A MULTICOMPONENT CONCEPTUALIZATION OF AUTHENTICITY: THEORY AND RESEARCH

Michael H. Kernis
Brian M. Goldman

> And if by chance I wake at night and I ask you who I am, oh take me to the slaughterhouse I will wait there with the lamb.
>
> —Leonard Cohen

> Whatever satisfies the soul is truth.
>
> —Walt Whitman

> I prefer to be true to myself, even at the hazard of incurring the ridicule of others, rather than to be false, and to incur my own abhorrence.
>
> —Frederick Douglass

In this chapter, we present research and theory pertaining to our multicomponent perspective on authentic functioning. We begin with a historical account of various philosophical perspectives on authentic functioning and briefly review several past and contemporary psychological perspectives on authenticity. We then define and discuss our multicomponent conceptualization of authenticity and describe each of its components and their relationships to other constructs in the psychology literature. Next, we present an individual differences measure we have developed to assess dispositional authenticity and each of its components, and we report findings attesting to the adequacy of its psychometric properties. In addition, we present findings from a variety of studies we have conducted to examine how authenticity relates to diverse aspects of healthy psychological and interpersonal functioning. These studies pertain to a wide range of phenomena, including the following: verbal defensiveness, mindfulness, coping styles, self-concept structure, social-role

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functioning, goal pursuits, general well-being, romantic relationships, parenting styles, and self-esteem. Following this, we discuss potential downsides or costs for authentic functioning and describe some future directions for research on authenticity.

I. A Historical Overview of Authenticity

Poets, painters, clergy, scholars, philosophers, and scientists have long sought to define who one "really" is. Descriptions of authentic functioning are found among a variety of works and disciplines across the arts and sciences. However, these descriptions are often vague, relegated to peripheral segments of larger works, and lack continuity in their lineage or origin. At times, descriptions of authenticity seem to be at the "limits of language," being loosely described in such diverse topics as ethics, well-being, consciousness, subjectivity, self-processes, and social or relational contexts, or characterized in terms of its opposite (i.e., inauthenticity), with references to inauthentic living, false-self behaviors, or self-deception.

Despite such limitations, contemporary psychological views of authenticity owe a great debt to the works of philosophy. Within the field of philosophy, authenticity is loosely set within topics, such as *metaphysics* or *ontology*, firmly entrenched in particular movements, such as *existentialism* or *phenomenology*, and localized to specific authors like *Sartre* or *Heidegger*. In the following section, we identify and discuss some of the historical ideas and perspectives within philosophy that contribute to the development of the concept of psychological authenticity. This historical summary points to a portrayal of authenticity as involving a variety of themes. Most notably, authentic functioning is characterized in terms of people's (1) self-understanding, (2) openness to objectively recognizing their ontological realities (e.g., evaluating their desirable and undesirable self-aspects), (3) actions, and (4) orientation towards interpersonal relationships.

Portrayals of authentic functioning date back to the Ancient Greek philosophers. Perhaps, the earliest account dates back to Socrates' stance that the "unexamined" life is not worth living. While self-inquiry is paramount for Socrates, in his work *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle emphasized the importance of actions. Aristotle viewed ethics in terms of people's pursuit of the "higher good." Specifically, he proposed that the highest good is "activity of the soul in accordance with the best and most complete virtue in a complete life" (Hutchinson, 1995). Such pursuits are intimately tied with people's well-being (Waterman, 1993). From this view, well-being (i.e., "eudaimonia") is attained through self-realization, that is, by performing activities that reflect

one's true calling. Such activities do not have happiness or pleasure as their desired end; instead, pleasure is a consequence of a life in which one successfully manages to perform these activities well. This view seems akin to existential philosophers like Nietzsche and Kierkegaard (May, 1960, p. 22), who described man as "the organism who makes certain values—prestige, power, tenderness, love—more important than pleasure and even more important than survival itself." The similarity among these perspectives, and many of the subsequent perspectives discussed in this section, is the portrayal of people in a manner that transcends measuring success primarily via hedonic qualities (e.g., happiness), or even basic evolutionary success (e.g., survival). What emerges in its place is a broad depiction of people as being rich in complexity, actively and intentionally pursuing a life in accord with their deepest potentials.

