

# Long-Term Goals and Self-Assessment Accuracy

---

A Thesis

Presented

to the Faculty of

California State University, Chico

---

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

in

Psychology

Psychological Science Option

---

by

© Mitchell A. Koff

Spring 2021

# Long-Term Goals and Self-Assessment Accuracy

A Thesis

by

© Mitchell A. Koff

Spring 2021

APPROVED BY THE DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES:

---

Sharon Barrios, Ph.D.

APPROVED BY THE GRADUATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

---

Lawrence G. Herringer, Ph.D., Chair

---

Martin van den Berg, Ph.D.

## PUBLICATION RIGHTS

No portion of this thesis may be reprinted or reproduced in any manner unacceptable to the usual copyright restrictions without the written permission of the author.

=

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

An enormous thank you to my thesis committee, Dr. Lawrence Herringer and Dr. Martin van den Berg, for their incredible assistance, guidance, and encouragement during this process. They allowed me to bridge my interests with their own in the development of this project and pushed me to produce work I can be proud of. I would also like to thank Dr. Patrick Johnson for his recommendations and insight with all my work as well as the incredible opportunities he has provided me. I would like to extend my gratitude to Allee Harris for introducing me to psychology in a way which grabbed my full attention, and a special thanks to Dr. Neil Schwartz for his inspiration in the realm of college teaching. Finally, I would like to express my deepest appreciation for my amazing graduate cohort, who were all instrumental in helping me persist through this chaotic process.

This thesis is dedicated to my mother Rhonda, my father David, and my sister Shaina, without whom I would never have had the motivation and drive to pursue my passions. This thesis is also dedicated to my extraordinarily caring group of friends and family. To Jacob, Vikash, Tanner, Jessi, Tristen, Billy, Rachel, Nick, Logan, and Matt: Thank you all for the love, support, and good times.

	PAGE
Publication Rights .....	iii
Acknowledgements .....	iv
Abstract .....	vii
CHAPTER .....	PAGE
I. Introduction .....	1
Background .....	1
Statement of the Problem .....	2
Definition of Terms .....	3
Purpose of the Study .....	3
Research Questions .....	3
II. Literature Review .....	4
Self-Assessment .....	4
Goal Setting and Task Completion .....	8
Current Research .....	11
Hypotheses .....	12
III. Methodology .....	14
Participants .....	14
Informants .....	14
Materials .....	15
Procedure .....	18
IV. Results .....	21
Data Modifications and New Variables .....	21
Data Analyses .....	21
V. Discussion and Conclusion .....	27
Hypotheses Discussion .....	27
General Discussion .....	32
Strengths .....	35
Limitations .....	35
Suggestions for Future Research .....	37

References .....	39
List of Tables .....	45

# ABSTRACT

## Long-Term Goals and Self-Assessment Accuracy

By

© Mitchell A. Koff 2021

Master of Arts in Psychology, Psychological Science Option

California State University, Chico

Spring 2021

This study was designed to see if one's self-assessment accuracy can be improved through the pursuit of long-term goals. Self-assessment is typically inaccurate, and individuals will under- or over- evaluate what they are capable of, leading to negative consequences. I predicted that actively setting, engaging, and monitoring a 4-week goal would increase relative accuracy in self-assessment, measured by agreement with a close informant. Twenty-five participants were recruited with informants, someone close enough to the participant to assess their characteristics. They ranged in age from 19 to 30 and were almost entirely female (n=23). A repeated measures ANCOVA found a significant change in relative accuracy and a significant positive change in overall self-concept. Personality styles were found to predict only self-concept ratings, but not goal setting, progress, or completion. The results indicate that goal pursuit can improve self-assessment, but further research is needed. If goal pursuit can influence one's self-assessment, this holds implications for rehabilitation programs. Setting and completing one task can cascade into multiple tasks and result in more positive self-views.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Do you ever find yourself setting a goal, then not entirely following through on it? Does this affect your view of yourself? Do you begin to see yourself differently, as someone who cannot complete tasks? What if you set a goal and complete it with ease? Does this make you see yourself more positively? When someone completes a challenging task, one they previously thought they would never be able to do, would they feel accomplished? Entitled? Perhaps they feel as if they can accomplish anything, since they just overcame what they perceived to be an insurmountable obstacle.

Dunning et al. (2004) states any time you reflect on your capabilities you are engaging in self-assessment. They go further to say the accuracy of your self-assessment, that is, how closely it aligns with the objective truth, depends on several variables. When people set personal goals, several factors influence their perception of how well, and how quickly, they can achieve them. People often forego opportunities because of an inaccurate evaluation of their own abilities, or the situation. There is also evidence that individuals tend to overload themselves with what they think they can achieve, ultimately burning out before producing anything substantial. The planning fallacy, for example, is a phenomenon where people consistently overestimate how easily they can complete a task (Dunning et al., 2004). In her book *Insight*, Tasha Eurich describes self-awareness as “the meta-skill of the twenty-first century” and argues that the “qualities most critical for success... all stem from self-awareness” (Eurich, 2018, p. 5). Effective and accurate self-assessment is important in setting realistic expectations and avoiding failure (Eva & Regehr, 2005). But conversely,



feedback about the success or failure of personal goals is important for the accuracy of our self-assessments. This thesis examines the effect of declaring and pursuing a long-term (4 week) goal on the relative accuracy of self-assessment of one's capabilities, compared to an assessment by a close informant.

Dunning et al. (2004) identified several cognitive errors which tend to emerge when framing goals. These may include unrealistic optimism, overestimation of the likelihood of desirable events, above average effects, underestimation of task completion times, overconfidence in judgment and prediction. Framing a goal is influenced by one's current evaluation of themselves. Moreover, one's current evaluation of themselves will largely dictate if they will set a goal and follow through at all. Recognizing the direction of the relationship of self-concept of ability and other causalities can assist in guiding interventions and promoting academic growth for adolescence (Clem et al., 2018). Extending beyond academia, understanding this association between cause of success/failure of a task and one's self-concept can help facilitate the development of the self. This will be most effective if the individual is able to accurately assess their characteristics. If they have a misguided view of themselves, either under- or over- evaluating what they can do, they may not fully develop their self-concept, or it may form inaccurately (overinflated, under evaluated, etc., Dunning, Heath, & Suls, 2004). Goal completion, for example, might provide the individual with enough feedback through the multiple tasks throughout the goal. Research suggests expressing goals in process-oriented terms (how will I do this and how will it help me grow and learn) opens a new level of insight (Eurich, 2018). This could result in the

individual better understanding their own capabilities - both what they can do, as well as what they cannot do.

The present study will look at the bidirectional, transactional interaction of self-assessment and goal setting and task completion. The data provide an understanding of goal monitoring and completion as useful feedback for improving self-assessment, and address several questions: Does pursuit of long-term goals lead to a more accurate self-assessment? Does current self-assessment influence goal setting and monitoring behaviors? How do personality characteristics influence the likelihood to follow through on a goal? How are personality characteristics related to self-assessment?

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Self-Assessment**

Self-assessment broadly refers to evaluating ourselves—our capabilities, our personal characteristics, our behaviors, our self. Panandero et al. (2016) characterize academic self-assessment as “a wide variety of mechanisms and techniques through which students describe and possibly assign merit or worth to the qualities of their own learning processes and products” (p. 804). Andrade (2010) addresses the purpose of self-assessment: “Self-assessment is feedback, and the purpose of that feedback is to inform adjustments to processes and products that deepen learning and enhance performance” (as cited in Andrade, 2019, p. 2). Andrade identifies two styles of self-assessment which must be considered: summative and formative. Summative self-assessment focuses on the end goal, while formative self-assessment checks progress throughout. Self-assessing one’s competence to successfully complete a task is useful to inform decisions on how to proceed (how much time to invest, whether to seek help, etc.). However, this assessment is only useful if one is given the opportunity to correct perceived low performance (Andrade, 2019). Andrade notes that the current self-assessment literature does not address the conditions which promote optimal self-assessment, and how those conditions are influenced by context. Andrade suggests that the characteristics of the task being assessed might have an effect.

