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Ethnic Background Differences in College Students' Self-compassion and General Well-Being

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Ethnic Background Differences in College Students' Self-compassion and General Well-Being

by

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Abstract

Ethnic Background Differences in College Students'

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by

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In considering current college students' general well-being, their diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds need to be considered as an important contributor. Previous research revealed that certain ethnic grouops had more difficulty adjusting to college life. This study examined the contributors to general well-being by introducing self-compassion as an important contributor for college students from three different ethnic backgrounds as determined by their self-identified choices. Data came from the online survey responses of 95 college students attending a southwestern university. Correlations between self-compassion and the nine subscales of general well-being yielded a positive relationship as in previous studies, with six of them meeting the previous criterion ($r = .60$). Results showed that etnic groups and degree of ethnic identification did not, for these students, moderate the relationship between self-compassion and general well-being..

Keyword   *Well-being, Self-Compassion, Ethnicity, College students*

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Depression and anxiety have been increasing and have nearly doubled in the past twenty years. Partly in response, a recent development emerged branch of psychology called positive psychology, proposed by Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) to focus on factors that enable happiness, the effects of autonomy, self-regulation, how optimism and hope affect health, and what constitutes wisdom. Positive psychology is concerned with using current psychological theories and interventions to promote a happier life and to study positive human development. As the field of positive psychology has grown, various constructs of personal well-being have been investigated and proposed. Promoting a "whole" person orientation in different areas and preventing mental illness is the focus of positive psychology.

What is general well-being

The study of general well-being can be traced back to Bradburn's (1969) seminal work that stated personal happiness is defined as the balance between positive and negative affect coming from everyday life. Research had indicated that personal failure, depending on intensity and frequency, is linked to positive and negative affect influencing one's well-being (Diener, Larsen, Levin, & Emmons, 1985). How often the positive/negative effect occurs indicates one's well-being, specifically long-term emotional well-being (Diener & Larsen, & Tellegen, 1998). Many researchers have identified key components that provide indication of one's well-being. Sociologists view life satisfaction as the key cognitive component that complement happiness and indicates one's well-being (e.g., Andrews & McKennell, 1980; Andrews & Withey, 1976; Bryant & Veroff, 1982; Campbell, Converse, & Rodgers, 1976). Having a baseline level of

subjective well-being affects individuals' health, work, income, social relation, and social benefits (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008; Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005).

The more recent years focused on the specific construct of well-being, the relations among positive adaptations with traits, and the relations among the traits. I will discuss these in detail in the following sections.

Components of general well-being

The amount of previous research on well-being has suggested that high well-being levels can benefit and improve one's life in better functioning at the individual and societal levels in terms of having and maintaining close relationships with friends and family, more likely to find joy in one's work, and better health (Cohen et al., 2003; Diener & Biswas, 2008; Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005; Roysamb et al., 2002).

Ryff and Keyes' six scales of multidimensional psychological well-being model (1995) includes distinct components of positive psychological human functioning that evaluate one's current and past life events. The model was tested, and results indicated that personal well-being was supported as a multifaceted structure. The six dimensions of well-being proposed by Ryff and Keyes are: self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth.

Considering that college students (ages 18 and up) are coming into a new environment with various interactions with different people coming from different backgrounds, it is not difficult to imagine that college life is challenging, and to learn how college students cope with new life experiences. Research has investigated potential variables influencing both positive and negative affect that links between general well-being in dealing with new circumstances. For

example, personal well-being has been linked to the pursuit of pleasure, life satisfaction, purpose in life, and self-acceptance (Diener 2000; Diener et al. 1999; Ryan & Deci 2000; Fredrickson 2000). Others stated that one's general well-being is built on the positive affect that comes with past experiences and lack of negative affect (Diener 2000; Diener et al., 1999; Fredrickson 2001). Other previous work on individuals' well-being focused on the measures of goals that claimed the ability to disengage in goal pursuit and redirect energy toward alternative achievable goals when the current goals are no longer achievable is an important contributor to general well-being (Neely et al., 2009).

Several of these previous studies developed scales are useful in measuring well-being. For my study with college students, I was interested in those that could reflect college students' life with their general well-being. In particular, autonomy, purpose in life, and personal growth are relevant. The measurement of Ryff and Keyes's Scale of Psyciological Well-being was selected because the original sample group was conducted with a group of young adults (18-29 years old) that fit into the age range of current college students (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). It was also suggested that the theoretical model could be used on college students to measure the collective self-reflected the development of general well-being over time (Seifert 2005).

a. Autonomy and Well-being

Autonomy refers to an individual's sense of self-determination in terms of freedom and independence, as well as resistance to social pressure, and the thoughts and behaviors that come with it. Lack of autonomy indicates difficulty in managing social pressure, and concern about others' judgement and expectations. If personal self worth is dependent on others' evaluation,

students well-being may buffer, as campus life brings with it social pressure to conform (Ryff & Keyes., 1995).

b. Purpose in Life and Well-being

Purpose in Life refers to personal feelings of direction in life individuals high in Purpose in Life tend to be more open to new experiences, have a sense of direction in life, and are more determined in aiming for personal goals. Individuals who have a higher sense of purpose in life believe life is meaningful (Ryff & Keyes., 1995).

c. Personal Growth and well-being

Personal growth assesses an individual's sense of continued development, and how the person sees herself/himself as a growing and expanding individual depending on past and new experiences. Individuals who have a higher sense of personal growth believe in their potential in life and can see themselves as improving persons who can reflect on self-knowledge and develop new attitudes and behaviors based on past experiences (Ryff & Keyes., 1995).

d. The General Self-Efficacy and Well-being

Luthans et al. (2007) combined the effects of hope, optimism, and self-efficacy in predicting workplace success and how individuals dealt with work-related stress. Among these widely used constructs of general well-being, the ones that are positively related to mental health are self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and gratitude. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in his/her ability to perform a specific behavior or action (Bandura, 1977). Others state that self-efficacy is the "dispositional expectancy" of one's ability to perform an action or behavior that will lead to desired outcomes (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995). Self-Efficacy is a particularly

important component in predicting general well-being in the college student population because it is associated with psychological adjustment and physical health when facing daily challenges of campus life (Maddux 2005). Individuals who are high in self-efficacy have a stronger buffer against mental illness, such as depression and anxiety, and they also tend to have better mental health and are more likely to complete personal goals in the face of challenges (Bandura 1977; Maddux & Meier 1995).

