.g., talking with a friend about the sad event), rather than the more emotion-focused strategy of music listening. This seeking of an active strategy, rather than music, may be why the unresolved high coping potential group chose happy music to a lesser degree than the unresolved low coping potential condition.

Limitations and Future Directions

The current study attempted to conceptually replicate the results of Tahlier et al. (2012) rather than being a direct replication of that research. The results of the current study failed to replicate differences between the resolved and unresolved conditions, as seen previously. Tahlier and her colleagues found that participants in the unresolved conditions chose happy music to a higher degree than those in the resolved conditions. In the current study, the resolved conditions chose similarly to the unresolved conditions when pooled together. When separated by condition, the resolved conditions chose happy music to a higher extent than the unresolved high and no information conditions but not different from unresolved low. It remains unclear why no differences between resolved and unresolved conditions occurred generally, however in the previous studies by Tahlier et al. (2012) coping potential should have been equally distributed in the conditions, which is why the difference in happy music choice was primarily due to resolution status. In the current study, coping potential seems to be central to the difference in happy music choice for participants with an unresolved event but not for those with a resolved event. This interaction shows the complex nature of how the constructs of resolution status and coping potential relate. It may be the case that the introduction of coping potential in this experimental paradigm changes the way that participants view the measures. It is likely that when coping potential is held constant, as should be the case in Tahlier et al. (2012), motivation to choose happy music is greater for the unresolved

groups. Whereas in the current study, motivation to choose happy music may be less for those with higher coping potential, but this does not mean that they have less motivation to cope in other ways. Further research with more diverse coping measures would be able to inform us in distinguishing why these differences between Tahlier et al. (2012) and the current study occurred.

Another limitation of the current study is that we assumed that resolution status is in the “eye of the beholder,” but it is possible that individuals’ self-perceived resolution status of a sad event may differ from a commonly agreed upon standard. The results suggest that there are no differences in music choice between the resolved conditions, yet differences in the unresolved conditions were found. Therefore it appears likely that coping potential is only influential in unresolved emotional situations, at least in the case of sadness. Tahlier et al. (2012) commented that more research should be done to determine what motivational mechanisms underlie the process of regulating sadness. The addition of coping potential to this paradigm does provide preliminary evidence that coping potential influences motivation to choose different music under unresolved circumstances, however more work is needed to clarify *how* coping potential is influencing regulation attempts. Future work should be concentrated on the conditions under which coping potential’s influence on the regulatory process persists, particularly within discrete emotions that have clear action tendencies.

Another limitation of the current study is that the use of music choice as the measured regulation strategy could be too limiting for participants to truly exhibit

coping attempts. Other measures should be used to investigate the validity of this measure. The manipulation of coping potential was largely successful, particularly when one takes into account the less-direct items that measured how “good” participants are at coping with stressful and emotional situations. The responses to these questions suggest that even when participants disagreed blatantly with the feedback, they internalized the message of the feedback since the responses for the self-ratings of coping competence are all concordant with the intended direction of feelings of capability. The current study used a novel manipulation that could prove useful and effective in future studies that aim to systematically study coping potential’s influence on various cognitive, emotional and social processes.

Another idea that warrants further investigation is the interaction between coping potential and flexibility of utilizing regulation strategies. The variability in responses of the unresolved high coping potential condition and the comparative lack of variability in the unresolved low coping potential condition suggests that coping potential may influence regulatory flexibility. The correlations between unresolved coping potential conditions and music index choice also suggest that based on the positive or negative coping feedback, adherence to one or multiple emotional valence categories varies. A study that directly manipulates coping potential and then measures regulatory flexibility may be better able to test this hypothesis. The implications that follow from this idea could inform practitioners about the importance of coping potential and how flexibility is influenced by it. This

would allow practitioners to strategically tailor grief-related therapy addressing related needs.

Conclusion

The current study has shown evidence that coping potential is important in influencing the regulation strategy choices of individuals dealing with an unresolved sad event. While it remains to be seen whether coping potential interacts with other applied regulation strategies, this work points to the importance of examining the specific conditions under which individuals will engage in sadness regulation. This research provides new questions about the scope of coping potential as an early catalyst of regulatory strategy utilization.

APPENDIX A
Consent Form

Professor Anca Miron and Alisha Petrouske, a graduate student, of the Department of Psychology at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh are conducting studies about life events and preferences for various items. The following information is provided for you to decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You should be aware that even if you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

As part of the study you will be asked to think about how you deal with emotions in your life. You may also be asked to think and write about a sad event you have once experienced. You should be aware that thinking and writing about a sad event could cause strong emotional responses. In this study you will also be asked to answer some questions about preferences of music. Although participation may not directly benefit you, we believe that the information will be useful in understanding some aspects of human behavior.

