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Reactions to Daily Events as a Function of Familiarity With an Environment

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Abstract

Undergraduate participants provided measures of their psychological well-being and described the positive and negative events that occurred each day, once during the first and second semesters of an academic year. For four of the five measures of daily well-being, reactivity to negative events decreased from the first to second semester, whereas for four of the five measures of well-being, reactivity to positive events did not change over the year. These results suggest that familiarity with an environment moderates reactivity to negative daily events. As people become more familiar with an environment, negative events may elicit smaller decreases in well-being. In contrast, increases in well-being elicited by positive events appear to be unrelated to familiarity with the environment. More broadly, these differences suggest that the reactivity to positive and negative events reflect the operation of different processes. Copyright © 2007 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Key words: multilevel analysis; within-person variability; daily events

INTRODUCTION

Entering a new environment is often a dual-edged sword. On the one hand, new situations can hold the promise of positive change and present new rewards, whereas on the other hand, new situations can present new difficulties and new sources or types of stress. Moreover, it appears that in the modern age, change is increasingly the norm, be it moving from country to country, school to school, or organisation to organisation.

Traditionally, how people adapt to new environments has been studied from a trait or between-person perspective. For example, research about how immigrants adapt to a new society or culture frequently focuses on between-person differences in measures such as acculturation and depression (e.g. Abouguendia & Noels, 2001). At a similar level of analysis, research about organisational socialisation tends to focus on between-person measures such as goals or commitment (e.g. Maier & Brunstein, 2001). This is also the focus even when contextual variables are being examined such as organisational (school)

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climate (e.g. Brand, Felner, Shim, Seitsinger, & Dumas, 2002). Admittedly, many studies of adaptation to new environments feature within-person analyses that focus on changes across time, and in some sense, such research focuses on the within-person level. Nevertheless, the primary measures of these studies are defined or exist at the person-level.

The present study was intended to complement this literature by conceptualising adaptation in terms of measures that exist only at the within-person level. It examined how relationships between daily events and daily well-being changed as people spent more time in a new environment. The focus was not on changes in well-being *per se*, as has been the case with much previous research; rather, the focus was on changes in relationships between external, situational factors and well-being.

Relationships between daily events and psychological well-being have been studied for over 25 years. Broadly speaking, this research has found that at the within-person level there are negative relationships between well-being and negative events such as conflict (e.g. Suls, Martin, & David, 1998) and positive relationships between well-being and positive events (e.g. Gable, Reis, & Elliot, 2000). Moreover, this research has found such relationships across a range of different measures of well-being (e.g. Nezlek, 2005).

Despite the volume of research, relatively little attention has been paid to how such relationships might change across time. More specifically, no research has conceptualised adaptation to a new environment in terms of changes in such within-person relationships. The present study examined such changes within the context of adapting to a new environment and focused on two types of events, positive and negative, and on state (daily) measures of psychological well-being. Twice during an academic year, participants provided daily reports of their psychological well-being and descriptions of the positive and negative events that occurred each day. The analyses examined how within-person relationships between daily well-being and daily events changed across time, with the underlying assumption that these relationships would weaken across time, particularly for relationships between well-being and negative events.

Daily well-being was defined in terms of constructs with an emphasis on depressogenic adjustment. Although depression has an important affective component, considerable research and theory suggest that depression involves more cognitively focused components. These include optimism about the future (e.g. Beck, 1967), perceptions of control over outcomes (e.g. Alloy, Kelly, Mineka, & Clements, 1990) and the ability to detect cause and effect in one's life (e.g. Weary & Edwards, 1994).

Well-being was defined in this way to provide a complement to existing research on daily well-being in which well-being has been defined primarily in affective terms, often in terms of positive and negative affect (PA and NA), following Watson and Tellegen (1985). Although studies defining well-being in terms of PA and NA have been informative, well-being is more than affect, and the importance of this distinction was underscored by Nezlek (2005), who presented analyses of data from seven studies of daily well-being and daily events involving over 1000 participants. He found that daily measures of well-being that were not affectively focused (including those collected in the present study) covaried with daily events above and beyond the covariation between events and measures of the affective circumplex.