e. Optimism

Optimism is the mental attitude and general belief that an individual will experience positive outcomes in life in general (Scheier & Carver 1985). It is said to enhance individuals' likelihood of focusing on the problem and emotion-focused coping strategies when encountering stressful life events among the college population, hence lowering levels of depression and anxiety and encountering better transitions to college (Aspinwall & Taylor 1992; Carver & Scheier 2005).

f. Hope

Snyder et al. (2002) stated that hope is the sense of determination in meeting goals successfully (agency) and personal ability in generating successful plans to achieve those goals (pathways). Previous studies with college students claimed that a sense of hopefulness is positively linked with students' cumulative GPA and graduation rates, and negatively linked with dropping out due to poor grades (Curry et al. 1997; Snyder et al 2002). It is one of the essential aspect of college life, hence provides an indicator of college students' general well-being.

g. Gratitude

Gratitude is considered as an affective personal trait that indicated an individual's positive sense of appreciation when the positive life experiences occur coming from other people's act of benevolence (McCullough et al., 2002). Other research has suggested that gratitude can be used as a predictor of happiness and well-being (Emmon & McCullough, 2003). College students with higher levels of gratitude had less reported physical problems, spent more time exercising, were more aware of personal physical health, had higher levels of positive affect; hence, was better general well-being (Emmons & McCullough 2003). Additionally, gratitude in college students was found to be positively correlated with motivational drive, empathy, and strategies planning, all of which indicate better psychological well-being (Miley & Spinella 2006).

h. General Health and Well-being

It is not for unusual general health to be used as a predictor of general well-being. Weiss et al. (2002) used self-confidence and general health in predicting the positive traits of well-being. Diener stated that the one of the positive evaluations that reflect a personal subjective well-being is health (Diener & Ryan 2009). In general, people who report to have better health, also report to have higher subjective well-being (Roysamb et al., 2003). It was also reported people who have higher levels of well-being have greater resistance to the common cold virus indicating a stronger immune system (Cohen et al., 2003; Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008). Others found that well-being can also be a predictor of human longevity when individuals are living in the identical environment (Danner, Snowdon, and Friesen., 2001; Pressman & Cohen., 2008).

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j. Goal regulation and well-being

Telic theories of subjective well-being hold that happiness can be achieved when a goal or need is reached. Ryan and Deci's (2000) Self-Determination theory suggested that when human innate needs are fulfilled, an individual can achieve a sense of well-being. Emmons (1986) stated that humans are consciously seeking to fulfill goals in order to achieve well-being (1986). Bandura (1997) argued that the pursuit of meaningful goals is an important component of self-regulation that accounts for individuals' general health and well-being. Some have argued that goal pursuit needs to be further specified and that goal disengagement and goal reengagement reveal a better picture (Wrosch et al., 2003). The ability to pull away from goals that are no longer achievable and redirect one's energy to new alternative salient goals is good for one's general well-being. Wrosch (2007) suggested a link between goal regulation and general well-being. The ability to disengage from some goals and reengage with other goals predicted an ability to deal with daily stress, improved stress hormone level, and fewer depressive symptoms; hence, a key predictor of an individual's general well-being. It was also reported that when one had the ability to disengage and reengage in goals, one experienced a higher level of life satisfaction. Using Wrosch's scales of goal disengagement and goal reengagement, Neely et al. (2009) confirmed that goal reengagement predicted college students' well-being. Adding scores from a measure of stress and social support as well as self-compassion accounted for a substantial amount of variance of students' well-being index. In all, the findings from the previous research indicated the importance of goal regulation, especially goal disengagement and goal reengagement, for predicting individuals' general well-being.

Self-compassion and well-being

Previous research has also revealed positive links between self-compassion and general well-being. For young adults, self-compassion correlates highly with their mental health (Neff, 2003b). To be more specific, self-compassion studies have shown a positive association with happiness, optimism, positive affect, wisdom, and a negative relationship with neuroticism, depression, and anxiety. Findings have shown that self-compassion and general well-being are dependent on one another, and may predict well-being more strongly than other factors (Leary et al., 2007). In the sections that follow, I first discuss what is self-compassion before addressing previous findings that relate self-compassion to several factors.

a. What is self-compassion

According to Neff (2003a), *self-compassion* is an emotional state in which a person can openly confirm, but without a judgmental attitude, one's own suffering while experiencing feelings of caring and kindness toward one's inadequacies and failures, knowing that the experience is just part of the human experience. By doing so, individuals can maintain an objective perspective on their current situation with more caring and kindness rather than self-criticism. This brings us to mindfulness. Self-compassion has often been linked to mindfulness. *Mindfulness* refers to keeping one's awareness in the current moment most of the time, being present and aware in life today, and aware that the past is the past, and the future has not yet arrived. It also refers to being non-judgmental with self and others (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Langer, 1989; Wallace & Shapiro, 2006). The benefits of being mindful allow one to manage frustration, stress, and problems effectively. It is being active in solving problems while accepting that things are sometimes out of one's control. Being mindful also improves one's

emotional regulation, and allows for having healthy emotional expression and impulse control, knowing how to balance coping and managing emotion as well as tolerating them by "riding the wave." Moreover, being mindful improves interpersonal effectiveness, meaning getting one's needs met in relationships, sustaining healthy relationships while also maintaining self-respect.

b. Self-compassion's Link to General Well-being

Self-compassion is an important aspect of individuals' mental well-being. Previous research has indicated the importance of self-compassion as a component of one's general well-being. It was reported that how individuals manage their negative emotions when encountering disappointing and stressful life events, being self-compassionate was an important contributor to their general well-being (Neff et al., 2007). Leary et al. (2007) found that college students' level of self-compassion was a predictor of their self-evaluations and reactions to life events.

A recent meta-analysis (MacBeth & Gumley, 2012) that contained 14 eligible studies revealed a large effect size for the relationship between self-compassion and general well-being ($r = -.54$, 97% C.I = -0.57 to -0.51; $z = +3.02$; $p < .0001$) with a strong negative link between self-compassion and psychopathology. Similar to mindfulness, self-compassion requires one to be self-aware that a bad situation is temporary, hence promoting a connectedness with reality and better personal well-being.

c. Self-Compassion and Positive Emotions

Self-compassion may contribute to understanding general well-being in college students because individuals high in self-compassion react differently to the everyday challenges they encounter on and off campus, reflecting how compassionately they treat themselves. Self-

compassion was found to be positively related to wisdom, happiness, optimism, extroversion, and conscientiousness; all of which are important perspectives on well-being (Neff et al. 2007).

