

New Research From Psychological Science

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Read about the latest research published in *Psychological Science*:

[Mind-Body Practices and the Self: Yoga and Meditation Do Not Quiet the Ego but Instead Boost Self-Enhancement](#)

Jochen E. Gebauer, Andreas D. Nehrlich, Dagmar Stahlberg, Constantine Sedikides, Anke Hackenschmidt, Doreen Schick, Clara A. Stegmaier, Cara C. Windfelder, Anna Bruk, and Johannes Mander



Yoga and meditation have entered the mainstream and are associated with significant benefits for physical and psychological well-being. Gebauer and colleagues conducted an empirical test of the psychological processes underlying these benefits. Participants were tested for several weeks before or after practicing yoga or meditation. They answered several rating questions to measure the degree to which they perceived yoga as self-central (self-centrality), themselves as better-than-average yoga students (self-enhancement I), themselves as better in communal domains (self-enhancement II), and their self-esteem (self-enhancement III). Results showed higher self-centrality and self-enhancement after practicing yoga than before. Self-centrality seemed to drive the effects of yoga on self-enhancement, and self-enhancement seemed to explain higher well-being as measured by self-esteem and also by other affective and cognitive components. These effects do not support the *ego-quieting hypothesis* that has been used to explain the benefits of yoga and meditation. The ego-quieting hypothesis would predict that yoga and meditation would reduce self-centrality, resulting in a decreased self-enhancement bias. Instead, the effects are consistent with the *self-centrality principle*, according to which practicing a skill makes it more central to the self and creates a self-enhancement bias that can increase well-being.

[Early Gender Differences in Core Values Predict Anticipated Family Versus Career Orientation](#)

Katharina Block, Antonya Marie Gonzalez, Toni Schmader, and Andrew Scott Baron



Communion (i.e., the promotion of other people) and agency (i.e., self-promotion) are two core values that guide human behavior. Previous research has shown that women tend to value communion more than men and that women tend to engage in more communal careers and to be more family-oriented. Block and colleagues examined the early development of these gender differences. In 411 children (6–14 years old), they used different rating scales to measure communal and agentic values, family-versus-career future orientation, and explicit gender identification. They also used the Implicit Association Test to measure implicit gender identification along with a parent-reported gender-identification measure. Results showed that by the age of 6, girls already showed higher communal and lower agentic values than did boys. Regarding their expected future, girls were also more family-oriented than were boys. Mediation analyses showed that, despite gender differences in gender identification, children's values were a better predictor of their expected future selves. These findings

support the notion that early development of gender differences in core values predicts children's expectations for their future.

Do Men and Women Know What They Want? Sex Differences in Online Daters' Educational Preferences

Stephen Whyte, Ho Fai Chan, and Benno Torgler

Evolutionary psychology proposes that women bear a greater cost in reproduction than men, and hence women's mate-choice strategies should display more selectivity and focus on quality over quantity. A good indicator of quality might be education, given that it is usually associated with higher social status and intelligence. The authors used a large set of data from a dating website to explore whether preferences for educational level varied between men and women and in relation to fertility. They analyzed over 41,000 profiles of men and women between the ages of 18 and 80 and found that women were more likely than men to specify desired educational levels in a potential partner, particularly in their fertile years (18–40). As women aged, their preference specificity diminished, but both older women and men preferred potential dates with at least their level of education. These results support the sexual-selection theories proposed by evolutionary psychology.