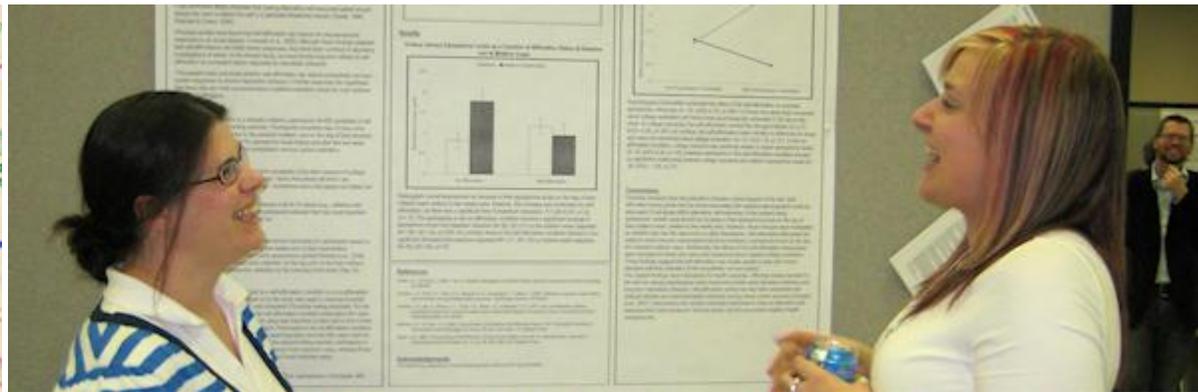


SPSP 2010

THE ELEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY FOR PERSONALITY AND SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

January 28-30, 2010 - Las Vegas, Nevada



NEWS & UPDATES

WELCOME TO SPSP 2010

News and Updates

Download the [SPSP 2010 Program](#) (PDF, 7.2MB)

Please read [this message](#) about email communications.

Can the benefits of self-defining memories be obtained from a closed memory?

Poster C201, Friday, January 29, 12:30 – 2:00 pm, Grande Ballroom

Travis Crone¹, Denise Beike¹; ¹University of Arkansas

Self-defining memories are key scenes that represent substantial markers in growth and understanding (Singer & Moffitt, 1991). Self-defining memories are marked not only by understanding, but also the high level of emotion associated with recall (Schwartz, Weinberger, & Singer, 1981). The pairing of emotionality with meaning across time appears to contradict that memories obtain more closure over time (Beike & Wirth-Beaumont, 2005). Open memories are associated with high emotionality and closed memories are associated with increased meaning. The current study's design was to determine if the positive outcomes of self-defining memories could be obtained from closed memories. Ninety-two students wrote about an unpleasant life event. Participants either wrote about a memory considered self-defining, closed, or open. Next, participants rated the memory on intensity, closure, insight, and other measures. Self-defining memories were not clearly closed or open, but continued to display a mixture of traits associated with both. Effects were seen for closure, $p < .001$; intensity now $p = .023$; and insight $p = .019$. Participants reported equal levels of insight for self-defining and closed memories, but less on open. Participants also reported less intensity at recall for closed memories than self-defining and open memories, which did not differ. Self-defining memories fell in the middle of the closure scale, different than both open and closed memories. The current research outlines how understanding, a major outcome of self-defining memories, can be obtained on equal levels from closed memories without the need for the emotionality associated with self-defining memories.

Keywords: Primary = Self/Identity, Secondary = Personality Processes

[Back to Poster Assignments](#)