Previous research shows there is a tendency for people to inaccurately assess their own abilities across all domains. A person’s self-view affects what they can achieve on a day-to-day basis. An important meta-analysis of self-assessment research

by Dunning et al. (2004) revealed that an inaccurate assessment of one's skills and character can lead to consequences such as pursuing the wrong life paths and missing important opportunities. Self-assessment of skill and character are more flawed than people suspect, and people tend to incorrectly predict their behavior in future events, often consistently differing from their actual displayed behavior. A meta-analysis by Mabe and West (1982) of research on self-perception of knowledge and performance found the average correlation between self-perception and objective performance to be only .29. This weak relationship of self-perception and performance leads to real negative consequences for an individual.

Travis Bradbury, in his book *Emotional Intelligence 2.0.*, discusses research based on individuals' own self-assessments, arguing that emotional intelligence has collectively improved over time (as cited in Eurich, 2018). Eurich counters that Bradbury's findings did not match what she had observed anecdotally. When she examined Bradbury's research, which involved 500,000 people, she found his conclusions were based on the participants' own self-assessment. She suggests these findings, that emotional intelligence has generally improved across society, more generally outline a "growing gap between how we see ourselves and what we really are [and] what looked like an increase in emotional intelligence was more likely a decrease in self-awareness" (Eurich, 2018, p. 6). She goes further to argue that individuals need to embrace the habit of comparing our past predictions with actual outcomes, suggesting this comparison will outline the gap between how we see ourselves and how we are. She suggests seeking feedback on our abilities and behaviors from "colleagues,

family members, and friends who will (lovingly) knock us down a peg when we're getting too big for our britches" (Eurich, 2018, p. 61-62).

How then do individuals' effectively increase the accuracy of their self-assessment? Kraayenoord and Paris (1997) suggest that a main purpose of authentic self-assessment is to encourage individuals to actively monitor their progress. Benchmarking is the idea of an individual improving their self-assessment by comparing their choices and performances against those of others (Dunning et al., 2004). Unfortunately, benchmarking works best for high performing individuals who are more introspective about their progress anyway. When used in conjunction with peer-assessment, however, the effectiveness of benchmarking improves. Peer-assessment provides the individual with feedback highlighting shortcomings they may not know they have. Furthermore, the views of other people—subordinates, peers, and superiors—agree with each other more often than with self-views (Dunning et al., 2004). One study of 300 married couples tested both partners for heart disease. They asked each to rate their partner's level of anger, hostility, and argumentativeness – which are predictors of heart disease – and found self-ratings were less accurate than those of the spouses (Smith et al., 2007). Moreover, Funder et al. (1995) compared how undergraduates were rated by those who knew them well, those who knew them casually, and those who had never met them. Surprisingly, the three groups were accurate across their ratings on 70 personality traits. The three groups saw similar qualities in the individual being assessed suggesting even people we do not know can be valuable sources of feedback. However, peer assessment is not perfect. To enhance the accuracy of peer-assessment one must: clearly communicate the purpose of the exercise, make clear the

dimensions of judgment, and monitor evaluations, intervening when they are too harsh or lenient (Norcini, 2003).

Bollich et al. (2011) explored several strategies to enhance the reception of feedback, as well as its accuracy. Close others (friends, family, coworkers, etc.) are often able to navigate the process of accurate judgment, and as a result possess knowledge about a person's personality that the person may lack. If participants can select who provides the feedback, however, they will likely nominate someone who knows them too well and is likely biased. The informant should be someone who knows the participant well but maintains enough distance to remain objective (Bollich et al., 2011). Furthermore, the perception of the feedback by the participant will determine how receptive they are to it. Bollich et al. (2011) define feedback as new, true information about oneself that could not have been accessed through introspection alone. This implies that the participant engages in introspection to begin with.

Eurich (2018) outlines strategies for improving one's self-view, bringing it in line with how the world perceives them. She describes a "3R model" for how individuals receive, reflect on, and respond to feedback. She argues that waiting to reflect on feedback allows one to review it more objectively, and identifies three key questions for self-reflection: (1) Do I understand this feedback? (2) How will this affect my long-term success and well-being? (3) Do I want to act on this feedback, and if so, how?

For feedback to be most effective though, the individual needs to be receptive to it. Certain personality traits tend to be more self-reflective than others and feedback given by credible sources is more likely to be received. Those with high self-esteem are generally more receptive to the feedback process, and those who report an internal

locus of control view feedback more favorably. Higher levels of extraversion and openness to experience may lead to more favorable reactions towards negative feedback. Achievement-oriented individuals prefer situations that emphasize self-assessment of competence (Sansone, 1986). These individuals are particularly likely to become involved in activities that utilize self-evaluation (Greenwald, 1982 as cited in Sansone, 1986). As a result, these individuals are more sensitive to the implications of feedback for personal assessment and respond more positively to it. The HEXACO Personality Measure will be used over the Big Five Inventory because of the inclusion of the honesty-humility personality dimension. It is possible that this dimension, and the extent to which one is honest with themselves, may influence one's goal setting and follow through. Furthermore, the inclusion of a processing phase, where the participant reflects on the feedback, improves its effectiveness. The effectiveness of feedback on improving self-assessment accuracy is ultimately dependent on the individual's goals and motivations. If they are more intrinsically motivated to improve self-assessment, they are more likely to openly accept the feedback (Bollich et al., 2011).

### **Goal Setting and Task Completion**

Goal-setting theory explores how setting a goal can influence one's performance in pursuit of that goal. It places heavy emphasis on the specificity and performance level of goals (Locke & Latham, 2013). Through goal setting theory, it is shown that challenging, specific, and concrete goals are powerful motivators and boost success in goal pursuit in ways vague and abstract goals do not. The goal of "lose 10 pounds in 2 months" will be more successful than "lose weight" since it is more focused and specific.

(Locke & Latham, 2002). Goal-setting theory suggests the goal-setter should subdivide long-term goals – known as superordinate goals – into specific, and more manageable short-term goals – known as subordinate goals – to enhance motivation and performance (Steel & König, 2006; Sun & Frese, 2013). Both superordinate and subordinate goals contribute to successful goal pursuit and are best utilized together (Höchli et al., 2018).

However, not every individual approaches a goal with the same mentality. Vangsness and Young (2020) outline three specific task-completion strategies: steady-workers, precrastinators, and procrastinators. Steady-workers will evenly disperse their workload across the time they have to complete the task, the precrastinator front-loads all their work at the beginning of their time period, choosing to complete it as fast as possible, and the procrastinator will often start the task at the beginning, and then put most of it off until the last minute, completing their task in close proximity to the deadline. The researchers argue that prioritizing one goal naturally procrastinates another. If a student chooses to procrastinate their homework to play video games, they are effectively ‘working’ on their gaming abilities (Vangsness & Young, 2020). Despite the series of trade-offs the researchers suggest when deciding how to complete a goal, the task-completion styles suggest that individuals have some inherent differences in how they like to complete tasks. People will often make compromises based on the ways in which they prioritize their work (Simon, 1955). The perceived utility of task completion can change as deadlines come closer and the consequences of success or failure become clearer (Ainslie, 1975). Although task completion styles result in some inherent differences, other mediating variables work to influence the degree to which the



style exerts control over task completion. Will the different task-completion styles provide enough influence to result in different levels of improved self-assessment accuracy?

Research by Polivy et al. (1986) showed the impact of progress monitoring on goal attainment. They wanted to manipulate how easily one could control their consumption. They offered participants chocolates. As they ate, one group kept the wrappers in front of them, while the other disposed of them. Participants who were asked to leave their wrappers on the table ate fewer chocolates than those who threw them away as they ate, indicating feedback provided in real time will reasonably influence one's behavior. Furthermore, Harkin, et al. (2016) identified six dimensions of progress monitoring that determine its effectiveness. The dimensions are as follows: 1. A focus on behavior, rather than outcomes of behavior, 2. Monitoring progress in public vs. in private, 3. Physically recording progress (such as in a journal), 4. Comparing one's current state against a past state vs. a future state, 5. Monitoring progress towards the goal, rather than distance from the goal, 6. Active vs. passive monitoring (Harkin, et. al., 2016, p. 201). Following these 6 dimensions will increase the likelihood the individual is receptive towards the feedback.