We do not anticipate that the study will present any risk or harm to your physical health. However, you may experience some emotional discomfort from thinking and writing about a very sad event.

The information that you will provide us will be recorded anonymously. Be assured that your name will not be associated with the research findings in any way. The information will be identified only by a code number.

We do solicit your participation but it is strictly voluntary. If you want to withdraw from the study at any time, you may do so without penalty. You will receive your research participation credit even if you decline to volunteer. The information collected from you up to that point would be destroyed if you so desire.

Once the study is completed, we would be glad to give the results to you. Do not hesitate to ask any questions about the study before, during, or after the research is complete. If you would like additional information concerning this study before or after it is complete, please feel free to contact:

Alisha Petrouske
Department of Psychology
UW Oshkosh
Petroa15@uwosh.edu

Dr. Anca Miron
Department of Psychology
UW Oshkosh
920-424-2328
mirona@uwosh.edu

If you have any complaints about your treatment as a participant in this study, please call or write:

Chair, Institutional Review Board
For Protection of Human Participants
c/o Grants Office
UW Oshkosh
Oshkosh, WI 54901
920-424-1415

I have received an explanation of the study and agree to participate. I understand that my participation in this study is strictly voluntary.

PRINTED NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE

APPENDIX B**Introduction**

Welcome to our studies! We know that your time and effort is valuable as is ours so to increase efficiency we have agreed to run a few short studies during these timeslots. We have three separate studies that we have combined because they are too short to run by themselves. Below we summarize each study and what will happen during each segment. Thank you again for your cooperation.

Study 1: College Student Coping

College life can lead to emotional situations whether it is adapting to the new surroundings, keeping track of new responsibilities or even just missing home. Here we want to find out more about how college students in particular cope with emotional situations. We have already conducted a large scale survey of 546 students here at UW Oshkosh and will be able to give you some information about your style of coping based on this previous data. This study will entail filling out a questionnaire about how you cope with emotional situations.

Study 2: Event Remembering

Human memory is an important and controversial area of study. Here we will be looking at how people remember events depending on how important or personally relevant the events are. You will be asked to write about an event during this portion and the event each person is asked to write about will vary from an everyday, regular event to an important or influential event. Please do your best to be as accurate as possible during this portion.

Study 3: Music Listening

Different factors affect how much we enjoy music and we want to find out what factors specifically account for level of music enjoyment. During this segment, you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire explaining what kinds of music you want to listen to. Based on the music preferences you indicate, we will select a musical piece for you to listen to on an MP3 player.

At this time, please open the door to let the researcher know that you are ready to continue.

APPENDIX C

Sad Event Manipulation

Instructions

You will be asked to spend 10 minutes writing about a life event that has happened to you very recently. Your information will be completely anonymous and confidential, and your name will not be linked to the information that you are giving us. For time limitations, we cannot ask people to write about more than one event. Because of that, we ask each person to write about one single event and to try to be as detailed as possible.

Resolved

Please write about an important event that has recently happened to you and which has made you very sad. This should be an event that has been resolved, which means that you have come to terms with the event and with what has happened to you. Please take 10 minutes to write down the event in detail and focus on the event and the emotions that you are experiencing now as you are thinking about the event. Use as much space as you need to.

Unresolved

Please write about an important event that has recently happened to you and which has made you very sad. This should be an event that is still unresolved, which means that you have not come to terms with the event yet and with what has happened to you. Please take 10 minutes to write down the event in detail and focus on the event and the emotions that you are experiencing now as you are thinking about the event. Use as much space as you need to.

APPENDIX D
Coping Questionnaire

Coping Questionnaire

College life can lead to emotional situations whether it is adapting to the new surroundings, keeping track of new responsibilities or even just missing home. Here we want to find out more about how college students in particular cope with emotional situations. We have already conducted a large scale survey of 546 students here at UW Oshkosh and will be able to give you some information about your style of coping based on this previous data. This study will entail filling out a questionnaire about how you cope with emotional situations.

Instructions: Please pick 10 of the following coping strategies and rank order them in terms of how frequently you engage in the strategies to cope with emotional situations (1 being most frequent, 10 being the least frequent).