Aristotle also discussed how people's pursuit of the higher good involves different virtues (e.g., continence, pleasure, friendship, and theoretical wisdom). Whereas the highest good refers to the end that people pursue for its sake only, every other good is pursued for the sake of the highest good (Hutchinson, 1995). As such, the described relationship between pursuit of the good and highest good seems to underscore a sense of unity or integration among people's pursuits—a perspective that contemporary self-theorists would suggest reflects *self-organization* (e.g., Donahue, Robins, Roberts, & John, 1993; Showers & Ziegler-Hill, 2003), *integrated self-regulation* (e.g., Deci & Ryan, 2000), or *self-concordance* (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999). Aristotle's contribution to conceptualizing authenticity is in having paved a connection between people's self-knowledge and behavioral self-regulation. In his view, knowledge of the highest good significantly affects peoples' lives because it allows them to organize their lives well "like an archer with a target to aim at" (Irwin, 2003). Thus, from this perspective, authentic functioning is the result of sustained activity in concert with a deeply informed sense of purpose.

Renee Descartes' *Meditations* offers a variety of concepts and insights relevant to conceptualizing authenticity. Descartes' perspective demonstrated a radical departure from his predecessors. According to Groscholz (2003), prior to Descartes, philosophers asked: *What must the world be like for it to be intelligible?* Following Descartes, they asked: *What must the mind be like for the world to be intelligible to it?* This shift in focus demonstrates the centrality of cognitive processes in directing and interpreting experience. While such a view clearly advances the role of psychological functioning in experience, perhaps Descartes' greatest contribution to conceptualizing authenticity lies in his emphasis on *subjectivity* in mental processes.

Descartes' proclamation "*I think*, therefore *I am*" suggests that what "I am" is a thing that thinks; a thing that doubts, understands, affirms, denies, is willing, unwilling, imagines, and has sensory perceptions. In contrast to

the epistemological precedent established by Aristotle, Descartes rejected the notion that all knowledge originates in sense perception and sense perception is our conduit to external things (Grosholz, 2003). In lieu of Aristotelian epistemology, Descartes proposed that if one can know objects, one must firstly learn to think them, or reason upon them. Subsequently, with mistrust, one may rely on sensory perceptions, abstracting from them and correcting them, in light of the constructions of reason (Grosholz, 2003).

Descartes demonstrates the importance of subjectivity in the case of a piece of wax just taken from a honeycomb. Presumably, the wax may be conceived of as an object of sense perception—retaining some of the scent of the flowers from which it was gathered. However, the piece of wax is not merely an object sensed by sensory perceptions, but rather it is also always *thought*, that is, submitted to being understood or reasoned upon (Grosholz, 2003). Whereas the qualities of the wax delivered by sense perception depend on sensory information, what one can think about the piece of wax, as it melts, or diminishes in its smell, is what remains constant under all transformations. Thus, individuals may doubt sensory perceptions about objects (since sense perception is just a modality of awareness), but they cannot doubt that they are aware of their perceptions of the objects (Grosholz, 2003). From this perspective, what validates the ontological reality of the object (e.g., what really constitutes the wax) is the quantifiable mental scrutiny of it. That is, the certainty that individuals' place on known objects is not caused by the objects' objective reality; rather, certainty of the object results from a formal subjective process of consciousness, constructed by reason. Knowledge of an object is not a function of the contents of an object, but of the contents of our consciousness and mental activities regarding the object. As such, by relying on the formal process of mentally scrutinizing their consciousness, people may attain clarity and distinctiveness in their idea of things, and thereby grasp their very *essence* (Grosholz, 2003).

