Wisdom cut-point (age 75?)
Universal prosocial spending

Participants in Canada and South Africa randomly assigned to buy items for charity report higher levels of positive affect than participants assigned to buy the same items for themselves, even when this prosocial spending does not provide an opportunity to build or strengthen social ties. Our findings suggest that the reward experienced from helping others may be deeply ingrained in human nature, emerging in diverse cultural and economic contexts.
Measuring self control

• The first measure of low self-control (SC1) was a behavioral item about class cutting.
• The second low self-control measure was a composite of 40 items that assessed current levels of low self-control (SC2) (see Gibbs et al., 1998). Students marked their agreement with each statement on a 10-centimeter line – to capture ratio level data. The response categories “totally disagree” and “totally agree”
• The third measure (SC3) of low self-control was a composite of 16 items affixed to a first person vignette about shoplifting (see Piquero and Tibbetts, 1996). Students recorded their agreement with each statement on a 10-centimeter line anchored by the terms “totally disagree” and “totally agree” that ranged in values from 0 to 160.
Replication of marshmallow experiment

• Very small and highly selective samples of children from the Stanford University community

• Originally 600 preschool-age children, but follow-up investigations focused on much smaller samples (only 185 of the original 653 children).

• Positive associations between DoG and later outcomes only for children participating in trials in which no coping strategy was coached and the treat was clearly visible
Replication of marshmallow experiment

• Concentrating on children whose mothers had not completed college, we found that an additional minute waited at age 4 predicted a gain of approximately 1/10th of a SD in achievement at age 15 (only ½ the size of original studies)

• Reduced by two thirds in the presence of controls for family background, early cognitive ability, and the home environment.

• Associations between delay time and measures of behavioral outcomes at age 15 were much smaller and rarely statistically significant.
Self control and religiousness

Psychologists at Queen's University have demonstrated that test subjects who are primed to think subconsciously about religion — including agnostics and atheists — actually perform better at tasks requiring self-control than those who aren't.
Positive relationships
30th Wedding Anniversary
(29.08.2015)
They are like potato and tomato who transformed themselves to french fries and ketchup just to stay together as the best pair for ever

ASHOK KUMAR & JAYASREE
Aswin, Rohini, Nidhi, Vinu, Advika, Aryan.
Money/materialistic goals & relationships
Self-sufficiency hypothesis

• A focus on money & materialistic goals may lead people to ignore or fail to invest in close, supportive relationships (important for well-being) (Vohs et al., 2006)
Self-sufficiency hypothesis

money appears to motivate only our interest in ourselves, making us selfish and self-centered...Money makes people feel self-sufficient, which also means they don't need or care about others; it's each man for himself

— Margaret Heffernan —
Self-sufficiency hypothesis

• People value money for its instrumentality: Money enables people to achieve goals without aid from others.

• Reminders of money may lead to feelings of self-sufficiency, and avoidance of dependency
Self-sufficiency: support?

- 9 studies by Vohs et al., 2006
- Hypotheses: Money will make us want less help
- Procedure:
  - Randomly assigned: high money or low money condition (read aloud an essay in front of a camera about growing up with abundant or meager financial resources)
  - Given an impossible task (trace figure with one line) (study 1) /difficult task (study 2) & help offered
  - Outcome measure: timed how long until asked for help
Fig. 1. Percentage of participants who asked for help as a function of money prime and length of time that had elapsed while working on (A) a difficult task (from Experiment 1) or (B) an unsolvable task (from Experiment 2).
Self-sufficiency: support?

• Hypothesis: Money will make us help others less
• Procedure:
  – Random assignment: primed money vs. neutral concepts (descramble tasks/play monopoly)
  – **Experiment 3:** Experimenter asked for help coding data (5 min.): How many will they code?
  – **Experiment 4:** Confederate shares room with participant & asks for directions on task. Measured time helping
  – **Experiment 5:** Confederate walking by dropped box of 27 pencils. How many picked up?
  – **Experiment 6:** Paid 2$ in quarters for participation. Pointed out donation box. Amount of money donated?
Self-sufficiency: support?

• **Hypothesis**: Money reduces desire for social intimacy

• **Procedure**:
  – Random assignment: screen saver - money; screen saver – fish; no screen saver while completing questionnaires
  – **Experiment 7**: “get acquainted” convo with another participant & asked to move chairs. Measured distance?
  – **Experiment 8**: choose between 2 activities X 9 (e.g., an in-home catered dinner for 4 vs. 4 personal cooking lessons). How many individual?
  – **Experiment 9**: develop an advertisement. Work alone or with someone else?
Prosocial behaviour

• At our basic-level, are we prosocial beings?