Research has also shown a positive relationship between self-compassion and academic goals. High scorers in self-compassion leaned toward learning goals in their learning orientation, focused on learning for personal mastery reasons; whereas lower scorers' motivation orientation leaned toward performance goals, expressing concerns with impressing others. In the same study, self-compassion also yielded links to greater self-efficacy and less fear of failure. In sum, individuals who are high in self-compassion are more likely to accept their mistakes while facing academic failure and to take responsibility (Leary et al., 2007, Neff, Kirkpatrick, & Ride, 2007).

Mindfulness based interventions have been developed that teach stress reduction, self-compassion, and emphasize the positive benefits that it might bring. Sharpiro et al. (2005) found that health care workers reported less stress after two months of using a mindfulness-based stress reduction. In another study Shapiro (2007) conducted using the mindfulness intervention, Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) techniques, for a ten-week period with a group of graduate students, results showed that the direct instruction reduced students' reported stress, worry, anxiety, and it increased mindfulness levels .

Neff et al. (2007) reported that students taking a self-compassion based intervention showed significant improvements that appeared robust for three weeks in college students after receiving the "Gestalt two-chair" exercise that involved students followed the counselor's self-compassion guidance after criticizing themselves. Neff and Germer's Mindful Self-compassion program raised 43% participants' self-compassion level. The result incated increased positive emotions, such as self-compassion, mindfuleness, compassion for others, and life satisfaction;

negative emotions were decreased, such as depression, anxiety, stress, and emotional avoidance (Neff & Germer, 2013). All the above finsings indicated the practung self-compassion enhances individuals' quality of life.

d. Self-compassion and Negative Emotions

Research has shown that adopting a self-compassion mindset can help individuals in dealing with their failures and inadequacies, and provide a buffer when stressful events are beyond their control. Experimental studies have shown that self-compassion moderates a negative situation and the emotions that come with it, and that self-compassion is negatively related to depression and anxiety (Neff, 2003). Researchers have also indicated that a non-judgmental and compassionate attitude toward oneself can decrease the negative affect that accompanies dealing with personal problems, and it can increase positive affect, hence promoting general well-being (Keng, Smoski, & Robins, 2011; Hoffman, Sawyer, Witt, & Oh, 2010). Leary et al. (2007) reported participants were less upset and more willing to take personal responsibility when prompted to be self-compassionate about a past negative event. Neff et al. (2005) studied undergraduates who had recently failed a midterm, and reported that the students who measured higher on their self-compassion tended to manage their negative emotions better compared to the students who scored lower. This finding suggests that self-compassion showed links to individuals' learning motivation. Moreover, Neff et al. (2005) conducted a mock job interview and concluded self-compassion predicted less anxiety in participants while they were being asked to describe their greatest weakness. The conclusions revealed that individuals who are self-compassionate are more likely to accept their weakness, failures, and more willing to take the responsibility for their mistakes.

In an empirical study by Zabelina and Robinson (2010c) to measure creativity in both visual and verbal performances, participants were asked to think about a past failure, rejection, or humiliation. While the control and experimental groups had the identical prompt, the experimental group was given an additional mini task to write an event invoking kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness before the write up. The authors concluded that the additional prompt allowed the participants to be mindful before processing into the write up, and they interpreted the results as revealing that the self-compassion manipulation increased creativity among self-critical individuals. Shapira and Mongrain (2010) found that a one-week compassion writing exercise increased one's self-compassion for six weeks.

In a study with a large (n=3000) community sample in the Netherlands (Neff & Vonk, 2009) comparing self-compassion and self-esteem, self-compassion predicted more stable feelings of self-worth over eight months, was less contingent on performance, appearance, or social approval, less social comparison, less reactive anger, and less need for cognitive closure (rigid opinions).

Self-compassion and coping also show a positive relationship. In studying how well veterans from Iraq and Afganistan coped, Dahm (2013) showed that veterans who had high self-compassion levels had less psychological distress and better day-to-day functioning. A similar study was conducted, by Sbarra et al. (2012) with 109 individuals who were in the process of divorce. The authors found that self-compassion predicted divorce-related psychological adjustment nine months later, and the results held even when controlling for depression, attachment, self-esteem, positive and negative emotions, and optimism.

e. Self-Compassion and General Health

The physiology of compassion meditation has also been linked to general health. The neurobiology of compassion meditation research showed that compassion increased oxytocin and reduced cortisol, and resulted in better immune function and longer telomeres (predictors of life span) (Pace et al., 2010). Compassion meditation allowed for changes in neural circuitry, rewiring of the brain, strengthening the connections in brain areas used to detect emotions in others, and increasing empathetic accuracy. Higher levels of left-prefrontal activity associated with joy, empathy, maternal love were detected by experts in self-compassion meditation (Davidson 2014) ; Hofmann et al., 2011; Keltner, 2004; Long 2009). Moreover, a self-compassion mindset has also been linked to heart rate variability that allows more flexible responding, lower cortisol levels associated with reducing stress, increased insula activity that promotes feelings of empathy, and better immune functioning in reducing social stress (Breines et al., 2014; Howland et al., 2011; Long et al., 2009; Rockcliff et al., 2011).

f. Age and self-compassion

Self-compassion has been researched with many age groups. Adolescents are reported to be highly concerned with evaluating their self-worth while comparing themselves with their peers, but teens who rated higher in self-compassion revealed lower levels of depression and anxiety, as well as greater connectedness with reality (Neff & McGehee, 2010). The findings also showed a negative association between self-compassion and adolescents' "personal fable" in which that they hold the belief they are unique and better than average. They are less likely to adopt maladaptive perfectionism standards, and to get upset when failing to meet standards (Neff, 2003a).

Self-compassion also has proved beneficial in the elderly. It is inevitable that with increasing age, the likelihood of an individual experiencing stressful life events will also increase, some of which affect general well-being and life satisfaction (Mirowsky & Ross, 1992). Studies investigating the potential factors that affect or reveal links to individuals' general well-being have reported greater variability in the elderly in how they cope with daily challenges. Among several factors, such as social support, perceived control, self-esteem, one was self-compassion. Self-compassion accounted for well-being among older individuals in how each reacts to age-related challenges in both physical and mental aspects. It was reported that adopting a self-compassionate mindset affects how the elderly feel about the inevitable challenges that come with aging self and stressful life events (Gilbert & Procter, 2006). Additionally, self-compassion is also associated with more regular doctors visits among the elderly, suggesting that self-compassionate individuals take better care of themselves, resulting in better general health (Allen et al., 2012). In sum, elders who are high in self-compassion are more willing to accept assistance for their physical limitations, they also tend to have greater ability in dealing with their limitations (Neff, 2003a; Neff, Rude, et al., 2007; Leary et al., 2007).