What then, if the object of one's attention is one's "self"? Philosophers like Descartes, Kant, and Dewey struggled with the role of self-consciousness in people's emotion, will, and thinking (Hoyle, Kernis, Leary, & Baldwin, 1999). However, conscious attention that regarded the falseness of others' behaviors seems to have emerged within a particular cultural context. For instance, the cultural historian Burckhardt (Winter & Barenbaum, 1999) concluded that people of the middle ages were conscious of themselves only as a member of a general category, for example, race, party, family, or corporation. Subsequent to the Renaissance, people construed themselves as individuals with personal attributes. Such societal changes appear to have corresponded with people's specific concerns in perceiving others' authentic

functioning. Harter (1999) describes this as the historical emergence of interest in *false-self behavior*.

According to Baumeister (1987), people of the 16th century became interested in distinguishing between others' private concealment from that which was observable in them. Similarly, Trilling (1971) discusses themes of deception and pretense found among English politics, philosophy, and literature (e.g., Shakespeare). Concerns about self-concealment were, in Baumeister's (1987) view, initially limited to perceptions of others—were people hiding their true-selves from others? Baumeister (1987) notes that with the arrival of Puritanism so too emerged concerns over whether individuals were deceiving themselves. Determining whether one's own actions were true or false depended on a consideration of one's standing on characteristics deemed necessary for one to possess in order to enter into heaven (i.e., piety, faith, and virtue). Thus, authentic functioning from this perspective (i.e., being one's true-self) involves regulating one's actions to be in accord with religious dictates.

Historical perspectives on false-self behaviors demonstrate the vital role that cultural contexts play in people's perceptions of their own and others' authenticity. In many respects, false-self behaviors represent the lower end of an authenticity continuum (i.e., the relative absence of authentic action or experience). Contemporary interest in false-self behaviors is evident in such varied topics as self-monitoring (Snyder, 1987), impression management and strategic self-presentations (Goffman, 1959; Leary, 1995; Schlenker, 1980), and voice (Gilligan, 1982; Harter, Waters, & Whitesell, 1997). In terms of conceptualizing authenticity, the notion of false-self behaviors reflects the continual tension between the person and the social structure—the interface of personal inclinations and social obligations that form the stage on which authenticity is portrayed.

Many of the works from middle-age philosophers were consistent with the Puritanical interpretation of authenticity by equating falsehood with non-conformity to religious prescriptions. In contrast, philosophy from the Enlightenment and onward often challenged the premise that authentic functioning occurs through acting in accordance with prescribed religious doctrines, or any learned social conventions. For instance, philosophers like Hobbes and Hume discussed morality and the structure of social contexts as central features of ontological concerns.

Hume asserted that the concept of oneself is one that people derive through their social interactions with others—a position championed by *symbolic interactionists* (Cooley, 1902; Meade, 1934) and advocated by current psychological theorists who emphasize the *reflected self* (e.g., Tice & Wallace, 2003). Thus, Hume asserted that morality and authenticity are

best understood through the relationships that connect individuals to others. Specifically, Hume described morality in terms of how people judge ''virtues''—behavior that produces pleasure or reduces pain for the actor or for others (Wilson, 2003). Whereas ''artificial'' virtues are those that depend on social conventions, and that people evaluate for its social prudence, ''natural'' virtues reflect behaviors people would perform even if there were no need for social conventions to regulate their occurrence (Wilson, 2003). Thus, in contrast to the implicit conformity found in artificial virtue pursuits, natural virtues, similar to Aristotle's notion of the pursuit of the higher good, are actions taken for their own sake. Furthermore, Hume describes such actions as emanating from relational concerns that promote social well-being, and thus, by extension promote individuals' personal well-being. Thus, the distinction between artificial and natural virtues provides an important basis for further differentiating authentic functioning in terms of people's motives, as opposed to merely actions taken in tandem with prescribed social norms. Moreover, Hume's views provide an important historical basis for considering interpersonal concerns as central to authentic functioning.