How individuals conceptualize and keep track of their behavior will certainly affect their self-assessment of ability to reach that goal. Previous research explores motivational factors behind goal attainment, finding that how one conceptualizes a goal determines if they will follow through. Focusing on one's superordinate reasons for pursuing a goal ('Why am I pursuing this') can highlight the significance of the activity, reaffirming why the goal was being pursued in the first place (Davis et al., 2015). A

study by Sheldon & Houser-Marko (2001) used the self-concordant model to predict goal attainment. The more intrinsically motivated the individual is regarding their goal, the more likely they follow through, leading to a positive view of the self, and a potentially upward spiral. Furthermore, emotions affect the setting and attainment of goals as well. For example, anger can lead to the creation of more goals, and faster execution of real behavior (Maglio et al., 2014). Most individuals report some discrepancy between their current state and how they feel they “ought” to be, and those who perceive their goals as unattainable experience more negative emotions (Strauman & Higgins, 1987; Higgins, 1987).

### **Current Research**

The present study aims to maximize the effectiveness of goal pursuit by utilizing both formative and summative self-assessment, giving the participant choice in their goal, and providing constant opportunities for reflection (benchmark check-ins) throughout the four-week goal program. Ideally, these conditions will create intrinsic motivation in the participant. The current study will utilize dimensions 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6 as outlined in Harkin, et al. (2016). Dimension 2, monitoring in public vs. private, is not utilized here since the participants’ ratings of their progress is known only to themselves and the researchers. This investigation will use informants, someone with an established relationship with the participant, as an ‘objective’ assessment against the participants’ self-assessment, as well as treating long-term goals, and their constant benchmarks of progress, as feedback to the individual. The participants will assess their self-concept, an evaluation of traits and characteristics which (a) have universal or near-universal relevance for adults, and (b) pertain to a broad range of life contexts, including

family and work (Stake, 1992). This will be used to determine how general self-assessment changes through the progress monitoring of goal completion. My research hypotheses are as follows:

1. Goal pursuit affects self-perceptions.

The participant's self-concept scores will change significantly from pretest to posttest from the experience of goal pursuit.

2. Goal pursuit enhances self-assessment accuracy.

The agreement between the participant's and informant's self-concept scores will increase from the experience of goal pursuit.

3. Goal expectations are related to personality styles and procrastination.

HEXACO personality scales and procrastination will predict expectancies about the goal pursuit at the beginning of the study.

4. Goal progress is related to personality styles and procrastination.

HEXACO personality scales and procrastination will predict total goal pursuit progress scores (advancement, obstacles) summed across three reports during the study.

5. Goal completion appraisal is related to personality styles and procrastination.

HEXACO personality scales and procrastination will predict the participant's goal completion appraisal scores at the end of the study.

6. Self-concept scores are related to personality styles and procrastination.

HEXACO personality scales and procrastination will predict the participant's self-concept scores at the beginning of the study.

7. Self-concept agreement between participant and informant is related to personality styles and procrastination.

HEXACO personality scales and procrastination will predict agreement between the participant's and informant's self-concept scores after goal pursuit.

8. Self-concept agreement is related to goal progress.

Goal pursuit progress scores (advancement, obstacles) summed across three reports during the study will predict agreement between the participant's and informant's self-concept scores at posttest.

9. Self-concept agreement is related to goal completion.

Goal completion appraisal scores at the end of the study will predict agreement between the participant's and informant's self-concept scores at posttest.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHOD**

#### **Participants**

Participants were recruited in pairs, one participant and one informant, through video and live advertisements during undergraduate psychology courses. The informant was selected by the participant and was intended to be close enough to the participant to offer an accurate evaluation without bias. The participants were all undergraduate psychology students at California State University, Chico. Initially, 40 participants were recruited for the study. After accounting for dropout and incomplete responses, 25 sets of usable data were collected ( $N = 25$ ). The participants were almost entirely female ( $n = 23$ ) and ranged in age from 19 to 30. The sample was 4% African American or Black ( $n = 1$ ), 12% Asian or Pacific Islander ( $n = 3$ ), 36% Caucasian or Anglo ( $n = 9$ ), 44% Hispanic or Latinx ( $n = 11$ ), and 4% other ( $n = 1$ ). Twelve participants were randomly assigned to choose one of five personal/social goals and 13 participants were randomly assigned to choose one of five academic/professional goals.

#### **Informants**

The informant was acting as an objective measure of assessment for the participant. Participants were told that the ideal informant would be someone who knew them well but could still offer an independent evaluation. The order of preference for an ideal informant, based on strength and style of relationship, was requested as (1) peer/classmate, (2) roommate, (3) colleague, (4) co-worker, (5) a friend, (6) a sibling, (7) a parent. Participants were asked to recruit any one of these to serve as their informant.

Each participant recruited their own informant and reported on their relationship to the informant. The relationships were reported as follows: 4 boyfriends, 2 cousins, 1 daughter, 1 family member, 2 friends, 1 girlfriend, 1 husband, 1 mother, 2 partners, 1 roommate, 3 siblings, and 2 significant others. Participants were offered varying extra credit in their undergraduate psychology courses based on how much of the 4-week study (beginning, end, 3 check-in sessions) they completed. Informants knew that they would not be compensated.

## **Materials**

### **HEXACO-60 Personality Inventory – Revised (Ashton & Lee, 2009)**

Developed by Michael Ashton and Kibeom Lee as a short version of the original 100-item HEXACO, this assesses six personality factors: Negative emotionality (N), Extraversion (E), Agreeableness (A), Conscientiousness (C), Honesty-Humility (H-H), and Openness to Experience (O). The items are scored on a 1-5 Likert scale and uses items such as “I would be quite bored by a visit to an art gallery.” Ashton, Lee, and Visser (2019) found the HEXACO to be a reliable and valid measure of the five personality dimensions outlined in the Big Five, and their key facets, while also accounting for the honesty-humility dimension not included in the Big Five Inventory. The HEXACO-60 accounted for similar proportions of variance in the BFI-2 scales, ranging from 48% (agreeableness) to 68% (extraversion), while the BFI-2 accounted for only 12% of variance in the honesty-humility, but much higher variance in the other scales, ranging from 47% (agreeableness and emotionality) to 72% (extraversion). The HEXACO accounted for more variance in the BFI-2 scales (average 60.6% across the five scales) than the BFI-2 accounted for in the HEXACO scales (average 51.0% across

the six scales). This is 1.19 times as much variance for the HEXACO, translating to essentially another variable's worth ( $1.19 * 5 = 5.95$ ) of variance in the five-factor BFI-2.

### **General Procrastination Scale (GPS-9) (Sirois et al., 2019)**

Nine items use a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) to measure trait procrastination. An example item is "I am continually saying I'll do it tomorrow." Sirois et al. (2019) found the GPS-9 demonstrated very good internal consistency across 15 student, adult, and chronic illness samples, with a meta-analysis finding an average reliability coefficient of 0.89 (Total  $N = 4492$ ). The GPS-9 also demonstrated good test-retest reliability ( $r = 0.89$ ), and the expected associations with variables known to be part of the nomological network of trait procrastination.

### **Six-Factor Self-Concept Scale (SFSC) (Stake, 1994)**

The Six-Factor Self-Concept scale has participants rate their self-concept on a 1-7 Likert scale. There are 36 items presented in random order which cover 6 dimensions: Likeability items, Task Accomplishment items, Power items, Vulnerability items, Gifted items, and Moral items. Stake (1994) reports test-retest reliability coefficients in a sample of 61 undergraduates after 6 weeks were as follows: Power, .85; Morality, .74; Likability, .74; Task Accomplishment, .85; Vulnerability, .68; and Giftedness, .72.

### **Personal Goal Variables (PGV) (Brunstein, 1993)**

Measures of three Personal Goal Variables were developed by Brunstein (1993), adapted from past research on formal characteristics of personal goals (Emmons, 1986; Klinger et al., 1980; Little, 1983 as cited in Brunstein, 1993). Two goal variables measure *expectations* about goal pursuit: (a) commitment (determination, urgency, and willingness; two items each) and (b) attainability (opportunity, control, and support; two

items each) using a 1 (completely disagree) to 5 (completely agree) Likert scale. For example, the two determination items are “No matter what happens, I will not give up this goal” and “I sometimes doubt whether I shall definitely accomplish this goal.” The second statement in each set of two items is negatively worded for the concept and so is reversed before summing.