To measure the breadth of constructs that research has suggested reflect depressogenic adjustment, five constructs that have been found to covary with depression at the trait level served as the basis for the daily measures of depressogenic adjustment in the present study. These were: Beck's Cognitive Triad (Beck, 1967), control over the outcomes of one's behaviour (Deci & Ryan, 1985), the ability to detect cause and effect in one's world

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(Weary, Jordan, & Hill, 1985), self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965) and anxiety. A more detailed rationale for and description of these measures can be found in Nezlek and Gable (2001).

The primary hypothesis guiding the study was that people's reactivity to negative events (i.e. the strength of the relationships between negative events and well-being) would decrease over time. This hypothesised decrease was presumed to reflect various processes. As people spend more time in an environment, their ability to cope with negative events should increase and the decline in daily adjustment accompanying negative events should decrease. This does not necessarily mean that they will experience fewer negative events over time or that the negative events that occur will be less important, although such changes could occur. Rather, as people spend time in an environment, they can learn about that environment (including the availability of resources), and they can gain experience dealing with the negative events that tend to occur within it.

Moreover, as people spend time in a new environment, their daily lives tend to stabilise. In a study of the stability of the social interactions of first year college students, Nezlek (1993) found that social interactions and social networks tended to stabilise over the course of the year. During the second semester, participants' cliques of close friends changed less than they did during the first semester, and the rewards people derived from interaction changed less during the second semester than they did during the first semester. More predictable stable social lives should provide a more secure context within which people can react to and cope with negative events.

A similar process is also suggested by Stewart's (1982) research on adaptation to new environments. Stewart suggested that as people spend more time in a particular environment they develop a stable 'emotional stance' toward the environment, a stability that includes cross-situational stability. Reactivity to daily events, sometimes referred to as lability (e.g. Butler, Hokanson, & Flynn, 1994) can be considered a type of cross-situational stability, with greater reactivity representing lessened stability. Assuming this, the greater stability Stewart discussed should be reflected in diminished reactivity to events.

No hypotheses about changes in reactivity to positive events were formulated in part because of differing theoretical accounts of reactivity to positive events. Some researchers who discuss lability in terms of theories of depression and self-esteem discuss reactivity to positive and negative events as having a common source, a weak or vulnerable self of sense, and have empirical support for this position (e.g. Butler et al., 1994; Nezlek & Gable, 2001). In contrast, researchers working within models of personality in which neuroticism and extraversion are critical constructs emphasise the distinction between relationships among negative affect, negative events and neuroticism, and relationships among positive affect, positive events and extraversion. They too, have empirical support for aspects of this position (e.g. David, Green, Martin, & Suls, 1997). Although research on reactivity to positive events is growing, relative to research and theory about reactivity to negative events, not enough is known about reactivity to positive events to form hypotheses about how such reactivity might change as people acclimate to a new environment.

METHOD

Participants

Participants were a subsample of participants who provided data for a study described in Nezlek and Gable (2001). Of the 123 participants who provided data (during a fall

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semester) for the Nezlek and Gable study, 40, of whom 30 were women, agreed to provide data the following spring semester. Given this self-selection, it was important to know if participants who provided data in the spring differed from those who did not. Reports of daily adjustment and daily events collected in the fall were analysed to see if these two groups differed; they did not. There were no significant differences between the two groups on any measure of adjustment or events. Details of these analyses are available from the author. Furthermore, only 10 participants were upperclassmen, making it impossible to compare (with any certainty) participants for whom the environment was totally new (freshmen) with participants for whom the environment was relatively new (upperclassmen).

Measures

Five measures of adjustment: self-esteem, depressive thinking, anxiety, causal uncertainty and perceived control, were collected each day. Daily self-esteem was measured using the 10 items on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE; Rosenberg, 1965) reworded to refer to how participants felt about themselves that day, for example 'Today, I was satisfied with myself'. Daily measures of depressive thinking consisted of three items representing the essential elements of Beck's cognitive triad theory of depression (Beck, 1967), negative views of self, life in general and the future, for example 'How optimistic are you about how your life (in general) will be tomorrow?' Daily anxiety was measured by asking participants to rate how 'on edge', 'uneasy' and 'nervous' they felt each day. Daily causal uncertainty was measured using four questions based on items from the Causal Uncertainty Scale (CUS; Weary & Edwards, 1994). Participants indicated their agreement with the item 'I did not understand why things happened the way they did' in reference to social and achievement failures and successes. Daily perceived control was measured using four items based on the General Causality Orientation Scale (GCOS; Deci & Ryan, 1985), for example '... to what extent did you feel that you had a choice about what you did and to what extent did things happen the way you wanted them to happen?' Two items referred to social domains and two to achievement domains. The self-esteem response scale had 9-points, the depressive thinking, anxiety and perceived control questions had 7-point scales, and daily causal uncertainty used a 6-point scale. Daily measures were operationalised as the mean response for scale items. Moreover, analyses presented in Nezlek and Gable (2001) demonstrated that these daily measures are valid and reliable.