- Go Shopping** _____
- Engage in Hobby.....** _____
- Use Humor.....** _____
- Have Sex.....** _____
- Eating** _____
- Talk/Call Someone.....** _____
- Be Alone.....** _____
- Do Chores/Cleaning.....** _____
- Religious/Spiritual.....** _____
- Drink Alcohol.....** _____
- Reading.....** _____
- Smoke Cigarettes.....** _____
- Change Location.....** _____
- Avoid Cause of Stress.....** _____
- Drugs.....** _____
- Exercise.....** _____
- Watch TV.....** _____
- Sleep.....** _____
- Cooking.....** _____
- Artistic Expression.....** _____
- Journaling.....** _____
- Study.....** _____
- Web, Facebook etc.....** _____

APPENDIX E**Coping Potential Manipulation**

We have collected some evidence from a previous large-scale study on the effectiveness of different strategies of coping with emotional events. We have computed an index score for you, based on your ranked strategy choices weighted by frequency, and then compared your index score to the scores of the students who participated in the first study.

Your index score is depicted below which indicates your coping style compared to other college students. (hand-written scores; 2.65 for low coping potential with ineffective circled and 9.29 for high coping potential with effective circled)

1

2

Ineffective Coping Styles

3

4

5

6

Average Coping Styles

7

8

9

Very Effective Coping Styles

10

APPENDIX F

Sad Event Reminder

Please answer the following questions about the sad event that you wrote about at the beginning of the session. Try to be as accurate as possible.

1. When did the sad event that you **described at the beginning of the study** occur? The event occurred within the last...

- day
- week
- two to three weeks
- three to four weeks
- one month
- two months
- longer than two months

2. How would you rate the intensity of the event?

Not at all intense									Extremely Intense
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

3. How important was the event in your life?

Not at all important									Extremely Important
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

4. To what extent did the event made you sad at the time it occurred?

Not at all Sad									Extremely Sad
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

APPENDIX G

Music Questionnaire

In this portion of the study we would like to select a musical piece for you to listen to. Please let us know what kind of music you would like to listen to RIGHT NOW by answering the questions below.

1. To what extent would you like to listen to music that is *happy*?

Not at all Very much

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

How *happy* should the music be?

Not at All Happy Extremely Happy

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

2. To what extent would you like to listen to music that is *sad*?

Not at all Very much

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

How *sad* should the music be?

Not at All Sad Extremely Sad

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

3. To what extent would you like to listen to music that is *angry*?

Not at all Very much

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

How *angry* should the music be?

Not at All Angry Extremely Angry

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

4. To what extent would you like to listen to music that is *calming*?

Not at all Very much

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

How *calming* should the music be?

Not at All Calm Extremely Calm
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

5. To what extent would you like to listen to music that is *uplifting*?

Not at all Very much
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

How *uplifting* should the music be?

Not at All Uplifting Extremely Uplifting
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

6. To what extent would you like to listen to music that is *relaxing*?

Not at all Very much
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

How *relaxing* should the music be?

Not at All Relaxing Extremely Relaxing
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

7. To what extent would you like to listen to music that is *upbeat*?

Not at all Very much
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

How *upbeat* should the music be?

Not at All Upbeat Extremely Upbeat
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

8. To what extent would you like to listen to music that is *soothing*?

Not at all Very much

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

How *soothing* should the music be?

Not at All Soothing Extremely Soothing

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

9. To what extent would you like to listen to music that is *exciting*?

Not at all Very much

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

How *exciting* should the music be?

Not at All Exciting Extremely

Exciting

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

10. To what extent would you like to listen to music that is *depressing*?

Not at all Very much

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

How *depressing* should the music be?

Not at All Depressing Extremely Depressing

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

11. To what extent would you like to listen to music that is *active*?

Not at all Very much

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

How *active* should the music be?

Not at All Active Extremely Active

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

12. To what extent would you like to listen to music that is *passive*?

Not at all Very much

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

How *passive* should the music be?

Not at All Passive

Extremely Passive

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

13. To what extent would you like to listen to music that is *meditative*?

Not at all Very much

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

How *meditative* should the music be?

Not at All Meditative

Extremely Meditative

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

14. To what extent would you like to listen to music that is *hostile*?

Not at all Very much

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

How *hostile* should the music be?

Not at All Hostile

Extremely Hostile

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

15. To what extent would you like to listen to music that is *sorrowful*?

Not at all Very much

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

How *sorrowful* should the music be?

Not at All Sorrowful

Extremely Sorrowful

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

APPENDIX H

Mood Questionnaire

To what extent do you feel the following emotions RIGHT NOW? For each emotion, circle a number that best reflects your answer.