One goal variable (progress) measures perceptions during goal pursuit and was used to log progress at check-in sessions during the goal pursuit period. This measure sums two categories, each using two items rated on a 1 to 5 Likert scale. The categories are: Advancement, (a) “I have made a great deal of progress concerning this goal.” (b) “I have hardly made any progress in the attempt of advancing in this goal.” and Outcome, (a) “I have had quite a lot of success in pursuing this goal.” (b) “Many of my efforts in carrying out this goal have failed.” The second item in each category is reversed before summing. Brunstein (1993) reports Cronbach  $\alpha$  reliabilities  $> .76$  for all three measures (commitment, attainability, progress).

### **Single-Item Self-Esteem (SISE) (Robins et al., 2001)**

The Single-Item Self-Esteem scale is a one-item measure of self-esteem. Participants answer the single item on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (not very true of me) to 7 (very true of me). The item states: “I have high self-esteem.” The authors report a test-retest reliability of .75 and a correlation with the well-known Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE; Rosenberg, 1979) of .74. The SISE and the RSE had nearly identical correlations across a range of criterion measures such as domain specific self-evaluations, self-evaluative biases, social desirability, personality, psychological and physical health, peer ratings of group behavior, academic outcomes,



and demographic variables. Additionally, they showed strong convergent validity for men and women, for different ethnic groups, and for both college students and community members.

### **Goal Completion Appraisal (GCA)**

This measure was created by the researchers to assess long-term goal progress. The scale contained two items and the participant indicated on a 1 to 5 Likert scale the degree to which they agree or disagree with them. The scale runs from (1) Strongly disagree to (5) Strongly Agree. Item one states: "I have made a great deal of progress on my goal over the last four weeks." Item two states: "I have had a great deal of difficulty in the pursuit of my goal over the last four weeks." After reversing item two, reliability analysis revealed a Cronbach's alpha between the two items of  $\alpha = .67$ .

### **Procedure**

#### **Participants**

The participants outlined and followed a goal over 4 weeks, and the informant (e.g., friend, roommate, classmate) acted as the 'objective' measure of assessment for the participant, logging on at the beginning session and week 4 check-in to assess the participants' characteristics. All surveys were compiled into specific survey links for each participant using Qualtrics. The participants and their informants each received a customized survey link they could return to each week. The participant was randomly assigned to one of two goal categories: Personal/Social or Academic/Professional. Table 1 reveals the five selectable goal options within the personal/social category. Table 2 reveals the five selectable goal options within the academic/professional category. The participant selected the goal they would like to follow over the course of

the study. By selecting the goal themselves from a list, it was assumed the goal would be more intrinsically motivating for the participant. Descriptive information for both goal categories is displayed in Table 3.

After goal selection, the participant answered all questionnaires highlighted above (HEXACO-60, Self-Concept Scale, General Procrastination Scale, Personal Goal Variables, and Single-Item Self Esteem Scale). For the following 4 weeks, the participants engaged in their goal, logging their progress week-to-week with the progress in goal achievement measure. The participants reported at every week throughout the study, and the informants reported at the beginning and end of the study. At the end of the 4 weeks, after completing all the assessments again, participant's goal progress was reported on a scale from 1 to 5 (1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree) based on the extent to which they agree or disagree with the two-item measure. A comparison of the participant's responses to their informant's responses using the week 4 test results to see relative accuracy was completed. This final comparison was used to compare to the same statistic from week one to determine if self-assessment improved in those who pursued their long-term goals more successfully than those who did not.

### **Informants**

The informant attended the beginning of the study and week 4. At the beginning, the informant filled out the six-factor self-concept scale, the general procrastination scale, and the single-item self-esteem scale, all regarding the participant. At week 4, the six-factor self-concept scale, the single-item self-esteem scale, the general

procrastination scale measure was administered to informant and participant, and the scores were correlated.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### Data modifications and new variables

One of the five items of the Giftedness scale of the SFSC was unintentionally omitted and so the remaining four items were summed and used as the scale score. In addition to each of the SFSC scale scores, an overall composite (sum of all SFSC items) was created for limited use as an overall indicator of self-concept change.

To measure relative agreement between the participant's self-assessment and the informant's assessment, the difference (participant – informant) between corresponding ratings was computed for each of the SFSC scales and procrastination, shown in Table 4. Perfect agreement is a difference score of 0. Some informants showed considerable variability in rating their participant from pretest to posttest, influencing participant-informant agreement. For this reason, the pretest-posttest difference in informant ratings was computed for each of the SFSC scales and procrastination to use as a covariate (called informant unreliability) when analyzing participant-informant agreement, shown in Table 5.

#### Data Analyses

##### ***Hypothesis 1: Goal pursuit affects self-perceptions.***

A repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) compared change from pretest to posttest in total (composite) SFSC scores for the participants (shown in Table 6). Total posttest scores on the six-factor self-concept scale ( $M = 191.33$ ,  $SD = 11.60$ ) were significantly higher than total pretest scores on the six-factor self-concept scale ( $M$

= 187.00,  $SD = 9.67$ ),  $F(1, 13) = 4.751$ ,  $p = .048$ ,  $\eta = .52$ . Participants viewed themselves more positively overall on self-concept after the goal program.

Separate repeated measures analyses of covariance (ANCOVA) compared change from pretest to posttest on each of the six-factor self-concept scores for the participants (shown in Table 7). Posttest scores for the power scale of the SFSC ( $M = 33.07$ ,  $SD = 4.56$ ) were significantly higher than pretest scores ( $M = 30.53$ ,  $SD = 6.01$ ),  $F(1, 13) = 4.761$ ,  $p = .048$ ,  $\eta = .52$ . Participants viewed themselves as more powerful after the goal program. No other SFSC scales showed significant pretest-posttest changes.

***Hypothesis 2: Goal pursuit enhances self-assessment accuracy.***

A repeated measures analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) compared change from pretest to posttest in the agreement (difference) between participant and informant on total (composite) SFSC scores for the participants (see Table 4), controlling for informant unreliability. Total posttest SFSC agreement (difference scores;  $M = 1.13$ ,  $SD = 3.99$ ) was significantly better than total pretest SFSC agreement ( $M = -6.33$ ,  $SD = 3.57$ ),  $F(1, 13) = 4.751$ ,  $p = .048$ ,  $\eta = .52$ . Participants and informants agreed more closely on the SFSC total (composite) of the participant after the goal program, controlling for informant unreliability. A single sample t-test showed that pretest SFSC agreement was significantly different from 0,  $t(19) = -2.27$ ,  $p = .035$ , while posttest SFSC agreement was not significantly different from 0. Although these analyses did not control for informant unreliability, they do indicate that agreement improved substantially. Posttest difference scores were indistinguishable from 0 (complete agreement).

Separate repeated measures analyses of covariance (ANCOVA) compared change from pretest to posttest in the agreement (difference) between participant and informant on each of the six-factor self-concept scores for the participants, controlling for informant unreliability on the same factors. Posttest agreement (difference scores) for the power scale ( $M = -1.87$ ,  $SD = 3.87$ ) was significantly better than pretest agreement ( $M = -3.20$ ,  $SD = 4.80$ ),  $F(1, 13) = 4.761$ ,  $p = .048$ ,  $\eta^2 = .52$ . Participants and informants agreed more closely on the SFSC power score for the participant after the goal program, controlling for informant unreliability. No other SFSC scores showed better agreement.

***Hypothesis 3: Goal expectations are related to personality styles and procrastination.***

Separate multiple regression analyses were used to predict goal commitment and attainability at the beginning of the study (shown in Table 8) using the seven personality predictors (procrastination and six HEXACO dimensions; shown in Table 9). The results of both regressions were non-significant.

***Hypothesis 4: Goal progress is related to personality styles and procrastination.***

Goal progress scores from the check-in sessions (see Table 8) were predicted from seven personality predictors (procrastination and six HEXACO dimensions). The result of the regression was non-significant.

***Hypothesis 5: Goal completion appraisal is related to personality styles and procrastination.***

A multiple regression analysis was used to predict goal completion appraisal (see Table 8) from the seven personality predictors (procrastination and six HEXACO dimensions). The result of the regression was non-significant.