With the onset of developments in existential philosophy around the 19th century, metaphysical critiques often equated conformity to religious conventions with inauthentic functioning. As a precursor to the Existential movement, Kierkegaard asserted that authentic functioning reflects subjectivity in choices that involve people's ''essential knowing''—knowledge that concerns the deepest meanings of their existence. Objective certainty of essential knowledge is neither final nor complete, and thus, its truth is always an approximation (Westphal, 2003). Kierkegaard also observed that cultural institutions tend to produce pseudo-individuals (i.e., stereotyped members of ''the crowd''). Whereas ''the crowd is untruth,'' Kierkegaard states, ''truth is subjectivity'' (Kierkegaard, 2004). In response to objective uncertainty and institutionalized identity production, individuals must take responsibility for their existential choices (e.g., their choices regarding who they will be) and become who they are beyond culturally imposed identities (McDonald, 2005).

In becoming their *self*, individual's existential anxiety is aroused. That is, people experience ambivalence regarding how to be, experiencing joy and excitement for their freedom, yet dread for self-repudiation and the responsibility for choosing how to be. Existential anxiety reflects a form of self-alienation or as Kierkegaard (2004, p. 26) put it, ''there is an interiority that is incommensurable with exteriority.'' Through a process of becoming their own self, individuals pass through the stage of self-alienation, and subsequently rely on their subjective faith to energize and organize their chosen actions toward their absolute end/goal (e.g., their essential purpose).

For Kierkegaard, *faith* is not rooted in the clarity of people's knowledge (e.g., "How certain is my knowledge?"), but rather in the embracing of their paradoxes in spite of their absurdities (e.g., "How deep is my commitment to what I fallibly take to be true?"). Faith signifies a particular cognitive stance (e.g., recognition of the absurd) that involves a radical transformation in one's life (Westphal, 2003). The challenge of this transformation occurs in a "process of highest inwardness"—whereby people accept their faith as normative and orient their actions toward becoming their "innermost" selves. From this perspective, authentic functioning is not attainable via learning and conforming to norms derived from external dogmatic beliefs (be they religious, or otherwise). Rather, authentic functioning occurs when individuals choose to be in accordance with their absolute end/goal.

Personally, for Kierkegaard, existence emerges as a philosophical problem to embrace the paradoxical presence of God, by smuggling "Christianity out of the system of Christendom." A generation later, Neitzsche's "philosophy of the future" sought to deconstruct the interpretations and evaluations implicit in cultural authorities (including the prior teachings of philosophy itself). According to Neitzsche, absolutisms in social categories, such as "good and evil," needed to be reinterpreted and revalued (e.g., "beyond good and evil"). By abandoning any, and all culturally constructed absolutes, nihilism emerges—the recognition that life has no intrinsic meaning. In light of this recognition, Nietzsche proposed that some people would fall victim to despair. Alternatively, Halling and Carroll (1999, p.97) note Nietzsche's proposal of the emergence of a new person—the *Ubermensch* ("Overman"), a "creator of authentic values." The *Ubermensch* represents a particular mode of existence, found in a person who goes beyond a mere nihilistic devaluation of all prevailing values, to make possible a "revaluation of values" (Schacht, 2003). Thus, by people "naturalizing" their self understanding to fit within a reinterpreted sensible context of their constitution, resources, and circumstances, people realize their life-affirming potential. Schacht (2003, p. 412) describes this state as "a fundamental expression reflecting how one is or how one has come to be constituted," noting that "it signals no abandonment of commitment to truthfulness, but rather the ascent to a further, highest humanly possible form of it."