• *Prosocial behaviour*: “voluntary behaviour intended to benefit another” (people or society as a whole)

• Looks like: Cooperation, helping, sharing
5.) This man spends his lunch reading to a coworker who cannot.
4.) A rainstorm popped up, but this kind neighbor made sure this car didn't get soaked.

You left your window open, so I put a bag over it to keep your interior dry. Have a great day!

from your friendly neighbor
Gilligan
14.) There should be more kind laundry fairies in the world.

Your load wasn't quite dry so I put it in for another load... I hate it when that happens!

Have a great night!

Eric Blue
7.) A man stopped running to catch his train to help an older woman who was struggling with her bags.
Other forms

Allen Large and his wife Violet won $11.2 million in a Lotto 6/49 jackpot in July, 2010. The couple decided to give away almost all of their winnings to family members, local churches, and volunteer and community groups in their community.

Lotto Max winner Tom Crist giving away entire $40-million jackpot to charity
Prosocial behaviour

• “Purest” form of prosocial behaviour is motivated by altruism
• Unselfish interest in helping another person.
MADISON LEIGH WALLACE, deceased & LYLE EAGLE TAIL, deceased  Vermillion, South Dakota

While at a municipal park with his siblings, Garrett, 6, fell into the Big Sioux River from its abrupt rock bank and disappeared into a thick layering of foam created by the cascading water. His sister, Madison, 16, high school student, who was nearby, went into the river feet first in an attempt to locate him, but she too was lost from sight as she entered the foam. From another party in the park, Lyle, 28, responded to the scene and let others hold to him as he lay on the bank and attempted to reach Garrett and Madison. He fell from their grasp into the river. Garrett surfaced, made his way to the bank, and was pulled to safety, but Madison and Lyle drowned.
Why prosocial behaviour?

- *Empathy* is the vicarious experience of another person’s feelings (feelings of tenderness, compassion and sympathy)
- Provides emotional and motivational component for prosocial behaviour
- leads to helping, regardless of personal gains & costs (Batson, 1987)
Why prosocial behaviour?

• Prosocial behaviour is inherently pleasurable (?): “helper’s high”
• Linked with:
  – Reduced stress response
  – Improved immunity markers, and
  – Release of oxytocin (warmth, euphoria, connection)
Examples of studies

• Older adults who volunteered to give massage to infants had lower stress hormones (vs. receiving massage)
Examples of studies

- Students who watched a file of Mother Teresa’s work in Calcutta showed significantly increased in protective antibodies (remained high for an hour)

“The hunger for love is much more difficult to remove than the hunger for bread.”
Inducing prosocial behaviour

Zak et al:

• dose of oxytocin caused people to give more generously and to feel more empathy towards others, with “symptoms” lasting up to 2 hours
Why prosocial behaviour?

• Prosocial behaviour is puzzling
  – Evolutionary drive to reproduce our genes
  – Kin selection (share some of our genes)
Why prosocial behaviour?

• Life and death situation (relatives > non-relatives) – real-life & self-reports (house fires)

• Degree of genetic relatedness versus emotional closeness? (Korchmaros & Kenny, 2006)
Why prosocial behaviour?

- Prosocial behaviour is puzzling (maybe)
  - Learned to cooperate in order to survive
  - But too cooperative, may be exploited
  - Need to learn *reciprocal altruism* (survival value)
  - Eventually become genetically-based
Reciprocity norm:
plays out in our day-to-day

Reciprocity: More likely to help those who help us

neighbor snowblows your driveway

You water their plants
Reciprocity norm: Universal

- **Christianity:** "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." Luke 6:31, King James Version.

- **Buddhism:** Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful." Udana-Varga 5:18

- **Ancient Egyptian:** "Do for one who may do for you, that you may cause him thus to do." The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant, 109 – 110

- **Humanism:** "Don't do things you wouldn't want to have done to you," British Humanist Society.

- **Islam:** "None of you [truly] believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself." Number 13 of Imam "Al-Nawawi's Forty Hadiths."