***Hypothesis 6: Self-concept scores are related to personality styles and procrastination.***

Six separate multiple regression analyses were used to predict self-concept pretest scores for each subscale of the six-factor self-concept scale (likeability, task accomplishment, power, vulnerability, giftedness, morality; see Table 7) from the seven personality predictors (procrastination and six HEXACO dimensions). Likeability had one predictor explaining 65% of the variance and a significant multiple correlation of  $R = .807$ ,  $F(7, 16) = 4.254$ ,  $p = .008$ . Extraversion significantly predicted likeability ratings ( $\beta = .339$ ,  $p = .003$ ).

Task accomplishment had one predictor explaining 57.2% of the variance and a significant multiple correlation of  $R = .756$ ,  $F(7, 16) = 3.06$ ,  $p = .030$ . Conscientiousness significantly predicted task accomplishment ratings ( $\beta = .461$ ,  $p = .023$ ).

Vulnerability had three predictors explaining 75.8% of the variance and a significant multiple correlation of  $R = .87$ ,  $F(7, 16) = 7.15$ ,  $p = .001$ . Emotionality ( $\beta = .57$ ,  $p = .001$ ), agreeableness ( $\beta = -.50$ ,  $p = .006$ ) and total procrastination ( $\beta = .413$ ,  $p = .037$ ) significantly predicted vulnerability.

Giftedness ratings had one predictor explaining 58.6% of the variance and a significant multiple correlation of  $R = .765$ ,  $F(7, 16) = 3.23$ ,  $p = .025$ . Openness to experience significantly predicted giftedness ratings ( $\beta = .384$ ,  $p = .017$ ).

Morality had one predictor explaining 69.3% of the variance and a significant multiple correlation of  $R = .832$ ,  $F(7, 16) = 5.15$ ,  $p = .003$ . Emotionality significantly predicted morality ratings ( $\beta = .39$ ,  $p = .10$ ). Power ratings did not have any significant predictors.

***Hypothesis 7: Self-concept agreement between participant and informant is related to personality styles and procrastination.***

Six separate multiple regression analyses were used to predict self-concept difference scores at posttest for each subscale of the six-factor self-concept scales (likeability, task accomplishment, power, vulnerability, giftedness, morality; see Table 7) using the seven personality predictors (procrastination and six HEXACO dimensions). The results of the regression indicated a non-significant multiple correlation, but two significant predictors: honesty-humility, and openness to experience. When we control for informant's agreement, we find the following negative partial correlation between morality and openness to experience,  $r(10) = -.538$ ,  $p = .047$ .

***Hypothesis 8: Self-concept agreement is related to goal progress.***

Bivariate correlations were computed between the goal progress score and each difference score for the SFSC subscales (likeability, task accomplishment, power, vulnerability, giftedness, morality). There were no significant correlations found between goal progress and each SFSC subscale.

***Hypothesis 9: Self-concept agreement is related to goal completion.***

Two separate regression analyses were used to predict self-concept difference scores at posttest for each subscale of the six-factor self-concept scales (likeability, task



accomplishment, power, vulnerability, giftedness, morality) from goal completion appraisals. The results of the regression were non-significant.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

#### ***Hypothesis 1: Goal pursuit affects self-perceptions.***

This hypothesis was supported. The participants' self-concept scores did change significantly from pretest to posttest from the experience of goal pursuit. Specifically, the total composite self-concept (SFSC total score) became more positive, and participants viewed themselves as more powerful after goal pursuit than before. This indicates that goal pursuit positively influenced participants' views of themselves, likely by providing self-assessment feedback which enhances one's view of themselves.

However, none of the other self-concept dimensions (likeability, task accomplishment, vulnerability, giftedness, morality) showed effects. Self-assessment of task accomplishment in particular might be expected to respond to goal pursuit but showed no significant change. Likeability also might be changed particularly by the pursuit of a personal/social goal. Unfortunately, the small sample size precluded separate analyses for the personal/social and academic/professional goal pursuits.

#### ***Hypothesis 2: Goal pursuit enhances self-assessment accuracy.***

This hypothesis was also supported. The agreement between the participant's and informant's self-concept scores did increase from the experience of goal pursuit. Specifically, there was better agreement between participant and informant on the total composite self-concept (SFSC total score), and on the participant's self-assessment of power. This provides support for the idea that goal pursuit provides feedback that increases self-assessment accuracy, relative to an external informant.

However, none of the other self-concept dimensions (likeability, task accomplishment, vulnerability, giftedness, morality) showed effects. Self-assessment of task accomplishment agreement could reasonably be expected to respond to goal pursuit but showed no significant change. Likeability agreement also might be changed particularly by the pursuit of a personal/social goal, and morality by the pursuit of an academic/professional goal. Unfortunately, the small sample size precluded separate analyses for the personal/social and academic/professional goal pursuits.

***Hypothesis 3: Goal expectations are related to personality styles and procrastination.***

This hypothesis was not supported. Goal expectations of commitment and attainability were not predicted by personality styles. This is interesting as one would expect the degree to which an individual feels committed to a goal and feels that goal is attainable would be influenced by their personality, since certain traits like procrastination seemingly affect goal pursuit. Commitment and attainability were averaged scores from Brunstein's (1993) Personal Goal Variables, which consisted of the following facets: determination, urgency, willingness, support, opportunity, control. Perhaps the contrived nature of the research study made the goal process artificial to the participants and so they did not feel the stakes were high. Finding better ways to make the process more intrinsically motivating for the participant might result in effects. With more participants and a longer goal program, perhaps the participants' personalities would begin to show in how they approach goal pursuit.

***Hypothesis 4: Goal progress is related to personality styles and procrastination.***

This hypothesis was not supported. Personality was not predictive of goal progress suggesting task-completion styles might not be as salient as expected. Procrastination specifically was expected to affect how much progress one feels they made. Perhaps this is a result of poor self-knowledge. Maybe procrastinators feel they are making great progress and so report such at the check-ins. The progress score was an average score adapted from Brunstein's (1993) measures of advancement and outcome, which were only two items. Although our research did not show it, personality influencing goal pursuit cannot be ruled out and future studies should seek to use a better vetted measure of goal progress.

***Hypothesis 5: Goal completion appraisal is related to personality styles and procrastination.***

This hypothesis was not supported. Personality styles did not influence one's goal completion appraisal. The goal completion appraisal was created for the current study and is only two items with moderate reliability ( $\alpha = .67$ ). This measure may not have adequately assessed participants' sense of goal completion.

***Hypothesis 6: Self-concept scores are related to personality styles and procrastination.***

This hypothesis was supported. Self-concept scales of (1) likeability, (2) task accomplishment, (3) vulnerability, (4) giftedness, and (5) morality at the beginning of the study were predicted by (1) extraversion, (2) conscientiousness, (3) emotionality, agreeableness, and procrastination, (4) openness to experience, and (5) emotionality, respectively. Those high on extraversion were more likely to rate themselves as likeable

– a non-surprising result. Extraverted individuals tend to view themselves as more social. Conscientious individuals were rating themselves high on task accomplishment. This is also an expected finding since conscientious people tend to be more detail oriented and hyper-focused on completing the task.

Ratings of vulnerability were positively predicted by emotionality and procrastination, but negatively predicted by agreeableness. This suggests that emotional individuals and procrastinators see themselves as more vulnerable, perhaps influencing how they will approach their goals. Agreeable individuals see themselves as less vulnerable, but it is unclear whether this is due to their desire to be liked by others. To be vulnerable could be a negative trait to the agreeable individual, and so they may be underrating themselves.

Those higher on openness to experience felt they were also more gifted. Perhaps their willingness to engage with new experiences is influencing their perception of gifts. Those who try new things tend to have a greater appreciation for the larger world around them, and so these higher ratings of giftedness could potentially be a better indicator of gratitude than feeling gifted. Conversely, those who have more experiences could consider themselves gifted since they have had more opportunities to “test the waters” of what they are capable of.

Finally, those higher on emotionality saw themselves as higher on morality. This could be an ego defense mechanism. Individuals who are more emotional might need to see themselves as moral individuals because to conceptualize themselves any other way would be too damaging to the self.