In general, self-compassion has been positively associated with positive emotions and negatively associated with negative emotions. Individuals with higher self-compassion report lower anxiety, depression, stress, neuroticism, rumination, thought suppression, and dogmatism. By contrast, individuals with a higher self-compassion level show a higher level of life satisfaction, autonomy, wisdom, curiosity, and exploration, happiness, optimism, and cognitive flexibility. In fact, researchers have shown that self-compassion provides a strong buffer against anxiety (Neff, 2003). Individuals who are high in self-compassion are more likely to act proactively and take better care of themselves, hence, to experience better general well-being.

Ethnic Identification and Well-Being

First generation minority college students in American universities have increased over the recent years. Previous research conducted in four different studies tested the hypothesis and claims that first-generation minority college students underperform because interdependent norms from their mostly working class backgrounds constitute a mismatch with middle class independent norms prevalent in universities. These minority students, compared with continuing generation students who have at least one parent with a four-year college degree, tend to struggle academically and harm their general well-being. The cultural mismatch theory serves as an important explanation of the achievement gap and provides a glimpse into what contributes to students' general well-being (Stephens et al., 2012).

Ethnic differences are based on various variables in terms of country of origin, region of settlement, socioeconomic status, and larger influences (Marian & Marin, 1991; Reid, 1994). The definition is not agreed by all, but Phinney's (1996) definition of culture that refers to broad groupings of Americans on the basis of both race and culture of origin is adopted in this study.

Ethnicity is often used in reference to groups of nationality; however, there is a distinction between culture and ethnicity. Phinney (1996) showed that the ethnic identification, in terms of culture, races, ethnicity, and social variables, provide a better understanding of the psychological role of ethnicity in students' general well-being. For many years, culture has been identified as a significant factor in human behavior, and the construct has included reference to race, ethnicity, and social class in both objective and subjective aspects (Betancourt & Lopez, 1993; Rohner & Triandis, 1948).

Acculturation is a process that reflects the extent to which individuals have maintained their culture of origin or adapted to the larger society they have joined, including daily behaviors, language usage, food practices, television viewing, or participation in traditional activities. Many researchers state that to understand better a person's social, emotional, cognitive, and mental health, it is necessary to understand the variables of ethnicity and cultural characteristics (Betancourt & Lopez, 1993; Phinney & Landin, 1996). The strength of ethnic identification is considered as part of self-identity.

The previous research on ethnic identification has suggested that individuals from different ethnic groups are socialized in different traditions and possess cultural orientations different from those of the majority (Gaines et al., 1997; Harrison et al., 1995; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Oyserman & Markus, 1993). Distinct differences in well-being can be explained by the effects of culture and personal differences in ethnic backgrounds (Diener & Diener, 1996). A previous empirical study found that Asian-Americans scored low on positive affect compared to European-Americans, whereas European and Asian-Americans scored high on positive affect, such as excitement, when compared to Chinese participants (Tsai, Knutson, & Fung, 2006). Other research also indicated racial differences among college students in other aspects of general well-being. Caucasian American students reported more satisfaction with school and self when compared with minority students (Zullin et al., 2005). The findings suggested that ethnic differences may play a key role in predicting college students' general well-being.

The rationale for my study

Although differences among individuals with different ethnic identification in terms of some aspects of their well-being have been reported, the factors that contributed to these results have not yet been fully tested in an empirical study. In particular, the research question addressed by my study is that both self-compassion and ethnic group membership should be related to general well-being as measured in several ways. In addition, because individuals belonging to the same ethnic group may not identify to the same degree with their ethnicity, a measure of ethnic identification, that is, a sense of belongs of one's ethnic background, was also considered. The view of ethnic identity here is based on the assumption that ethnicity is a meaningful psychological variable to the extent that it has salience and centrality for the individual involved.

For example, because they have a stronger sense of belonging that brings personal security, those with stronger ethnic identificationmay be more willing to accept their personal failings, problems, and inadequacies, and they might be more able to deal with stressful events. Such individuals may experience less anxiety, depression, and more life satisfaction, autonomy, general self efficacy, and other positive attitudes toward life in general. They may also be more able to accept who they are when encountering other college students who come from different backgrounds. All of these considerations suggest that ethnic identification may be linked to college students' well-being and self-compassion level.

This study is focused on the role of ethnic differences in accounting for the relationship between general well-being and self-compassion, taking degree of ethnic identification into account. Thus, I explored the contributors to the well-being of college students representing

different ethnic backgrounds and different degrees of ethnic identification in order to understand how they are facing academic and daily stress of being college students.

I assessed the role of ethnic identification as a moderator of the relationship between general well-being and self-compassion. In this study, the relationship between self-compassion and general well-being, with ethnic identification as a moderator, was tested in college students. Although previous studies have revealed that general well-being and self-compassion are associated with one other among young adults, no research has examined the relationship between self-compassion and general well-being among college students of different ethnic backgrounds.

Chapter 2

Method

In this chapter, I include the participants, the measures, how the data were collected, and the data analysis plan.

Participants

The participants were students who were taking classes offered by the Department of Educational Psychology with a subject pool requirement. Among students needing to fulfill the subject pool requirements, my participants were invited to join my study from among a group randomly selected to represent each of the ethnicities they reported themselves. Originally, 107 participants had been allotted from the subject pool to my study, but I found 134 sets of data entered, on the survey site, of which 114 were complete entries.

The data were sorted and cleaned to exclude any repeated and incomplete data entries. Resulting in 106 complete data sets, I then excluded two international students and one 65-year-old senior because I considered an outlier potentially very different from the others. Also, five African American students and three students, who reported mixed ethnicities were excluded due to low sample size.

The final sample consisted of 95 students (47 men and 48 women). Six were freshmen, 12 were sophomore, 17 were juniors, and 60 were seniors. The ethnic composition was 36.8% Asian Americans (n=3), 30.5% were Caucasian Americans (n=29), and 32.7% were Latino Americans (n=31). Most students, 93 of the students' ages range from 18 to 24 years old, and only two were range from 31~35.