1. Sad

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all								Extremely

2. Happy

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all								Extremely

3. Distressed

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all								Extremely

4. Excited

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all								Extremely

5. Upset

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all								Extremely

6. Angry

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all								Extremely

7. Low-spirited

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all								Extremely

8. Helpless

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all								Extremely

9. Joyful

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all								Extremely

10. Sorrowful

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Not at all

Extremely

13. Was the event **you wrote about in the beginning of the session** resolved?

 Yes

 No

14. **If yes**, to what extent was the event resolved?

Minimally

Completely

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

15. How important is it for you that the event was or will be resolved?

Not at all

Extremely Important

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

16. How good are you at coping with stressful situations?

Not at all

Extremely

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

17. How effective are you at coping with emotional situations?

Completely Ineffective

Completely Effective

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

18. To what extent did you agree with the feedback you were given about your coping potential?

Strongly Disagree

Neutral

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

19. How much control do you believe that you had over the sad event that you wrote about in the second study?

No Control

Full Control

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

APPENDIX I
Debriefing Procedure

Date:

Participant ID:

Gender:

Before we conclude the study is it ok if I ask you a few questions? Do you mind if I take notes?

What did you think of the study? Do you have any ideas as to what it is about?

For this study, we asked you to think about the way you deal with emotional events. Then we asked you to *think and write* about a personal sad event. Finally, we asked you questions regarding your music preferences. Did you see a connection between these portions of the study?

YES NO

If YES: What would you say the connection is?

- **Do you believe that writing about a personal sad event affected your preferences for different types of music? YES NO**

IF YES: How so?

A previous study has found that those who thought about an *unresolved* sad event were more likely to want to listen to happy and exciting music. This because listening to happy and exciting music may help in coping with the unresolved event they experienced and lift the sad mood up. However, when participants wrote about a *resolved* sad event, they wanted to listen to happy and exciting music less. This may be because these participants will not need to listen to happy and exciting music that could motivate them to cope with the event (since the event is already resolved).

- **For this study we asked you to write about a personal sad event in order to instigate feelings of sadness. As you may know, sadness is a very useful emotion that we experience in order to make sense of what has happened to us. In this study, we explore how people deal with sad events. Now, the event you wrote about was either resolved or unresolved. Were you asked to write about a resolved or unresolved event? RESOLVED UNRESOLVED**

- **At the beginning of the study we asked you to rank order coping strategies and gave you feedback regarding how effective your choices were at successfully dealing with emotional events. Do you remember what kind of feedback you received? EFFECTIVE NOT EFFECTIVE NONE**

What did you think about the feedback you received?

Did you believe the feedback?

- The reason we needed to give you feedback about how effective your coping strategies were was because we believe that how capable you feel at coping with emotional situations will influence your music choice. We believe that if someone believes that they have low coping potential and writes about an unresolved sad event, they will be more likely to choose happy, upbeat music to increase their motivation to cope with the unresolved event. Those that believe their coping potential is high will not need the happy upbeat music to motivate them to cope.

- **At this time I want to let you know that the feedback regarding your coping strategies was pre-determined. It is important that you know that the feedback we gave you has no bearing on your ability to cope. Do you understand why we had to include misleading aspects regarding this manner? Are you okay with that? (wait for them to answer and write down their response)**

- **How are you feeling now that you've completed the study? Are you okay?**

If not : Let them know about UW-Oshkosh Counseling Center:

http://www.uwosh.edu/couns_center/index.php

Hours

The Counseling Center is open during semesters from

Monday **8:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.**

Tuesday through Friday **8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.**

All other times our schedule is Monday through Friday **8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.**

Location

University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh Counseling Center

Dempsey Hall 201

800 Algoma Blvd.

Oshkosh, WI 54901-8613

Office: (920) 424-2061

Fax: (920) 424-1066

- **Do you have any questions at all?**
- **Any suggestions for improvement of this study?**

Before you leave, we just ask that you please not talk about this study to anyone until at least the end of the semester so others can come participate in a genuine manner. Would that be ok with you?

Thank you for you participation! We really appreciate it.

Suspicion

None

Low

Moderate

High

References

- Averbeck, J. M., Jones, A. & Robertson, K. (2011). Prior knowledge and health messages: An examination of affect as heuristics and information as systematics processing for fear appraisals. *Southern Communication Journal*, 76 (1), 35-54.
- Averill, J. R. (1969). Automatic response patterns during sadness and mirth. *Psychophysiology*, 5, 399-414.
- Bonanno, G. A., & Burton, C. L. (2013). Regulatory flexibility: An individual differences perspective on coping and emotion regulation. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 8 (6) 591-612.
- Brehm, J. W., Brummett, B. H., & Harvey, L. (1999). Paradoxical sadness. *Motivation and Emotion*, 23, 31-44.
- Brehm, J. W. & Self, E. A. (1989). The intensity of motivation. *Annual Reviews Psychology*, 40, 109-131.
- Chaiken, S. (1980). Heuristic versus systematic information processing and the use of source versus message cues in persuasion. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 39, 752-766.
- Cheng, C. (2001). Assessing coping flexibility in real-life and laboratory settings: A multimethod approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 80, 814-833.