***Hypothesis 7: Self-concept agreement between participant and informant is related to personality styles and procrastination.***

This hypothesis was supported. Although none of the multiple correlations of self-concept scores by the seven predictors were significant, Openness to experience was a significant negative predictor of agreement on the morality scale. Controlling for informant unreliability, a partial correlation of openness with morality agreement was also significant, indicating that this relationship was not just a function of the other predictors in the model, and is interpretable. Those higher on openness to experience had lower participant-informant difference scores on morality, suggesting more open individuals will have a more realistic view of their morality as compared with an informant. This is an interesting finding. Perhaps by having more experiences, these individuals have developed a strong sense of identity. They know who they are, and what they think is right and wrong. It may be the case that more exposure to the world through these experiences is resulting in more opportunities for the individual to demonstrate their morality, leading to a more accurate sense of their own considerations of right and wrong.

***Hypothesis 8: Self-concept agreement is related to goal progress.***

This hypothesis was not supported. There were no correlations found between self-concept agreement and goal progress scores. The benchmarks of progress throughout were expected to affect one's self-assessment. This could be due to the inconsistencies across check-in sessions. Because the progress scores were averaged scores, participants who completed just one check-in session could reasonably obtain the same numeric average as someone who completed all of them. More data are

needed. A future study with more participants over a longer time frame might see results.

***Hypothesis 9: Self-concept agreement is related to goal completion.***

This hypothesis was not supported. Again (see hypothesis 5), the most likely reason is the inadequacy of the goal completion appraisal measure.

***General Discussion***

This study demonstrated a relationship between goal pursuit and self-concept assessment. After completing the goal process, the participant's self-concept assessment improved overall and in relative accuracy. Curiously, the power facet of the six-factor self-concept scale was driving the bulk of the effect. Participants were not simply viewing themselves more positively but were viewing themselves as more powerful. Furthermore, ratings of power as compared with an informant were more accurate. Not only did the participant view themselves more powerfully, but their rating agreed with their informants. It is possible the participant logging their progress week-to-week is responsible for the change in self-concept accuracy, but the focus on the facet of power is interesting. Midway through the study, the 2020 presidential election of the United States occurred. It is possible the change in leadership is responsible for this observed change in power amongst our participants, not the goal process itself.

We expected the goal process to improve areas of self-concept related to task accomplishment, giftedness, or vulnerability since we expected the goal process to highlight a more realistic view of what it takes to complete those goals successfully. The results for the self-perception of power suggests that goal pursuit itself can make one feel more powerful, regardless of goal completion success. Perhaps setting goals for

ourselves fills us with a sense of pride and accomplishment regardless of the outcome. We are influenced by the *idea of change* more so than the actual change. Further studies should seek to more closely monitor the check-in sessions, which would identify if self-concept improved from task completion itself.

Furthermore, HEXACO personality characteristics and procrastination ratings were not found to be significant predictors of the goal expectancies of commitment and attainability. Past research by Sansone (1986) suggests personality styles influence how receptive one is to feedback, and Vangsness and Young (2020) suggest inherent differences in how people conceptualize tasks. This suggests there should be personality differences in expectations for goal pursuit. Perhaps the goals were not properly broken into realistic subordinate goals as outlined in goal-setting theory (Locke & Latham, 2002). If they were, differences in goal pursuit would be confined to individual variation. Because the past research suggests these personality differences do exist in setting goals, future research should more closely examine ways to create an intrinsically motivating, challenging, and realistic goal program.

HEXACO personality characteristics and procrastination scores were found to significantly predict individual subscales of the six-factor self-concept scale at the pretest. It is expected that personality traits are related to self-concept characteristics. Not surprising was that likeability was significantly predicted by extraversion. Those who are more outgoing and enjoy others' presence are more likely to rate themselves as more likeable at the pretest. Ratings of task accomplishment was significantly predicted by conscientiousness, suggesting a greater diligence results in viewing one's ability to complete tasks favorably. Those who are more diligent would be expected to better



complete tasks, so this finding is consistent with what we could have expected with this comparison. Emotionality and procrastination ratings were predictive of vulnerability ratings. If one is more emotional and thinks they procrastinate, they may see themselves as more vulnerable. Perhaps a greater focus on their negative attributes (I procrastinate, I am emotional) results in viewing themselves as more exposed or open to criticism.

Agreeableness was negatively predictive of vulnerability, suggesting more agreeable people rate themselves as less vulnerable. It is possible this effect results from agreeable individuals attempting to fit in by not exposing their true selves. Openness to experience was found to predict giftedness. More life experiences could come across as gifts to the individual. Because they are more experienced, they might appreciate those experiences more. A greater appreciation for those experiences may be resulting in viewing the self as more gifted, not necessarily because they are, but because they perceive these experiences as gifts. Finally, emotionality is predictive of morality ratings. Evaluations of morality are almost always emotional in nature. Because we are biased by our experiences and expectations, rating our own morality can never be objective. Our morality will always be viewed more favorably because it is tied to our identity. So, it follows that more emotional individuals are more likely to view themselves as more moral, because to see themselves any other way would be too damaging to their egos.

An interesting finding in the results is the negative relationship between morality agreement scores and openness to experience. Perhaps those who are more open to experiences develop a stronger sense of right and wrong by way of those very

experiences. They see more of the world and are therefore more confident in their evaluations of morality. Furthermore, those higher on openness to experience may be less likely to view the world dogmatically. Morality becomes less of a black and white evaluation of the world and more of a spectrum. Individuals who are more open to experiences may share those experiences with their informant, who may be more attuned to the participants' worldview. This could be resulting in this negative relationship.

### ***Strengths***

The current study had several methodological strengths worth mentioning. First, the goal selection list was successful in allowing participants choice in their goal, while still controlling for too much variability. The design of the study (four-week goal program with check-ins each week) was a successful structure. Although, future studies may seek a longer timeframe for the goal program to have a more salient affect. The SFSC scale was an excellent measure to use for self-assessment. Its six subscales were adequate in spanning a range of qualities which may be affected by goal pursuit. Not to be overlooked were the logistical strengths of this study. It was conducted entirely online during the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. All participant recruitment and contact during the study was done remotely out of necessity, and that only added to the difficulty of obtaining complete data. Yet, the modest number of student participants did provide complete data with their informant over the four-week span of the study.

### ***Limitations***

Although we saw self-assessment improve in both its overall score, and its agreement with the informant, there were several notable factors narrowing the scope of

the finding. First, our sample returned only 25 sets of complete, usable data. Both participant and informant provided varying levels of responses, and so certain surveys were partially incomplete, resulting in different group sizes across the separate measures. The sample is overwhelmingly female, and the oldest participant is 30. The study is also limited by its length. Four weeks is a very short timeframe to be considered long-term. Following a goal over the course of six months or a year might provide more salient change. Moreover, all these data were self-reported. While this was the idea, to evaluate self-assessments, the self-report format allowed for incomplete responses which affected the statistical power of our results. These all severely limit the generalizability of our findings.

Next, only the power facet of the SFSC scale was found to affect the change in overall self-concept accuracy. In fact, this facet was driving the bulk of the effect. We failed to see effects of personality on goal setting and progress scores. This was most surprising since the goal process is so dynamic and therefore susceptible to influence. One's personality is expected to influence how they conceptualize goals since so much of goal setting is contingent on the individual's motivations. Furthermore, the informant was supposed to act as an objective measure of assessment against the participant as outlined by Bollich et al. (2011). The informant's evaluations of the participant changed from the beginning to the end, making them an unreliable comparison to the participant. Therefore, we chose to control for the informant's difference scores in our analyses. This could be mitigated to some extent by recruiting multiple informants with varying relationships to the participant. However, if informants are consistently unreliable, future studies should attempt to find more objective evaluators, perhaps through the

workplace. Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic was instrumental to the limitations of this study. We were limited to an entirely online format which may have contributed to incomplete responses and dropout, and the pandemic itself may have been limiting the extent to which our participants felt engaged with their goal. Recreating this study with an in-person format may return different results.

### ***Suggestions for Future Research***

Future studies might choose to have the participant select multiple informants and rank their relationship to the informant in terms of closeness. The researchers should then select the informant which they feel will provide the best evaluation. This might provide a better understanding of which qualities of an informant will produce the more objective evaluation, while being sure the participant is not selecting someone who may not be an ideal informant.

This study requires replication. Our findings were modest because we were severely limited by methodology and the COVID-19 pandemic. Our sample size was too small due to recruitment limitations (entirely online), and the design of the goal program was only four weeks in length. Moreover, measuring agreement at the check-in sessions might provide better feedback to the participant. If the participant's ratings of themselves are constantly being compared against their informants throughout the program, then their self-assessment may more drastically change. Additionally, our measure of goal completion was created for this study.