<center>Procedure</center>

Only the quantitative self-report survey had been uploaded to Qualtrics, the students were contained and invited to join this study by clicking on the link provided were given at least two months to complete the questionnaire. User information and survey responses were collected through the Qualtrics website in survey form.

When they accessed the survey, students first saw a consent form and reminded that participation was voluntary. They were told there was no penalty if they chose to stop participation at any time. By clicking "I agree to participate", the students advanced to the first part of the actual survey.

The survey itself included 114 items in 10 sub-scales, presented in14 blocks or subsections presented in the following order: Consent Form, 1.) Optimism questionnaire, 2.) The General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE), 3.) Autonomy 4.) Personal Growth 5.) Purpose in Life, 6.) Self-compassion 7.) Goal Disengagement 8.) Goal Re-engagement, 9.) Adult Hope Scale (AHS), 10.) Gratitude Questionnaire, 11.) General Health Scale, 12.) The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM), and 13.) a demographic questionnaire. I explain these more fully below.

<center>Measures</center>

Measuring Well-Being

The measures of general well-being were selected because they had been used often in the relevant literature. The scales are described that they appear in the order they appeared in the online survey.

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Optimism Questionnaire: To measure optimism, I used the Life Orientation Test-Revised (LOT-R) from Scheier et al. (1994). The scale has 10 items with three items that need to be reversed coded. Ratings were on a scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The measure indicates individual differences in optimism versus pessimism. Sample items include, "In certain times, I usually expect the best" versus the permissive reversed coded item " I hardly ever expect things to go my way."

The General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE): the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE), developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995), is a 10-item measure that is widely used in different countries and available in 33 languages. The participants responded on a 5-point Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The scale assesses a general sense of perceived self-efficacy that focuses on daily activities and personal coping skills after experiencing stressful life events. Sample questions include "I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough," and" I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events."

Autonomy subscale: This is one of the six scales embedded in Ryff and Keyes' (1995) dimensions of well-being. The 7-item scale measures the confidence an individual ha in his/her opinions, when the opinions are contrary to general consensus (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). The participants responded on a 5-point Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Sample items include "I am not afraid to voice my opinions even when they are in opposition to the opinions of most people," and "I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus." A higher score indicates a participant is self-determined and independent.

Purpose in Life subscale: This is another of the six scales from Ryff and Keyes (1995) as measure of well-being. The 8-item subscale measures purpose in life. The items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree. Items include, "I am an active person in carrying out the plans I set for myself," and " I enjoy making plans for the future and working to make them a reality." Some items are reversed coded, such as "I don't want to try new ways of doing of doing things-my life is fine the way it is." The subscale is meant to assess individuals' sense of direction in life, a sense of meaning in past and present events in life, beliefs about purpose in life, and aims or goals in life. A high score indicates the individual reported the above qualities in his/her life.

Personal Growth: Another of the six scales from Ryff and Keyes (1995) personal growth refers to a measure of the importance of an individual new experience and how the new gained experience challenge how current views of the world. The 7-item Likert scale measure reveals how one views oneself as open to new experiences and the sense of feeling that one is growing and expanding as a person. The participants responded on a 5-point Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Sample items include "I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about the world," and " I have the sense that I have developed a lot as a person over time."

Adult Hope Scale (AHS): The Adult Hope Scale is a 12-item measure that examines the effect and level of hope for adults. The scale has two sections measuring goal-directed energy (agency) and energy in planning to accomplish goals (pathway) (Snyder et al., 1991). Four of the 12 items measure agency, four measure pathway, ad four are fillers. Responses are indicated on 5-point Likert scales ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The scale is derived from hope theory with a higher score indicating higher perceived capability in planning

and accomplishing goals. Sample items include, "I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to me," and "I put effort toward other meaningful goals."

*The Gratitude Questionnaire-Six Item Form (GQ-6:)*The six items of Gratitude Questionnaire (McCullough et al., 2002) are intended to measure the participants' grateful emotion toward others when positive experiences occur rated on 5-point scales, sample items include, "I have so much in life to be thankful for," and the reversed item, "Long amounts of time can go by before I feel grateful to something or someone."

General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12): The 12-item General Health Questionnaire assessed the participants' general psychological distress experience within the past few weeks (Goldberg, 1972). The 5-point Likert scale questionnaire ranges from definitely yes (1) to definitely no (5), and focuses on the traits of disorders or patterns.The questionnaire includes questions like " Have you felt constantly under strain?" and "Have you lost much sleep over worry?" Higher overall scores indicate lower stress levels and higher general health, whereas lower overall scores indicated higher stress levels and worse general health.

Goal Disengagement and Goal Resengagement scales: According to Neely et al. (2009), goal regulation and goal disengagement have positive correlation with personal general well-being.Two scales, Goal Disengagement and Goal Re-engagement scales, adopted from Worsch and used in this study to measure college students ease in engaging with and disengaging from goals. The Goal disengagement scale (Worsch et al., 2003) consists 4 items, rated on 5 points Likert ratings that is trying to measure individuals' life goals and the ease in reducing effort and retracting commitment whose goals become unattainable. This scale was developed in order to measure the ability to relinquish goal commitment when needed. The 5-point Likert scale ranges from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Sample items include, "It's easy for me to

reduce my effort toward the goal" and the reversed item "I find it difficult to stop trying to achieve the goal."

The Goal re-engagement scale, also from Worsch et al (2003), is comprised of 8-item, rated on 5 points Likert scales that includes items like, "I think about other new goals to pursue," and" I convince myself that I have other meaningful goals to pursue."

Measuring Self-Compassion

Self-compassion was measured using the brief 12-item self-compassion scale (Raes, Pommier, Neff, & Van Gucht, 2011) a short form that has a nearly perfect correlation with the longer version. The measure identifies one's sense of self-judging (e.g., include "I'm disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies"), self-kindness (e.g., "When I'm going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need"), common humanity ("I try to see my failings as part of the human condition"), and mindfulness (e.g., "When something painful happens, I try to take a balanced view of the situation"). Responses are provided on 5-point Likert scales from almost never (1) to almost always (5). High scores indicate how self-compassionate a person is when he/she encountered negative events.

Degree of Ethnicity

The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (Phinney., 1992) is widely used to measure the individual' degree of identification with their ethnicity. It has good reliability (. 9 for college sample) in general. The scale focuses on four components: ethnic identity search, affirmation, belonging, and commitment. Sample items include "I have spent time trying to find out more about my own ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs," and "I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me." The 5-point Likert scale ranges from

strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). High scores indicate higher levels of ethnic identification.