Daily events were measured using a subset of items from the Daily Events Survey (DES; Butler et al., 1994). In the present study, 22 of the 40 events from the DES were measured, 12 positive and 10 negative, with equal numbers of social and achievement events. Examples of items are: 'Had plans fall through to spend time with someone special', and 'Did well on a school or work task (e.g. test, assignment, job duty)'. In addition to the items from the DES, four items, each representing a combination of positive-negative and social-achievement, were created to measure other events that may have occurred. Each day, participants rated each event using the following scale: 0 = did not occur, 1 = occurred and not important, 2 = occurred and somewhat important, 3 = occurred and pretty important, 4 = occurred and extremely important. For each day, ratings of events were averaged to create positive and negative

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composite scores.[1] A more detailed discussion of all the daily measures can be found in Nezlek and Gable (2001).

Procedure

A similar procedure was used for both phases of the study. At the beginning of each phase, participants came to a laboratory and received instructions and a computer disk containing the data collection programmes. They were told that they would be using a computer to answer a series of questions every day for 3 weeks and to complete questionnaires on the first and last days of the study. Data collection programmes were written using the Micro-Analytic Experimental Laboratory software package (Schneider, 1988), and participants were able to run these programmes and provide data using any IBM-compatible personal computer. The programmes included standard instructions for the measures with modifications for daily administration. Participants were told to run the programme every day for 3 weeks. A programme run on the last day of the study administered the study evaluation questionnaires.

Members of the research team maintained regular contact with participants via electronic mail. Participants were told to contact the experimenter should any problems arise such as disk failure, computer viruses, etc. When problems of this type occurred, participants were given replacement disks within 24 hours and continued the study. At the end of each phase of the study, participants answered questions about their participation, and their responses suggested that participating in the study had not changed their daily routine. Participants provided a total of 777 days of data for the fall semester and 812 days for the spring semester, an average of 19.4 and 20.3 days, respectively.

RESULTS

The present data comprised what is referred to as a multilevel data structure in that observations at one level of analysis (days) were nested within another level of analysis (semesters) which were then nested within people. Accordingly, the data were analysed with a series of multilevel random coefficient models using the programme HLM (Raudenbush, Bryk, & Congdon, 2000). Multilevel random coefficient modelling (MRCM) was chosen over ordinary-least-squares methods such as using within-person correlations to measure within-person relationships because MRCM provides better parameter estimates than OLS methods. For a discussion of using multilevel random coefficient models to analyse studies of reactivity to daily events, see Nezlek (2001).

Within the general terminology of multilevel modelling, the primary analyses were three-level models, days nested within semesters which were then nested within-persons. For each person for each semester, coefficients were estimated representing day-level relationships between well-being and daily events. In the multilevel modelling literature, such coefficients are referred to as slopes to distinguish them from intercepts. These three-level models relied on a set of contrast-coded variables to estimate changes across the

[1]Positive and negative frequency scores, based on the number of events occurring each day, were also created. Analyses using composite mean scores were presented because there was less heterogeneity of variance for composite scores than for frequency counts, and because composite scores incorporate differences in the importance of events, whereas frequency counts assume all events are equally important. Nevertheless, the results of analyses using frequency counts were similar to the results presented in this article.

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semesters, and these models are described below. Each measure of daily well-being was analysed separately.

The primary hypotheses were tested using a level-1 model describing day-level relationships between well-being and events. In these models, daily well-being was modelled as a function of daily positive and daily negative event scores. Event scores were group mean centred to eliminate the influence on parameter estimates of individual and semester differences in event scores.