The findings that personality characteristics were related to aspects of the goal pursuit process holds implications when structuring goal programs in schools and workplaces. Regardless of how well laid out a goal plan is, the execution of that plan is

susceptible to individual variation in personality. Future research should look more closely at how flexible each personality style is within their own limits of goal pursuit, and how much each will change in response to goal pursuit.

In sum, this is a promising area of research which begets future studies. Finding the influence of goals on improving self-assessment holds implications in positive psychology, through the idea of an upward spiral. Successfully completing tasks is rewarding. If task completion can be used to successfully predict what tasks one can accomplish in the future, then completing one task can cascade into completing several, which will improve one's view of themselves, and ultimately lead to more positive outcomes for individuals in their day-to-day lives (Dobson & Joffe, 1986).

## References

- Ainslie, G. (1975). Specious reward: A behavioral theory of impulsiveness and impulse control. *Psychological Bulletin*, 82, 463–496. doi: 10.1037/h0076860
- Andrade, H. (2010). “Students as the definitive source of formative assessment: academic self-assessment and the self-regulation of learning,” in Handbook of Formative Assessment, eds H. Andrade and G. Cizek (New York, NY: Routledge), 90–105.
- Andrade, H. L. (2019). A critical review of research on student self-assessment. *Frontiers in Education*, 4. doi:10.3389/feduc.2019.00087
- Ashton, M. C., & Lee, K. (2009). The HEXACO-60: A short measure of the major dimensions of personality. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 91, 340-345.  
https://doi-org.mantis.csuchico.edu/10.1080/00223890902935878
- Ashton, M. C., Lee, K., & Visser, B. A. (2019). Where's the H? Relations between BFI-2 and HEXACO-60 scales. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 137, 71-75.  
doi:10.1016/j.paid.2018.08.013
- Bollich, K. L., Johannet, P. M., & Vazire, S. (2011). In search of our true selves: Feedback as a path to self-knowledge. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2. https://doi.org.mantis.csuchico.edu/10.3389/fpsyg.2011.00312
- Brunstein, J. C. (1993). Personal goals and subjective well-being: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 65(5), 1061–1070. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.65.5.1061
- Clem, Anna-Leena; Aunola, Kaisa; Hirvonen, Riikka; Määttä, Sami; Nurmi, Jari-Erik; and Kiuru, Noona (2018) "Adolescents' domain-specific self-concepts of ability

- predict their domain-specific causal attributions: A longitudinal study," *Merrill Palmer Quarterly*: Vol. 64 : Iss. 4, Article 5. DOI: 10.13110/merrpalmquar1982.64.4.0539
- Davis, W. E., Kelley, N. J., Kim, J., Tang, D., & Hicks, J. A. (2015). Motivating the academic mind: High-level construal of academic goals enhances goal meaningfulness, motivation, and self-concordance. *Motivation and Emotion*, 40(2), 193–202. doi: 10.1007/s11031015-9522-x
- Dobson, K. S., & Joffe, R. (1986). The role of activity level and cognition in depressed mood in a university sample. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 42(2), 264–271. doi: 10.1002/1097-4679(198603)42:2<264::aid-jclp2270420207>3.0.co;2-e
- Dunning, D., Heath, C., & Suls, J. M. (2004). Flawed self-assessment: Implications for health, education, and the workplace. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 5(3), 69–106. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1529-1006.2004.00018.x>
- Emmons, R. A. (1986). Personal strivings: An approach to personality and subjective well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51, 1058-1068. <https://doi-org.mantis.csuchico.edu/10.1037/0022-3514.51.5.1058>
- Eurich, T. (2018). *Insight: The surprising truth about how others see us, how we see ourselves, and why the answers matter more than we think*. New York: Currency.
- Eva, K. W., & Regehr, G. (2005). Self-assessment in the health professions: A reformulation and research agenda. *Academic Medicine*, 80(Supplement). doi:10.1097/00001888-200510001-00015
- Funder, D., Kolar, D.C., & Blackman, M. (1995). Agreement among judges of personality: interpersonal relations, similarity, and acquaintanceship. *Journal of*

- Personality and Social Psychology*, 69, 656-672. <https://doi-org.mantis.csuchico.edu/10.1037/0022-3514.69.4.656>
- Harkin, B., Webb, T. L., Chang, B. P. I., Prestwich, A., Conner, M., Kellar, I., ... Sheeran, P. (2016). Does monitoring goal progress promote goal attainment? A meta-analysis of the experimental evidence. *Psychological Bulletin*, 142(2), 198-229. doi: 10.1037/bul0000025
- Höchli, B., Brügger, A., & Messner, C. (2018). How focusing on superordinate goals motivates broad, long-term goal pursuit: A theoretical perspective. *Frontiers in psychology*, 9, 1879. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01879>
- Klinger, E., Barta, S. G., & Maxeiner, M. E. (1980). Motivational correlates of thought content frequency and commitment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 39, 1222-1237. <https://doi-org.mantis.csuchico.edu/10.1037/h0077724>
- Kraayenoord, C.E.V., and S.G. Paris. 1997. Australian students' self-appraisal of their work samples and academic progress. *Elementary School Journal*, 97, no. 5: 523-37. <https://doi-org.mantis.csuchico.edu/10.1086/461879>
- Little, B. R. (1983). Personal projects: A rationale and method for investigation. *Environment and Behavior*, 15, 273-309. <https://doi-org.mantis.csuchico.edu/10.1177/0013916583153002>
- Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P. (2002). Building a practically useful theory of goal setting and task motivation: A 35-year odyssey. *American Psychologist*, 57(9), 705-717. <https://doi-org.mantis.csuchico.edu/10.1037/0003-066X.57.9.705>



- Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P. (2013). Goal setting theory, 1990. In E. A. Locke & G. P. Latham (Eds.), *New developments in goal setting and task performance*. (pp. 3 15). Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.  
<https://doi-org.mantis.csuchico.edu/10.1027/1016-9040.12.4.290>
- Mabe, P.A. III, & West, S.G. (1982). Validity of self-evaluation of ability: A review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 67, 280–286.  
<https://doi-org.mantis.csuchico.edu/10.1037/0021-9010.67.3.280>
- Maglio, S. J., Gollwitzer, P. M., & Oettingen, G. (2014). Emotion and control in the planning of goals. *Motivation and Emotion*, 38(5), 620–634. doi: 10.1007/s11031 014-9407-4
- Martin, B. A., & Murberger, M. A. (1994). Effects of self-esteem and assigned goals on actual and perceived performance. *Journal of Social Behavior & Personality*, 9(1), 81–87.
- Norcini, J. (2003). Peer assessment of competence. *Medical Education*, 37, 539–543. <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2923.2003.01536.x>
- Panadero, E., Brown, G. L., and Strijbos, J.-W. (2016). The future of student self assessment: a review of known unknowns and potential directions. *Educ. Psychol. Rev.* 28, 803–830. doi: 10.1007/s10648-015-9350-2
- Polivy, J., Herman, C. P., Hackett, R., & Kuleshnyk, I. (1986). The effects of self attention and public attention on eating in restrained and unrestrained subjects. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 50, 1253–1260.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.50.6.1253>

- Robins, R. W., Hendin, H. M., & Trzesniewski, K. H. (2001). Measuring global self esteem: Construct validation of a single-item measure and the Rosenberg self esteem scale. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 27, 151-161.  
<https://doi-org.mantis.csuchico.edu/10.1177/0146167201272002>
- Rosenberg, M. (1979). *Conceiving the self*. New York: Basic Books.  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/3340091>
- Sansone, C. (1986). A question of competence: The effects of competence and task feedback on intrinsic interest. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51(5), 918-931. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.51.5.918
- Sheldon, K., & Houser-Marko, L. S. (2001). Self-concordance, goal-attainment, and longitudinal well-being: Can there be an upward spiral? *PsycEXTRA Dataset*. doi:10.1037/e413802005-350
- Simon, H. A. (1955). A behavioral model of rational choice. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 69, 99–118. <https://doi-org.mantis.csuchico.edu/10.2307/1884852>
- Sirois, Fuschia M., Yang, Sisi, & van Eerde, Wendelien. (2019). Development and validation of the general procrastination scale (GPS-9): A short and reliable measure of trait procrastination. *Personality and Individual Differences*, Vol 146, 26-33. <https://doi-org.mantis.csuchico.edu/10.1016/j.paid.2019.03.039>
- Smith, T. W., Uchino, B. N., Berg, C. A., Florsheim, P., Pearce, G., Hawkins, M., Hopkins, P. N., & Yoon, H. C. (2007). Hostile personality traits and coronary artery calcification in middle-aged and older married couples: different effects for self-reports versus spouse ratings. *Psychosomatic medicine*, 69(5), 441–448.  
<https://doi.org/10.1097/PSY.0b013e3180600a65>