Thus, for Nietzsche and Kierkegaard alike, the essence of people's being is unfounded in objective inventories designed to measure *what they are*, but rather, people's essence is understood in terms of their *way of being*. This idea that no general or uniform account of what it means to be human can be put forth, because the meaning of being is decided in and through existence itself, is captured in Sartre's infamous existential slogan: "existence precedes essence" (Crowell, 2005). Thus, Sartre (2004, p. 344) puts forth the view that subjectivity must be the starting point on which people's essence is

predicated. Whereas entities are defined in terms of their essential properties (e.g., what type or kind of thing they are), the essence of people is not fixed by their type, but rather by what they make of themselves. Existential psychologist Rollo May (1960, p. 17) amplifies this view through his assertion "that only as we affirm our existence do we have any essence at all."

Within the realm of existential philosophy, the studies of Martin Heidegger and Jean-Paul Sartre are generally regarded as prototypes for characterizing authenticity. While both philosophers employed a phenomenological methodology, Heidegger is credited with having united existential concerns with the phenomenological method posed by the phenomenologist Edmund Husserl . Husserl proposed that through the psychological process *epoch*é, people clear away their preconceptions about experience and return "to the things themselves" (Halling & Carroll, 1999). This process relies on people's intentionality—the interaction between the subjective and objective components of consciousness. Rather than just passively registering an object's existence, people "cocreate" phenomena through intentionality (Halling & Carroll, 1999).

Heidegger (1968) implemented the phenomenological method in seeking to understand the question "What is meant by being?" Heidegger framed existence (*Dasein* or *Being-there*) with respect to both its historical and temporal aspects. For Heidegger, authentic possibility exists in relation to *Geworfenheit* (i.e., "thrown-ness"). Thrown-ness refers to the idea that people are born into a world that they did not construct, live amid conditions over which they have little control, and are insufficiently equipped to determine solutions to existential questions such as "Who am I?" Consequently, the totality of people's behaviors is at first a function of the behavioral prescriptions derived from the social environment. In light of the constraints of their "*thrown-ness*," and the inevitability of their finitude (e.g., death), people can embrace their individuality and freedom to live authentically (Halling & Carroll, 1999).

By counteracting their *thrown-ness* and imminent finitude, the whole of *Dasein's* activity—people's "Being-in-the-world"—gains significance from the purpose or aim to which they understand themselves as *existing* (Heidegger, 1968). Authentic possibility occurs in the condition of self-making, when having been confronted with the "nothingness" of their existence (e.g., acting solely in accord with social norms), individuals transform their mode of being to reflect a sense of *care* (i.e., assumed responsibility) toward others and their being themselves. "Being-in-the-world" does not constitute the self as an independent isolate of the world, but rather it reflects an existential modification of how one exists with others (Heidegger, 1968). When such a transformation occurs, the activity of *Dasein* is governed by the *project* of existential possibility in which people "make themselves." Accordingly,

authenticity in German, *Eigentlichkeit* refers to the attitude through which individuals engage their projects as their own (Crowell, 2005).

From Heidegger's perspective, authentic functioning reflects people resolutely choosing to act with care those projects that permit their Being-in-the-World. Moreover, authentic functioning is marked by a sense of unity among the temporal and historical aspects of existence. For instance, Crowell (2005) refers to existential temporality in which the future (the possibility aimed at by one's projects) recollects the past (what no longer needs to be done or completed) in order to give meaning to the present (the things that take on significance in light of what currently needs doing). These facets of existential temporality resemble various cognitive-motivational terms used by contemporary psychologists to describe people's pur-posive behavior (e.g., Cantor & Zirkel, 1990) and seem relevant to the notion of personal narratives or self-stories (e.g., Gergen & Gergen, 1988; McAdams, 1995, 1999). In particular, existential temporality complements the fundamental concerns of Hermans' Valuation Theory (1987) in which people's personal construction of meaning is examined with respect to specific spatio-temporal instances ascribed to their life stories (Hermans, Rijks, & Kempken, 1993). Thus, an authentic existence is one in which people understand their choices and commit themselves to enact those projects that give shape to their existence.