- Cunningham, M. R. (1988) What you do when you're happy and blue? Mood expectancies and behavioral interest. *Motivation and Emotion*, 12, 309-331.
- Ekman, P. (2003). *Emotions revealed: Recognizing faces and feelings to improve communication and emotional life*. New York, NY:Times Books/Henry Holt.
- Frijda, N. H. (1986). *The Emotions*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Goldin, P. R., Ziv, M., Jazaieri, H., Werner, K., Kraemer, H., Heimberg, R. G., & Gross, J. J. (2012). Cognitive reappraisal self-efficacy mediates the effects of individual cognitive-behavioral therapy for social anxiety disorder. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 80, 1034-1040. doi: 10.1037/a0028555
- Gross, J. J. (1998). The emerging field of emotion regulation: An integrative review. *Review of General Psychology*, 2, 271-299.
- Kukla, A. 1974. Performance as a function of resultant achievement motivation (perceived ability) and perceived difficulty. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 7, 374-383.
- Lazarus, R. S. (1991). *Emotion and Adaptation*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- McGinty, H. L., Goldenberg, J. L., & Jacobsen, P. B. (2012). Relationship of threat appraisal with coping appraisal to fear of cancer recurrence in breast cancer survivors. *Psycho-Oncology*, 21, 203-210. doi: 10.1002/pon.1883
- Mesquita, B., & Frijda, N. H. (1992). Cultural variations in emotions: A review. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112, 179-204.

- Nesse, R. M. (2006). Evolutionary explanations for mood and mood disorders. In D. J. Stein, D. J. Kupfer, & A. F. Schatzberg (Eds.) *The American psychiatric publishing textbook of mood disorders*. (pp. 159-175). Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Publishing.
- Nyers, P. U. (1997). A study of the relationships between cognitive appraisals and consumption emotions. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 24, 296-304.
- Rivers, S. E., Brackett, M. A, Katulak, N. A., & Salovey, P. (2006). Regulating anger and sadness: An exploration of discrete emotions in emotion regulation. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 8, 393-427. doi: 10.1007/s10902-006-9017-2
- Scherer, K. R. (1984). On the nature and function of emotion: A component process approach. In K. R. Scherer and P. Ekman (eds.) *Approaches to Emotion*. 293-317. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Schwartz, G. E., Weinberger, D. A., & Singer, J. A. (1981). Cardiovascular differentiation of happiness, sadness, anger and fear following imagery and exercise. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 43, 343-364.
- Shields, S. A. (1984). Reports of bodily change in anxiety, sadness, and anger. *Motivation and Emotion*, 8, 1-21.
- Stein, N. L., & Levine, L. J. (1990). Making sense out of emotion. In N. L. Stein, B Leventhal, & T. Trabasso (Eds.). *Psychological and biological approaches to emotion* (pp. 47-73). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

- Tahler, M., Miron, A. M., & Rauscher, H. (2012). Music choice as a sadness regulation strategy for resolved versus unresolved sad events. *Psychology of Music*. doi: 10.1177/0305735612446537
- Thayer, R. E., Newman, R. J., & McClain, T. M. (1994). Self-regulation of mood: Strategies for changing a bad mood, raising energy, and reducing tension. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 6, 910-925.
- Woodman, A. C. & Hauser-Cram, P. (2013). The role of coping strategies in predicting change in parenting efficiency and depressive symptoms among mothers of adolescents with developmental disabilities. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, 57, 513-530.
- Wright, R. A. (1996). Brehm's theory of motivation as a model of effort and cardiovascular response. In J. A. Bargh and P. M. Gollwitzer (eds.) *The Psychology of Action*. 424-453. The Guilford Press: New York.
- Wright, R. A. (1998). Ability perception and cardiovascular response to behavioral challenge. In Kofta et al. (eds.) *Personal Control in Action*. 197-232. Plenum Press: New York.
- Wright, R. A. (2008). Refining the prediction of effort: Brehm's distinction between potential motivation and motivation intensity. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2, 682-701.
- Wright, R. A., Wadley, V. G., Pharr, R. P. & Butler, M. (1994). Interactive influence of self-reported ability and avoidant task demand on anticipatory cardiovascular reactivity. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 28, 68-86.