Data Analysis Plan

The first step of data analysis was to prepare the data. Originally, 107 participants had been allotted to me, but when I downloaded the data from the survey website, I found that 134 individuals has started the survey. Of these, 114 were complete. I then sorted the data by IP address and EID, and deleted data if it was completed by the same participant or under any other conditions that might cause order or fatigue effects.

The criteria for selecting data entries were in the following: (1) When I found repeated data entries collected from the same participant, I chose one that had completion; (2) if two sets of data were complete from the same person, I chose the one that was completed in a reasonable amount of time (range from 30 minutes to an hour); (3) If two sets of data were completed by the same person with similar completion me, I chose the first completed set in order to avoid contomination from having recently seen the items; (4) my target participants were U.S. college students, and thus participants who had not been born and educated in the United States were excluded (two international students); (5) my target participants needed to range in age from 18 to 35 years of age to fit into the norm of general college students, and thus, one participant who was 65 years old was excluded; (6) the sample of African American students (n = 5) had be to excluded due to low sample size; (7) the sample of mixed ethnicity students (n = 3) was also excluded due to low sample size.

Next, data analysis was conducted in order to answer the research questions. These are listed at the beginning of chapter 4.

Chapter 3

Result

I organize my report of results based on my research questions listed below. Among the 10 subscales of general well-being, the Purpose in Life subscale was dropped due to unsatisfactory reliability (. 62). The research questions are:

- *Will there be a positive correlation between self-compassion and general well-being as has been shown in previous research?*

- *Are there differences between ethnic groups in self-compassion and general well-being level as measured by the10 subscales?*

- *If each ethnic group is dichotomized into high and low groups by their MEIM scales, will there be differences in their self-compassion and general well-being level?*

Descriptive Data

In Table 1, the overall means, standard deviations, and reliabilities measured by Cronbach's Alpha for each measure are reported. The purpose in Life scale was dropped due to low Crobach's alpha. The remaining scales had acceptable reliabilities ranging from .71 to .89.

TABLE 1   Overall Mean, standard deviation, Cronbach's Alpha

Scales		Asian American		Caucasian American		Latinos Americans	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Optimism	.79	3.32	.49	3.49	.66	3.45	.59
GSE	.85	3.50	.52	3.78	.51	3.84	.51
Autonomy	.79	3.29	.40	3.42	.53	3.42	.54
Personal Growth	.80	3.80	.64	4.05	.50	4.10	.61
Purpose in Life (Dropped due to low reliability)	.62	*3.14*	*.39*	3.26	.60	3.34	.48
Hope	.88	3.67	.58	3.80	.63	3.90	.50
Gratitude	.84	3.95	.79	4.13	.72	4.30	.48
General_Health	.89	3.49	.41	3.69	.46	3.73	.48
Goal Disengagement	.87	2.79	.55	2.73	.92	2.74	.79
Goal Re-engagement	.84	3.73	.58	3.60	.57	3.77	.48
Self-Compassion	.79	3.10	.39	3.03	.57	3.10	.54
MEIM	.71	3.25	.30	3.00	.41	3.21	.51

Research Question 1

My first analysis was intended to examine if there was a relationship between the general

well-being scales and self-compassion. Because previous research had shown that there is a

positive association between self-compassion and positive well-being, I hoped to replicate these

findings with my data. My first task was to correlate all pairs of variables, the nine subscales of

well-being measures (that is, optimism, general self-efficacy, autonomy, personal growth, adult hope scale, gratitude, general health, goal disengagement, and goal re-engagement) with self-compassion for the full sample of 95 participants. These are reported in the multicorrelation matrix in Table 2. The matrix shows that nine scales of general well-being were correlated with self-compassion. Across the entire sample, previous work showing a significant correlation between self compassion and general well-being was replicated. In my study, correlation ranged from .18 to .74, eight of which were statistically significant. In the existing research, the correlation between self-compassion and general well being is usually around .60 (Neff, 2003). Five of the nine subscales met that criterion, with others of the well-being subscales showing much lower correlation level.

My own research questions were to see if different ethnic groups would show different levels of association between self-compassion and well-being. The optimism scale, the general self-efficacy scale, autonomy, effect of hope, and general health were significant for all three ethnic groups. As shown in Table 3, the relationship between self-compassion and the gratitude scale showed a significant correlation when measured at the whole group level. However, the relationship remained significant for Asian-American and Caucasian-American students, Latino-Americans did not show a significant correlation. The association between self-compassion and personal growth was only significant when measured at the whole group level. Goal disengagement did not reveal a positive correlation with self-compassion when measured in the whole group, but showed a significant correlation when measured for the Asian Americans group only. Goal re-engagement showed a significant correlation overall, but when measured in each ethnic group, only Latino Americans revealed a significant correlation.

One scale revealed more nonsignificant relationships than any other. The goal disengagement was not associated with other well-being measures of optimism, gratitude, and personal growth. Thus, this study revealed similar results as previous studies, with moderate to strong positive relationship among most general well-being sub-scales but not goal disengagement.

TABLE 2   Means and standard deviations of measures, reliability coefficients, and correlation between scale scores

Scales	Correlations								
	OPT	GSE	AUT	PG	AHS	GQ	GHQ	GD	GR
Optimism	--								
Self-Efficacy	.56**	--							
Autonomy	.57**	.58**	--						
Personal Growth	.38**	.43**	.38**	--					
Adult Hope	.59**	.69**	.62**	.37**	--				
Gratitude	.45**	.36**	.44**	.45**	.49**	--			
General Health	.77**	.76**	.80**	.61**	.84**	.68**	--		
Goal Disengagement	.09	.34**	.30**	.20	.42**	.14	.36**	--	
Goal Re-engagement	.33**	.40**	.35**	.26*	.64**	.30**	.51**	.39**	--
Self-Compassion	.74**	.48**	.65**	.21*	.63**	.39**	.72**	.18	.39**

TABLE 3   Correlations between self-compassion and well-being for each ethnic group

General Well-Being	Total	Asian Americans	Caucasians Americans	Latino Americans
Optimism	.74**	.727**	.758**	.779**
General Self-Efficacy	.48**	.391*	.601**	.530**
Autonomy	.65**	.593**	.727**	.634**
Personal Growth	.21*	.317	.078	.291
Effect of Hope	.63**	.577**	.695**	.663**
Gratitude	.38**	.418*	.501**	.279
General Health	.72**	.706**	.808**	.733**
Goal Disengagement	.18	.434**	.152	.077
Goal Re-engagement	.39**	.331	.288	.573**

Research Question 2

The 2nd research question was to see if there was any differences between ethnic groups in their self-compassion and general well-being levels (nine sub-scales). I used MANOVA to compare the means of the three groups on self compassion and the nine general well-being sub-scales. The multivariate testing indicated no significant effect (Pillai's Trace yield: $F (22, 166) =$. 235, $p > .01$). Hence, due to the result of failing to reject the null, self-compassion and general well-being across the three ethnic groups can be considered equivalent.