In the model presented below, y_{ijk} is a measure of daily well-being on day i during semester j for person k, π_{0jk} is a random coefficient representing the intercept for person k during semester j, π_{1jk}(PosEvent) is a random coefficient (a slope) representing the relationship between a measure of well-being and daily positive events for person k during semester j, and similarly, π_{2jk}(NegEvent) is a random coefficient (a slope) representing the relationship between a measure of well-being and daily negative events for person k during semester j. The error associated with each measure is represented by e_{ijk}, and the variance of e_{ijk} constitutes the day level random error variance. The basic day level (level-1) model was:

$$y_{ijk} = \pi_{0ijk} + \pi_{1ijk}(\text{PosEvent}) + \pi_{2ijk}(\text{NegEvent}) + e_{ijk}$$

Coefficients estimated using this model were then analysed at the semester-level, level-2 for present purposes. For each person, semester-level effects were estimated for positive and negative event slopes (i.e. the relationships between well-being and events), and individual differences in semester-level effects were then analysed at level-3, the person-level.

Changes across semesters in the relationships between daily events and daily well-being were initially examined using the following level-2 (semester-level) model:

$$\begin{aligned}
&\text{Intercept}: \quad \pi_{0jk} = \beta_{00k} + \beta_{01k}(\text{FallSprg}) + r_{0jk}\\
&\text{PosEvent}: \quad \pi_{1jk} = \beta_{10k} + \beta_{11k}(\text{FallSprg})\\
&\text{NegEvent}: \quad \pi_{2jk} = \beta_{20k} + \beta_{21k}(\text{FallSprg})
\end{aligned}$$

In these models, the coefficients representing day-level phenomena (the intercept and the two slopes, π_{0jk}, π_{1jk} and π_{2jk}, respectively) were modelled as a function of a contrast-coded variable, FallSprg, coded 1 for fall and −1 for spring. For each person, the difference between the intercepts and slopes for the fall and spring semesters was estimated. In these models, the slopes from level-1 were modelled as fixed. This was done for two reasons. For some analyses, HLM could not estimate a starting model if the level-1 slopes were modelled as random, and for others, the random variance was not significant. See Nezlek (2001) for a discussion of rationales for modelling parameters as random or fixed.

The critical level of analysis for this study was the person-level, and individual differences were analysed at level-3, the person-level. The initial person-level models were:

$$\begin{aligned}
&\text{Intercept intercept}: \quad \beta_{00k} = \gamma_{000} + u_{00k}\\
&\text{Intercept FallSprg}: \quad \beta_{01k} = \gamma_{010} + u_{10k}\\
&\text{PosEvent intercept}: \quad \beta_{10k} = \gamma_{100} + u_{10k}\\
&\text{PosEvent FallSprg}: \quad \beta_{11k} = \gamma_{110} + u_{11k}\\
&\text{NegEvent intercept}: \quad \beta_{20k} = \gamma_{200} + u_{20k}\\
&\text{NegEvent FallSprg}: \quad \beta_{21k} = \gamma_{210} + u_{21k}
\end{aligned}$$

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In these models, the γ_{pq0} coefficients represented the mean of the six coefficients estimated in the semester-level models. There were coefficients for the intercept and the semester contrast effect for the intercept and for both of the event slopes. The hypothesis of the study concerned the γ_{110} and γ_{210} coefficients representing the fall-spring contrast for positive and negative event slopes, respectively. A significant FallSprg effect in an equation indicated a significant difference between fall and spring in the strength of the relationships between well-being and events. The error associated with each effect is represented by u_{pqk}, and the variance of u_{pqk} constitutes the person-level random error variance of that effect.

As described above, all effects were initially modelled as random at the semester-level. Effects were modelled as fixed only when the random variance associated with an effect was not significant or when the deletion of a random error component was associated with a non-significant change in the deviance statistic (a measure of the goodness of fit of a model). These tests are described in Bryk and Raudenbush (1992, pp. 54–56), and their application to studies of daily events is discussed in Nezlek (2001). In all but one analysis (the negative event slope for daily causal uncertainty which was modelled as random), all FallSprg effects were modelled as fixed, that is no random error term was estimated. Note that this procedure left all intercepts as random.

Before examining the slopes that represented reactions to events, differences in means across the two semesters were examined. These analyses found no significant (or near significant) changes across the semester for any measure of well-being and for mean daily negative events. There was a statistically reliable decrease in positive event scores ($p < 0.01$), although the absolute magnitude of this effect (1.19–1.07) was small. Moreover, because the event scores were entered group mean centred, such differences did not contribute to parameter estimates (Nezlek, 2001). Descriptive statistics for daily well-being and event scores are presented in Table 1.