- **Judaism:** "...thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.", Leviticus 19:18
The question: At our deepest level, are we selfish or prosocial?
Reflective Model of Prosocial Behaviour

- Assumes people are ‘naturally’ selfish, yet we can behave in prosocial ways.
- Helping especially common in humans, perhaps due to other ‘human’ capabilities (e.g., self-control, thoughtful choice).
- Helping requires effort, choice.
Intuitive Prosociality
Model of Prosocial Behaviour

• Prosocial behaviour is basic or intuitive
• Findings from several scientific disciplines have lent support to this model
Intuitive Prosociality: Cognitive approach

- **Experimental Paradigm**: Choose between selfish or prosocial outcomes

- If intuitive, prosocial behaviour should be our default response (vs. selfish):
  - Happens quickly
  - Happens when self control is reduced (e.g., time pressure, distraction)

- Here, applied to public goods game
Public Goods Game

- You are paired with 3 other people.
- Everyone has 40 cents to play with.
- You can keep it, or contribute some to the group’s common project.
- Money in the common project is doubled, then split equally among 4.
- If all contribute 40 cents, each gets 80 cents.
- If all others contribute, but you keep, you get 100 cents; others get 60 cents (mhwaaaaahaaaa)
Public Good Game results

• People make prosocial decisions quicker than selfish ones (Rand et al., 2012)

• Studies that reduced ability to exert control:
  – Inducing time pressure, more prosocial (Cappellitti et al., 2011)
  – Inducing distraction, more prosocial (Rand et al., 2012)

• Suggests that prosocial decisions are intuitive, rather than reflective
Intuitive Prosociality: Neuroscience

- Prosociality does not typically require the suppression of selfish responding
- (not) Associated with cognitive control: lateral prefrontal cortex & anterior cingulate cortex
Intuitive Prosociality: Neuroscience

• Associated with reward seeking (dopaminergic system): Ventral striatum & ventromedial prefrontal cortex

• Found these results when....
  – Making personal prosocial choices
  – Seeing fair outcomes
  – Seeing another get rewards
Intuitive Prosociality: Early development

- Prosocial behaviours occur early in ontology, before children are able to exert significant self-control over their action
- Engage without prompts or rewards; even when costly
Intuitive Prosociality: Early development

• Preference for prosocial actors (first yr.)
• Helping without request (18 mons)
  – Helping others in need (opening cabinet when hands are full)
  – Offer useful information (location of a desired object)
• More complex prosocial actions (18mon +)
  – Discard resources rather than distribute unfairly
Summary (Reflective vs. Intuitive)

• Prosocial behaviour may be intuitive or ‘easy’
• But we don’t always act this way...
• How can we foster prosociality?
How to increase helping in general

• Rewards
  – e.g., praise, smiles when child helps (self-representative)
  – avoid “over-justification effect”
How to increase helping in general

- Role Models
  - e.g. parents volunteering; child learns that it is a valued act
Close relationships

• Relationships linked with health/happiness: “deep truth”
• Happy people: rich social lives, satisfying friendships, happy marriages
• Death bed test
Defining close relationships

Distinguishing intimate from casual:

6 core characteristics

1) Knowledge
   – True self & actual self
   – Powerful affirmation of self
   – Disclosure reciprocity: Enhances liking & affection (Aron et al, 1997 study)
   – Knowing and decreased passion
Defining close relationships

2) Trust
   – Do you no harm; confidence, privacy

3) Caring
   – Concern for and attention to feelings
   – “how are you?”

4) Interdependence
   – Mutual influence (actions, feelings, thoughts); intertwined

5) Mutuality
   – Feelings of overlap (we, us, our): “Jelly”

6) Commitment
   – Intention to continue into the future; Time and energy

• Not all close relationships fit this mold!
Shift from exchange to communal

• Exchange relationships
  – Tit-for-tat
  – Relationships governed by need for equity
  – Usually short-term
  – Satisfied if exchange ratio is fairly even
  – Can create discomfort in communal relationships
Shift from exchange to communal

- Communal relationships
  - Relationships governed by being responsive to the other’s needs (regardless if repaid)
  - Usually longer-term
  - Chronic imbalance can be a problem still
Friendship vs Romance

• Emotional intensity
  – Fascination, passion, infatuation, total absorption

• Clarity of rules
  – Some universality in what it means to be someone’s friend (supportive, trustworthy, humor, accepting)
  – Romance: complex and emotionally volatile nature seems to preclude rules
  – Rules more varied (e.g., call me before bed?)
Friendship vs Romance

• Complexity of feelings
  – “mysterious” quality
  – Conflicting (love/hate)
  – Captivated but understand it very little (songs)
  – Demanding loyalty, faithfulness, exclusivity in relationships (vs. friendships)
Friendship vs Romance

• Expectations
  – We demand more from our romantic relationships
  – More so now (practical), than in the past (love based & maintained)
  – Lots of expectations: fulfill deepest emotional needs, be exciting, make us happy, be sexually satisfying, etc.
  – (Esther Perel)
Romantic attachment

• Biological underpinnings:

• Initial attraction: adrenaline (sweat), dopamine (desire, reward, focused attention), serotonin (low levels, OCD)

• Longterm attachment: oxytocin
  – counter-act fight or flight; increase parental bonding; safety, calm
  – Orgasm, touching, kissing, breastfeeding
Deciding on a romantic partner

• “If a person had all the other qualities you desire, would you still marry this person if you were not in love?”

