

Gratitude in an On-Going Dyadic Relationship: The Effects of Feeling and Expressing
Gratitude on Marital Satisfaction among Married Couples

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Abstract of thesis titled: Gratitude in an On-Going Dyadic Relationship: The Effects of Feeling and Expressing Gratitude on Marital Satisfaction among Married Couples

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This study attempts to extend the existing literature about gratitude in the on-going relationship of married couples, and examined the dynamics thereof involved. N=100 dyads in Hong Kong were interviewed at three time points. T1 measures indicated that dispositional gratitude could predict not only the grateful mood one experienced in the past seven days but also the grateful mood one perceived from his/ her spouse. Both measures of grateful mood had similar actor and partner effects on the husbands' as well as wives' marital satisfaction. Between them, perceived mood of spouse was the stronger predictor, taking up virtually all the shared variance in explaining marital satisfaction. Longitudinal measures across the three time points showed that grateful mood of both spouses could be increased by about equal degrees via one of two interventions: having one of them keeping a private gratitude journal, or overtly expressing gratitude to the other. But the resulting changes in marital satisfaction differed for the actors (who assumed the role of beneficiaries) and their partners. Specifically, two moderators were identified: partners who judged their spouses' gratitude expressions as less sincere declined in their marital satisfaction, whereas, contrary to past research findings, actors who felt more obliged to their spouse became happier about their marriage. The results suggested involvement of different mechanisms for spouses on the two sides of the

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gratitude equation, and that feelings of obligation could be a protective factor in intimate relationships. The implications for research and counseling were discussed.

摘要 - 論文題目: 夫婦與感激: 主觀感覺感激和感覺配偶對自己有感激之情兩者對婚姻滿意度的影響

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本研究嘗試將有關感激的文獻引申到夫婦的關係裏, 並探索夫婦二人在有關方面的互動。在三個不同的時段裏共追蹤了 100 對香港夫婦。T1 的數據顯示, 感激度作為一種性格因素, 不但能有效推測夫婦二人在過去 7 天內自己所感覺到的感激情緒, 亦有助推測他們感覺到對方對自己的感激之情。這兩個感激情緒的變項, 各自都能同時影響丈夫及妻子的婚姻滿意度。在兩者當中, 能察覺對方對自己存有感激之情相對更為有效, 幾乎能全部解釋這兩個變項在婚姻滿意度上的共變數估計值。從三個時段所搜集的縱貫式數據顯示, 有兩種方法都可以提高夫婦二人的感激情緒, 而且這兩種方法所能提高的程度相約: 讓夫婦當中一人獨自填寫一份有關感激的日記, 或讓他/她直接向對方道謝。這兩種方法對婚姻滿意度的影響, 會按個人所扮演的角色 - 主動的(即扮演受益人的角色並填寫日記或提出道謝)或被動的 - 有所分別。具體而言, 作為被動者, 假如判斷對方的道謝行為並不真誠, 他/她的婚姻滿意度會下降; 同時, 跟以前的研究結論不同, 作為主動者, 越是感覺有責任回報配偶的, 他/她的婚姻滿意度反為上升。這個結果顯示在感激程式的兩邊牽涉不同的機制, 尤其在親密的關係中, 感覺有責任回報對方可以是一個保護因子。本文詳細探討這些結果對有關方面的研究和輔導的含義。

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