Research Question 3

To explore further the hypothesis whether the degree of ethnicity moderates the relationship between general well-being and self-compassion in each ethnic group, I then

dichotomized each ethnic group into high and low groups by their MEIM median. By each

ethnic group, there were 14 participants identified as low and 21 participants identified as high

for Asian Americans; there were 19 participants identified as low and 10 participants identified

as high for Caucasian Americans; and there were 12 participants identified as low and 19

participants identified low.

TABLE 4 Frequencies for High/Low MEIM for eachethnic groups

	Asian American	Caucasian American	Latino American	
High	21	10	19	50
Low	14	19	21	45
Total	35	29	31	

I then conducted a 2 by 3 MANOVA comparison to identify whether the means differed

on each of the scales. The Pillai's Trace (F (11,83) = .66, p > 0.05 indicated no significant

difference between the high/low MEIM groups on measures of well-being and self-compassion.

None of the scales revealed significant differences on any of the well-being sub-scales and self-

compassion.

TABLE 5 MANOVA comparison with self-compassion and MEIM High/low scales

	Optimism	GSE	Autonomy	Personal Growth	AHS	Gratitude	Health	Goal dis	Goal re
F	.04	1.3	.01	.36	1.59	3.3	.84	.15	1.4
p-value	.83	.26	.92	.55	.21	.07	.36	.70	.23

Chapter 4

Discussion

This research was an exploration of the contributors to feelings of general well-being of college students coming from different self-identified ethnic backgrounds. In this research, general well-being was measured on several aspects of their lives, autonomy, personal growth, general self-efficacy, optimism, hope, gratitude, general health, goal dis-engagement, and goal re-engagement. Because self-compassionate individuals are mindful of their general well-being and have stronger buffers to deal with negative life experiences, I had hypothesized that college students who are high in self-compassion should be able to deal with difficult college life as well. The findings showed generally positive links between self-compassion and general well-being. When the relationships were examined at the whole group level, the relationships between self-compassion on the one hand and, on the other hand, gratitude, personal growth, and goal reengagement showed positive significant correlations.

Results showed that some correlations between self-compassion and some well-being measures were significant when the association was measured separately by ethnic groups. For example, the relationship between self-compassion and gratitude remained significant for Asian-American and Caucasian-American students, but not Latino-Americans. Goal disengagement only revealed a positive correlation with self-compassion when measured for the Asian Americans. And Goal re-engagement showed a significant correlation for Latino Americans but not for the other two ethnic groups. Among all the relationships, Goal disengagement was not associated with other well-being measures of optimism, gratitude, and personal growth. Degree of ethnic identification also did not make a difference in self-compassion and general well-being in this study.

Taken together, this study explored whether multi-ethnic backgrounds are disadvantages for college students who perhaps were first generation representatives of their families in college. My goal had been to explore how personal self-compassion levels, stress levels, personal goal commitment, and academic goals would allow a better investigation of this issue. I hypothesized that their multi-ethnic backgrounds would affect students in multiple levels, and hence, might result in a higher level of stress and lower levels of academic performance. This study showed that self-compassionate people are more likely to have better general well-being, as had previously been shown. Study results revealed that ethnic backgrounds did not make a difference in these students' stress and academic well-being. Although overall significance was not detected even with degree of ethnic identification included, I would recommend that differences among ethnic background should not be overlooked. In a different kind of college/university drawing from students from different backgrounds, it may be that ethnic groups will show differences in self-compassion and well-being.

<div align="center">Limitation and Future Studies</div>

There are some limitations of this research. Self-report questionnaire are commonly used to measure well-being, and generally show high convergene with non-self-report measures, but it is no doubt that there are factors that might introduce measurement bias, such as current mood or the surrounding environment (Sandik,Diener, and Seidlitz., 1993; Eiener & Ryan 2009).

Another limitation is that the survey of ethnic group membership was set up as categories. Many researchers believe the use of self-identified ethnic identification is more suitable than fixed categories. Less freedom is given when individuals are only given fixed self-labels from which to choose (Chung, 1991). In addition to the growing numbers of mixed ethnicity individuals in the United States, Phinney (1996) claimed that some individuals have multiple

ethnic identities that are difficult to be measured. Phinney pointed out that achieved ethnic identity is not necessarily a static end point of development; individuals are likely to reexamine their ethnicity throughout their lives and thus may reexperience earlier developmental stages (Parham, 1989). Different stages of ethnic or racial identity have different mental health correlates (Phinney & Kohatsu, in press). However, the scale of measurement in this study was a one-time measurement, which will not allow for the changing and growing of ethnic identity. Thus, the psychological implications of ethnicity will vary over individuals' life cycle, with changes in one's identification with the group. Further investigation is encouraged.

The study took place in a large southewestern research-intensive public university, limiting the generalizability of conclusions. Thus, the explicit details of these findings on which theories and principles are built should be considered local theories. To explore other populations, future potential participants should include college students from more diverse backgrounds. In this study, participants were asked to report attitudes toward or beliefs about various mental health topics, and provide some general information, including basic demographic information (e.g., age) and experience with different mental health issues (e.g., sadness or anxiety). Also, different comparions with responses across different groups, between men and women, or persons with versus without different clinical symptoms can be useful.

Other data analysis plan can also be useful. Although the correlations reported in this study showed a positive association between general well-being and self-compassion when it was measured in the whole group, such correlations were not always significant done when the group were divided by ethnicity. A hierarchical multiple regression analyses can be conducted to determine whether ethnic group membership can contribution to the prediction of the relationship between self-compassion and general well-being as measured in different ways.