• 35% of men said yes; 76% of women said yes (in 1967)

• Men previously more romantic notions about marriage; women more practical minded
Deciding on a romantic partner

• “If a person had all the other qualities you desire, would you still marry this person if you were not in love?”

• 86% men and 91% women said no (in 1991)

• Now, both sexes value “being in love” as primary reason for marriage
Deciding on a romantic partner

• Is romantic love, a western individualistic cultural feature?

• Cultural expressions
  – Japanese – amae
  – Chinese – gan qing
  – Korean – jung
Deciding on a romantic partner

- Historical investigations have found that romantic love was less prominent in non-western countries
- Romantic love as a basis for marriage is becoming universal
- Buss (1994) – 37 countries: #1 desirable quality in a partner = love/mutual attraction
- Collectivist: still greater consideration to family/group members; harms with total absorption
Gender Differences: Pop quiz

- Harrison & Shortall
- 171 heterosexual participants (only those who have been in a committed romantic relationship)
- Questions...
Pop Quiz

(1) Who falls in love first in a relationship, a man or a woman?

(2) Do you think a man or a woman is more likely to say ‘I love you' first in a relationship?
Pop Quiz

(1) Who falls in love first in a relationship, a man or a woman?

The great majority of both men and women (87.78%) thought that women would fall in love more rapidly.

(2) Do you think a man or a woman is more likely to say ‘I love you' first in a relationship?

The great majority of both men and women (75.20%) thought that a woman would be more likely to be the first to do so
(3) "In your most recent romantic relationship, how long did it take you to realize you were in love?"

Men reported that they fell in love more rapidly than did women.

(4) "In your most recent committed, romantic relationship, who said ‘I love you' FIRST?"

Of those who've shared such sentiments (only 12.10% of respondents claimed that neither partners had uttered these words), a much greater percentage of men (64%) as compared to women (18.51%) stated that they were the first to say ‘I love you' first.
Gender differences

• Overall, much similarity, but some differences

• Men more prone to ‘romantic’ conceptions (*mixed findings*)
  – Fall in love more quickly
  – More romantic beliefs (“true love lasts forever”)
  – More love-at-first-sight

• Women tend to companionately love their partners more than they are liked/loved in return
Romantic relationships

• The good...
• What makes relationships great?
  – *Relationship illusions & realism*
  – Capitalization
  – Humour
  – Expressing gratitude
  – Perceiving equity
  – Quality shared time
  – Positive responses to conflict
Relationship Illusions

What’s better: realistic or idealized? (Murray & Holmes, 1997)
Relationship Illusions

- Couples rated own and partner’s attributes, and attributes of an ideal partner (over 3 years)

**Results:**
- Ratings by partner > self ratings; Closer to ideal ratings
- Effects of idealization (a year later):
  - More satisfaction, love, trust;
  - Less conflicts; and
  - Began to live up to the idealization
- Accuracy also important in some domains
Capitalization

• Sharing positive news can build intimacy
• Responses of partner key: 4 possible responses
• Only 1 related to enhanced relationship quality; the others more distress
Perceived Responses to Capitalization Attempts scale

“Consider how your partner responds when you tell him/her about something good that has happened”

1) active-constructive – “I sometimes get the sense that he/she is more happy and excited than I am”
2) passive-constructive – “He/she tries not to make a big deal about it, but is happy for me”
3) active-destructive – “He/she points out the potential downside of the good event”
4) passive-destructive - “He/she partner doesn’t pay much attention to me”
Heard my boyfriend giggling to himself in the bathroom last night, woke up to this. That, my friends, is a lint roller refill.
Humour

• Indicates compatibility of personality and beliefs (attracted to people who laugh at the same things we do)
• Hard to fake
• Signals intimacy – I like and know you enough to tease you
• Does not appear to decline with length of marriage (unlike sex)
• Observational studies do show that happy couples interactions are characterized by a good deal of humor and reciprocated laughter
Expressing gratitude

• Good idea to express it to partners for supportive behaviours. Expressing important to...
  – Relationship satisfaction
  – Lower perceptions of unfairness

• Good for receiver and giver
Equity Theory

- Own rewards = Partner’s rewards
  Own costs       Partner’s costs

- Equitable relationships: relationship satisfaction
- Inequitable relationships: over-benefited or under-benefited → motivated to restore equity