In addition to the fact that the FallSprg effect was not significant for any measure of well-being, none of the random error terms associated with any of the FallSprg effects for the intercepts of the intercepts (i.e. mean daily well-being) was significant (or approached conventional levels of significance). Given the lack of significance of the fixed and random effects for the FallSprg contrast for the intercepts of daily well-being, and because these contrasts did not test any hypotheses, in the interests of parsimony, the FallSprg contrast for the intercept of daily well-being was eliminated from the final models.

The results of these analyses supported the hypothesis that reactivity to negative events would decrease from the fall to the spring. For all measures of well-being except causal uncertainty, the FallSprg effect (representing the contrast between fall and spring slopes)

Table 1. Descriptive statistics: means and variances

	Means		Variances		
	Fall	Spring	Day	Semester	Person
Self-esteem	7.45	7.36	0.71	0.37	1.08
Anxiety	3.76	3.56	1.47	0.52	1.57
Triad	5.23	5.14	0.81	0.29	0.82
Causal uncertainty	2.30	2.32	0.59	0.40	0.70
Control	4.82	4.86	0.77	0.42	0.65
Positive events	1.19	1.07	0.48	0.18	0.44
Negative events	0.52	0.49	0.36	0.15	0.36

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Table 2. Relationships between well-being and daily events for each semester

	Self-esteem	Anxiety	Triad	Causal	Control
Negative events					
Fall	−0.76	1.58	−0.87	0.41	−0.79
Spring	−0.50	1.00	−0.53	0.24	−0.48
t-ratio	2.83	2.74	3.30	1.07	2.74
p-level	0.01	0.01	0.01	n.s.	0.01
Positive events					
Fall	0.25	0.00	0.52	0.01	0.33
Spring	0.33	−0.22	0.64	−0.18	0.26
t-ratio	1.24	1.41	1.50	3.18	0.86
p-level	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	0.01	n.s.

for negative events was positive and significant (all $ps < 0.01$), indicating that fall slopes were larger than spring slopes. In other words, relationships between well-being and negative events were stronger in the fall than they were in the spring. Estimated negative event slopes representing these relationships for the fall and spring are presented in Table 2.

Interpreting the slopes is relatively straightforward. HLM estimates only *unstandardised* coefficients, and so each slope represents the expected change in the dependent measure for a 1.0 U increase in the corresponding predictor (type of event in this case). For example, the estimated mean slope between self-esteem and negative events in the fall was −0.76, whereas it was −0.50 in the spring. This means that in the fall, for every 1.0 increase in negative event scores, self-esteem decreased 0.76, whereas in the spring for every 1.0 increase in negative event scores, self-esteem decreased only 0.50.

In contrast, in the analyses of positive event slopes, for all measures of well-being except causal uncertainty, the FallSprg effect was not significant, indicating that positive event slopes did not vary across the two semesters. In other words, with the exception of causal uncertainty, relationships between well-being and positive events did not differ across the two semesters. Estimated slopes for the fall and spring are also presented in Table 2. For causal uncertainty, the FallSprg effect was significant, and an inspection of the means in Table 2 indicates that the spring slope was greater (more negative) than the fall slope. Causal uncertainty did not vary as a function of positive events in the fall, but in the spring, it was lower on days when positive event scores were higher.

Although the significance of mean (across semester) event slopes was not of interest, given the general interest in such relationships, the results of tests of these effects (the intercepts in the event slope equations) will be summarised. All positive and negative event slopes were significant at $p < 0.01$, except the positive event slope for causal uncertainty, which was significant at 0.05, and the positive event slope for anxiety, which was not significant. These results are consistent with those reported by Nezlek and Gable (2001).

DISCUSSION

As expected, people were less reactive to negative events over the course of the academic year. In the fall semester, relationships between daily psychological well-being and daily negative events were stronger than they were in the spring. In contrast, reactivity to positive

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events changed very little across the academic year. With one exception, relationships between daily psychological well-being and daily positive events were the same in the fall and spring. It is important to note that although reactivity to negative events changed, the number and importance of negative events did not change, and mean daily well-being did not change.