Despite these limitations, this study provided a general look at how self-compassion and general well-being are related in college students of different ethnic groups and with different levels of ethnic identification, especially for those who were not new on campus considering the fact that the sample participants were mostly juniors and seniors. Additionally, the results showed that the relationship between self-compassion and general well-being was a positive association even among such diverse ethnic groups.

Appendix A

Consent Form

Invitation to participate:

You are invited to participate in a study about college students' stress level, degree of self-compassion, and academic performance. This form provides you with information about the study. Before you decide whether or not to participate, please read the information below. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Whether you agree to participate in this research will not be revealed to your instructor until after grades have been assigned and will have no chance of affecting your grade in this class. The study is being conducted by Dr. Diane Schallert and Carlton Fong in the Educational Psychology Department of The University of Texas at Austin.

The purpose of this study is to assess the contributors to the positive well-being of college students with different ethnic backgrounds, and how they are facing academic stress. In this research, the academic performance on students' self-compassion/stress/goal commitment/personal academic goal will be further analyzed in attempting to address the following question: Is the multi-ethnic background differences affect the college students' degree of self-compassion and general well-being.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse participation, decline to answer any question, and withdraw from participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

If you agree to be in this study, we will ask you to answer a variety of survey questions on rating your personal information, daily academic stress, hopeness, optimism, self-efficacy (measure of the belief in one's own ability to complete tasks and reach goals), gratitude, life satisfaction, goal-management level, and self-compassion level

Total estimated time to participate is estimated that it will take about 1 hour of your time to complete the questionnaires.

Risks and Benefits of participations: Risks to participants are considered minimal. There will be no costs for participating, nor will you benefit from participating other than receiving credit for subject pool participation. Only the investigators will have access to the data, and in no way will your identity be linked with your responses.

Confidentiality: All the records of this study will be stored privately and securely. Authorized persons from The University of Texas at Austin, members of the Institutional Review Board, have the legal right to review your research records and will protect the confidentiality of those records to the extent permitted by law. All publications will exclude any information that will make it possible to identify you as a subject.

Contacts and Questions: This study has been reviewed and approved by The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board. If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact - anonymously, if you wish - the Institutional Review Board by phone at (512) 471-8871 or email at orsc@uts.cc.utexas.edu.

Appendix B

Optimism Scale

In uncertain times, I usually expect the best.

If something can go wrong for me, it will.

I always look at the bright side of things.

I'm always optimistic about my future.

I hardly ever expect things to go my way.

Things never work out the way I want them to.

I'm a believer in the idea that "every cloud has a silver lining."

I rarely count on good things happening to me.

Appendix C

The General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE)

I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.

If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want.

It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.

I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.

Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.

I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.

I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.

When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.

If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution.

I can usually handle whatever comes my way.

Appendix D

Autonomy

I am not afraid to voice my opinions, even when they are in opposition to the opinions of most

people

My decisions are not usually influenced by what everyone else is doing.

I tend to worry about what other people think of me.

I tend to be influenced by people with strong opinions.

It's difficult for me to voice my own opinions on controversial matters.

I judge myself by what I think is important, not by the values of what others think is important.

Appendix E

Purpose in Life

I live life one day at a time and don't really think about the future.

I have a sense of direction and purpose in life.

My daily activities often seem trivial and unimportant to me.

I don't have a good sense of what it is I'm trying to accomplish in life.

I enjoy making plans for the future and working to make them a reality.

Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them

I sometimes feel as if I've done all there is to do in life.

Appendix F

Personal Growth

I am not interested in activities that will expand my horizons.

I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world.

When I think about it, I haven't really improved much as a person over the years.

I have the sense that I have developed a lot as a person over time.

I do not enjoy being in new situations that require me to change my old familiar ways of doing things.

For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth.

I gave up trying to make big improvements or changes in my life a long time ago.

Appendix G

Adult Hope Scale

I can think of many ways to get out of a jam.

I energetically pursue my goals.

I feel tired most of the time.

There are lots of ways around any problem.

I am easily downed in an argument.

I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are important to me.

I worry about my health.

Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve the problem.

My past experiences have prepared me well for my future.

I've been pretty successful in life.

I usually find myself worrying about something.

I meet the goals that I set for myself.

The Gratitude Questionnaire-Six Item Form (GQ-6:)

I have so much in life to be thankful for.

If I had to list everything that I felt grateful for, it would be a very long list.

When I look at the world, I don't see much to be grateful for.*

I am grateful to a wide variety of people.

As I get older I find myself more able to appreciate the people, events, and situations that have been part of my life history.

Long amounts of time can go by before I feel grateful to something or someone.

Appendix I

General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12)

Have you been able to concentrate on whatever you are doing?

Have you lost much sleep over worry?

Have you felt that you were playing a useful part in things?

Have you felt capable of making decisions about things?

Have you felt constantly under strain?

Have you felt that you could not overcome your difficulties?

Have you been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities?

Have you been able to face up to your problems?

Have you been feeling unhappy and depressed?

Have you been losing confidence in yourself?

Have you been thinking of yourself as a worthless person?

Have you been feeling reasonably happy, all things considered?

Appendix J

Goal Disengagement

It's easy for me to reduce my effort toward the goal.

I find it difficult to stop trying to achieve the goal.

I stay committed to the goal for a long time; I can't let it go.

It's easy for me to stop thinking about the goal and let it go

Appendix K

Goal Reengagement

I think about other new goals to pursue.

I seek other meaningful goals.

I convince myself that I have other meaningful goals to pursue.

I tell myself that I have a number of other new goals to draw on.

I start working on other new goals.

I put effort toward other meaningful goals.

My attitude about myself is probably not as positive as most people feel about themselves

I sometimes feel I have done all there is to do in life

Appendix L

Self-Compassion Scale

When I fail at something important to me I become consumed by feelings of inadequacy.

I try to be understanding and patient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like.

When something painful happens I try to take a balanced view of the situation.

When I'm feeling down, I tend to feel like most other people are probably happier than I am.

I try to see my failings as part of the human condition.

When I'm going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need.

When something upsets me I try to keep my emotions in balance.

When I fail at something that's important to me, I tend to feel alone in my failure

When I'm feeling down I tend to obsess and fixate on everything that's wrong.

When I feel inadequate in some way, I try to remind myself that feelings of inadequacy are shared by most people.

I'm disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies.

I'm intolerant and impatient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like.

Appendix M

The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM)

I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.

I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group.

I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.

I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership.

I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.

I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.

I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me.

In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group.

I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group.

I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs.

I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.

I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background.

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