- Global assessments not supported
- Instead, “exchange elements”: commitment, sociability, attentiveness (Van Yperen et al., 1990)
Spending time together

• Importance of novel and arousing or ‘exciting’ activities

• Correlational support with satisfaction
Spending time together

• Experimental studies (7-min)
  – Novel & arousing activity
  – Mundane activity
  – No activity control

• Novel & arousing increase relationship quality (self-reported and observational discussions)
Novel activities

• Esther Perel (Mating in Captivity)
• Separation = anxiety; leading to desire to “merge”
• Less anxiety = closeness, trust, being “known” = bad for passion
• When do we feel most passionate:
  – “when my partner is away”
  – “when I see my partner in their element”
Positive responses to conflict

I’d agree with you but then we’d both be wrong.... tsthis.tumblr.com
Response to conflict: Growth vs. destiny

Romantic destiny theory:
• Two people are either compatible
• Conflict is a sign of incompatibility
• “A successful relationship is mostly a matter of finding a compatible partner right from the start”
• “Early troubles in the relationship signify a poor match between partners”
Response to conflict: Growth vs. destiny

Growth theory

- Relationships are challenging and will grow/develop over time
- Interested in *developing* the relationship
- “Challenges and obstacles in a relationship can make love even stronger”
- “It takes a lot of time and effort to cultivate a good relationship”
Response to Conflict

• 2 independent dimensions
• Scored high on destiny & growth:
  – 'I can tell quickly if I get along with someone, but that is just the beginning. Whether we last depends on how the relationship evolves.’’
  – 'Fate brings people together, but then it is up to them.’’
• Suggest is that belief in destiny may be more relevant to relationship onset, whereas belief in growth may be more relevant to maintenance processes
Impact of Orientation: Coping

• Contributes to how one attempts to cope with relationship events
• Belief in destiny was associated with coping strategies that reflect disengagement and restraint from maintenance attempts
• Belief in growth was generally associated with relationship-maintenance strategies
Impact of Orientation: Breaking up

• Destiny theorists seem to play an active role during the breakup; associated with taking more responsibility for ending the relationship.

• Belief in growth was slightly associated with taking less responsibility for ending the relationship.
Response to conflict:
Negative vs. positive interactions

- Love labs (Gottman)
- Video & code behaviours during discussion
Response to conflict: Negative vs. positive interactions

• Negative communication styles were more predictive of marital satisfaction level and relationship quality than displays of kindness

• Bad is stronger than good

• Ratio of positive to negative behaviours

• 5:1 divides successful from unsuccessful
Signs of Problems in the relationship
John Gottman’s 4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse

• **Criticism (instead of Complaints)** A complaint addresses only the specific action at which your partner has failed. A criticism is global (personality or character).

• **Contempt.** Contempt is composed of a set of behaviours that communicate *disgust*.

• **Defensiveness.** These behaviors convey the message, “The problem is not *me*. It’s *you*.”

• **Stonewalling.** Eventually one partner tunes out. This is the beginning of stonewalling. The stonewaller acts as if he (85% of stonewallers in marriages are husbands) couldn’t care less about what the partner is saying or doing.
4 Horsemen

• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQOgAgfDm_8
Signs of Things going well in a relationship
John Gottman’s strategies

• Repair attempts (*any* action that prevent escalation)
• Soft start ups to conflict discussions -> more likely to resolve conflict
• Remind yourself of partner’s positive qualities (not the “Enemy”)
• Solve solvable problems and avoid gridlock over perpetual problems (e.g., personality)
• Knowing each other ("love map")
Love Map Exercise (Gottman)

• Name my two closest friends.
• What was I wearing when we first met?
• Name one of my hobbies.
• What stresses am I facing right now?
• Describe in detail what I did today, or yesterday.
• What is my fondest unrealized dream?
• What is one of my greatest fears or disaster scenarios?
• What is my favorite way to spend an evening?
• What is one of my favorite ways to be soothed?
• What is my favorite getaway place?
Lasting relationships

• Lauer and Lauer (1990)
• 351 couples (married at least 15 years)
• select from 39 statements that best explained why their marriages lasted
Lasting relationships

• Most frequently endorsed reasons: **friendship and commitment**

• Friendship responses:
  – spouse is best friend; “like them”, interesting; enjoyment of shared activities; stimulating exchange of ideas

• Commitment responses:
  – importance of a strong commitment to making their marriage work; sacred; want it to succeed
Next week

• Interventions to improve wellbeing
• Empirical evidence