- Stake, Jayne E. (1992). Gender differences and similarities in self-concept within everyday life contexts. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 16(3), 349–363.
- Stake, Jayne E. (1994). Development and validation of the six-factor self-concept scale for adults. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, Vol 54(1), 56-72. doi: <https://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0013164494054001006>
- Steel, P., and König, C. J. (2006). Integrating theories of motivation. *Acad.Manage.Rev.* 31, 889-913. doi: 10.2307/20159257
- Strauman, T. J., & Higgins, E. T. (1987). Automatic activation of self-discrepancies and emotional syndromes: When cognitive structures influence affect. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 53, 1004–1014.  
<https://doi-org.mantis.csuchico.edu/10.1037/0022-3514.53.6.1004>
- Sun, S.H., and Frese, M. (2013). “Multiple goal pursuit,” in *New Developments in Goal Setting and Task Performance*, eds E. A. Locke and G.P. Latham (New York, NY: Routledge), 177-194.
- Vangsness, L., & Young, M. E. (2020). Turtle, task ninja, or time waster? Who cares? Traditional task-completion strategies are overrated. *Psychological Science*, 31(3), 306-315. doi:10.1177/0956797619901267

## List of Tables

TABLE 1

Personal/Social Goals
<p><b>Exercise Goal:</b></p> <p>I will actively work on a specific exercise activity at least 2 times per week. (Indicate your exercise activity: going to the gym, running, athletics, riding my bike, home exercise, yoga, etc.)</p>
<p><b>Dietary Goal:</b></p> <p>I will alter my diet at least 2 times per week (Indicate how you will alter your diet: eating greens, eating vegan, excluding red meat, keto diet etc.)</p>
<p><b>Extracurricular Goal:</b></p> <p>I will actively practice my extracurricular hobby at least 2 times per week (Indicate your extracurricular: instrument practice, meditating, drawing, etc.)</p>
<p><b>Interpersonal Goal:</b></p> <p>I will maintain and/or improve social contact 2 times per week (Indicate your social contact: calling family or friend, attending social gatherings, zoom calling, etc.)</p>
<p><b>Technological Goal:</b></p> <p>I will limit my recreational screen time to 30 min/day for one of my media outlets (Indicate your media outlet: social media, streaming services, video games, cable television, news media etc.)</p>

TABLE 2

Academic/Professional Goals
<p><b>Academic Goal:</b></p> <p>I will start assignments within 2 days of it being assigned. (Indicate a MINIMUM of two main assignments from any of your courses to be done over the next six weeks)</p>
<p><b>Communication Goal:</b></p> <p>I will improve my communication by practicing 2 times per week (Indicate which you will improve: public speaking, 1-on-1 conversations, active listening, etc.)</p>
<p><b>Academic Goal:</b></p> <p>I will miss no more than 1 of my assigned readings/blog posts/discussion posts per week over the course of the six weeks for one class. (Indicate your class below)</p>
<p><b>Time Management Goal:</b></p> <p>I will arrive at least 30 minutes before the start time of my scheduled responsibilities. (Indicate a MINIMUM of two responsibilities you are required to be in attendance for)</p>
<p><b>Cognitive Restructuring Goal:</b></p> <p>I will re-frame my thoughts from negative to positive about my career/job/class/internship/etc. by logging my feelings 2 times per week for reflection. (Indicate your career/job/class/internship below)</p>

***(Note: Main assignments involve a one-week or longer time frame. These could be short or long papers, presentations, projects, etc.)***

**TABLE 3**

<b>Goals Selected</b>					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Personal/Social	12	1.00	2.00	1.0833	.28868
Academic/Professional	13	1.00	5.00	3.3846	1.66024
Valid N (listwise)	0				

**TABLE 4**

**Difference Scores of SFSC subscales and Procrastination at  
Pretest and Posttest**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Likeability	20	-6.00	14.00	-.8500	4.39228
Task Accomplishment	20	-9.00	7.00	-2.0500	4.26090
Power	20	-12.00	14.00	-2.4500	5.97781
Vulnerability	20	-6.00	20.00	5.6500	7.13239
Morality	20	-12.00	1.00	-3.6000	2.99825
Giftedness	20	-14.00	8.00	-3.6500	6.12394
Likeability Posttest	17	-10.00	8.00	-1.5882	4.67786
Task Accomplishment Posttest	17	-12.00	10.00	-1.2353	4.73721
Power Posttest	17	-10.00	5.00	-1.1765	4.12667
Vulnerability Posttest	17	-3.00	20.00	8.7059	6.78937
Morality Posttest	17	-9.00	5.00	-1.5294	3.57277
Giftedness Posttest	17	-10.00	7.00	-1.9412	4.58899
Procrastination	20	-5.00	11.00	2.5500	5.58640
Procrastination Posttest	16	-6.00	15.00	2.2500	6.56760
Valid N (listwise)	14				

**TABLE 5**

<b>Informants' Difference Scores (Pretest-Posttest)</b>					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Likeability	15	-11.00	7.00	-1.1333	4.54920
Task Accomplishment	15	-4.00	8.00	1.6667	3.86683
Power	15	-10.00	8.00	-1.2000	5.57033
Vulnerability	15	-12.00	15.00	1.6000	8.54233
Giftedness	15	-7.00	10.00	.4667	4.48596
Morality	15	-2.00	7.00	1.7333	2.81493
Procrastination	15	-11.00	14.00	-1.4667	6.42391
Valid N (listwise)	15				



**TABLE 6**

<b>Participants' SFSC Composite Scores</b>					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pretest	24	168.00	207.00	186.4583	11.03740
Posttest	21	166.00	215.00	187.5238	12.39201
Valid N (listwise)	21				

TABLE 7

SFSC Subscale Scores (Pretest and Posttest)					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Likeability	24	29.00	42.00	35.7083	3.39410
Task Accomplishment	24	24.00	42.00	35.3750	4.27137
Power	24	18.00	42.00	30.5833	6.04991
Vulnerability	24	17.00	42.00	29.3750	5.74693
Giftedness	24	8.00	28.00	18.0833	4.75410
Morality	24	26.00	42.00	37.3333	3.72613
Likeability Posttest	21	28.00	41.00	35.2381	3.78027
Task Accomplishment Posttest	21	23.00	42.00	34.4762	5.33497
Power Posttest	21	17.00	39.00	31.9524	5.68750
Vulnerability Posttest	21	19.00	40.00	29.7143	5.29285
Giftedness Posttest	21	12.00	28.00	18.7143	4.32600
Morality Posttest	21	29.00	42.00	37.4286	3.32523
Valid N (listwise)	21				

**TABLE 8**

<b>Goal Expectancies, Goal Progress, and Goal Completion Appraisal</b>					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Commitment	25	3.67	6.00	4.9200	.54671
Attainability	25	4.00	6.00	4.9667	.51144
Progress	20	3.42	6.00	4.7833	.75771
Goal completion appraisal	21	2.00	10.00	6.4286	2.35736
Valid N (listwise)	19				

**TABLE 9**

<b>HEXACO and Procrastination at Pretest</b>					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Honesty-Humility	25	21.00	45.00	35.4000	5.98609
Emotionality	25	24.00	43.00	36.6400	6.00611
Extraversion	25	23.00	43.00	33.8800	6.93013
Agreeableness	25	26.00	47.00	35.6800	5.77148
Conscientiousness	25	24.00	46.00	35.9600	5.90536
Openness to Experience	25	22.00	46.00	35.4400	5.93773
Procrastination Total	24	21.00	40.00	30.1250	4.56177
Valid N (listwise)	24				