These differences in the changes in reactivity to positive and negative events suggest that the two types of reactivity reflect the operation of different processes. Previous research (e.g. Nezlek, 1993; Stewart, 1982) has found that people's lives tend to stabilise as they spend time in an environment. Assuming that participants' lives stabilised over the course of the year suggests that greater stability in people's lives is associated with decreased reactivity to negative events but not to decreased reactivity to positive events. Underlying this difference may be the fact that greater stability, particularly in terms of the 'emotional stance' construct described by Stewart (1982), may reflect increased ability to cope with negative events. Moreover, such improved coping would seem to be unrelated to reactivity to positive events. Although positive events may present challenges, such challenges are probably of a qualitatively different nature than the challenges presented by negative events, a supposition consistent with research demonstrating differences in reactions to daily positive and negative events.

The ability to cope with negative events can be considered from both an intra- and interpersonal perspective. Intrapersonally, over time, people may acquire skills that allow them to cope more effectively with the negative events that are likely to occur in a particular environment. For example, they may have a clearer idea of what to say to specific people following an argument. Moreover, as people spend more time in an environment, they may develop clearer and more accurate expectations about the problems they will experience, and considerable research suggests that more predictable stressors are less stressful.

Interpersonally, coping with negative events can be considered in terms of social support. For example, Nezlek and Allen (2006) found that reactivity to negative events was negatively related to social support from peers. People with more support reacted less strongly to negative events, that is they were better able to cope with the problems they experienced. Nezlek and Allen did not find any relationships between social support and reactions to positive events. Within the present context, people's social support systems may become more effective over time. For example, over time, people may have a better idea from whom they can receive support for specific types of problems, and people may also develop a larger support network from whom they can obtain support. Although these suppositions may be reasonable, demonstrating that changes in reactivity are related to changes in coping skills and or changes in social support will require research in which such constructs are measured explicitly.

The supposition that different processes underlie reactivity to positive and negative events is also consistent with research on individual differences in reactivity to events reported by Gable et al. (2000). They found that reactivity to negative events was related to individual differences in the sensitivity of people's behavioural inhibition system (BIS, Gray, 1987), whereas reactivity to positive events was related to individual differences in the sensitivity of people's behavioural approach systems (BAS). These results are consistent with the model they propose in which positive events (and other positive aspects of life) are presumed to reflect the operation of an appetitive or approach system, whereas negative events (and other negative aspects of life) are presumed to reflect the operation of an aversive or avoidance system. Within the present context, adaptation to a new

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environment may be reflected in decreased sensitivity to avoidance motives or systems. In contrast, adaptation may be unrelated to approach motives or systems.

An important focus of research on daily events has been relationships between mood and daily events, and so it is important to consider the implications of the present results for this body of research. On the one hand, it would seem that the decreased reactivity to negative events over time found for the non-affective measures in the present study would also characterise affective reactivity to negative events. This was clearly the case for anxiety, an affective measure. Nevertheless, some research suggests that although daily affective and non-affective states are related, affective and non-affective states are related to daily events independently of each other (e.g. Nezlek & Plesko, 2003; Nezlek, 2005). Future research will need to examine changes in different types of affective reactivity specifically.

One of the enduring questions in studies of reactivity to daily events is that of causality. Most studies of daily events assume that events lead to changes in internal states, a logical extension of the traditional stimulus–response perspective. It is possible, however, that people's internal states influence the events they experience. Such causal relationships have been examined by comparing lagged relationships between measures taken on adjacent days. Such analyses tend to support a causal sequence from events to states. For example, Bolger and Zuckerman (1995) found that distress experienced on a particular day was related to the conflict experienced on a previous day. Similarly, Gable et al. (2000) and Nezlek and Gable (2001) found that events occurring on a previous day were related to present day states, whereas previous day states were not related to present day events. These results suggest that characterising relationships between states and events as reactivity was valid, although more definitive answers to such questions are needed.

Of course, the present study is not without its limitations. Participants were students, and although the changes they experienced are meaningful, it cannot be assumed that the present relationships would occur for different types of people adapting to a different environment. Also, the number of participants made it difficult to examine individual differences in the changes across the semesters. Future research needs to be conducted that provides a better basis for such analyses.

Nevertheless, the present study raises important questions about how people adapt to new environments. If the presumed underlying mechanisms are true, similar changes might be found for other types of people adapting to other environments such as new employees at a job. More broadly, the present results suggest that reactivity to negative and positive events reflect different processes, processes that are in some way related to how people adapt to a new environment. Understanding such issues requires research that takes into account people's familiarity with their surroundings.

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