For Sartre, people's way of "being" is inextricably linked to their *choices*. Similarly, contemporary psychological theories of *motivation* (Deci & Ryan, 2000) and *psychological well-being* (Ryff, 1989) place a premium on people's *autonomy*. In Sartre's view, *we are our choices:* "to be" is to choose; "to cease to choose" is to cease to be (Flynn, 2003). While Sartre's basic message attests to people's conscious decisions and their responsibility for their actions (or inaction), such choices are noted to occur within situations themselves. More specifically, Sartre describes situations in terms of a synthesis of a person's "*facticity*" (e.g., life's givens, such as a person's past experience, psychological properties, and broader sociocultural milieu) and one's "*transcendence*" (e.g., the willful agent capable of going beyond, or surpassing the situations' facticity). Actions governed by facticity reflect a particular form of determinism, a predilection toward what practically "is" in the situation. Alternatively, actions governed by trans-cendence reflect a predilection toward what can be. By recognizing that they are radically free to "choose" otherwise, to be other than the way they "are" (e.g., beyond their facticity alone), people exhibit a form of self-negation expressed as *existential angst*. Thus, the kind of being one is, reflects the choices and decisions one makes amid the facts and the possibi-lities of the situation. In this respect, Sartre frames authentic functioning as a particular instance of peoples' behavioral self-regulation. That is, authentic

actions reflect the intrapsychic resolve that emerges from the choices found among the operative self-schemas governing individuals' situated freedom (cf., involving the *actual self* and the *possible self*, Markus & Nurius, 1986).

For Sartre, "Bad faith" emerges when individuals lie or deceive themselves about their ontological duality. Such deceptions occur when people either dissolve the possibilities of transcendence in the throws of "facticity," or conversely when they act with only sheer "transcendent" will, and ignore the facts of the situation. Thus, authentic functioning from this perspective emerges when individuals openly embrace the ontological duality of their situated freedom when deciding on how they will behave.

II. Taking Stock of These Various Perspectives: Towards a Psychological View of Authenticity

This brief and necessarily selective historical account of philosophical perspectives on authenticity demonstrates the construct's richness and complexity. These perspectives depict various themes and help to illuminate the development of the construct. First, authenticity reflects self-understanding. Whereas Socrates equated self-examination with the very value of a person's existence, other philosophers emphasized the importance of self-understanding in organizing one's actions. Thus, a second aspect of authenticity involves behaviors that are rooted in self-knowledge, as in Aristotle's "pursuit of the highest good," Heidegger's notion of "project," Kierkegaard's essential knowledge and subjective truth, and Husserl's intentionality. Moreover, authentic behavior reflects particular actions, actions expressive of people's values (e.g., Hume, Nietzsche), and that are freely chosen with a sense of agency (e.g., Sartre, Kierkegaard, & Heidegger). Third, authentic functioning reflects people's willingness and capacity for objectively acknowledging and accepting their core self-aspects. That is, authenticity reflects the relative absence of self-deception and the relative presence of unbiased recognition of self-relevant information, including ontological realities (e.g., consider the discussion on false-self behaviors, or Sartre's discussion of facticity and transcendence). Fourth, authentic functioning involves a particular orientation towards others (e.g., Heidegger's notion of Being-in-the-World).

Taken as a whole, authentic functioning also reflects a set of processes. The notion of authenticity reflecting a set of processes is essential to the perspectives discussed from Kierkegaard through Sartre. Collectively, the existential philosophy perspective couches authenticity as occurring when people freely choose to commit themselves to engage their activities

with agency, in a process of self-authoring their way of being. In this respect, the existential view of authenticity is consistent with Trilling's (1971) description of the Greek ancestry of the word authentic, *authenteo*, meaning "to have full power." That is, authentic functioning is reflected in an individual being "the master of his or her own domain."

Taken as a whole, this historical overview of authenticity documents a variety of mental and behavioral processes that account for how individuals discover, develop, and construct a core sense of self and, furthermore, how this core self is maintained over time and situation. While various historical accounts emphasize that authenticity involves a union between thought and action, they often place a premium on whether these actions originate within the self or without by societal expectations, norms, or pressures. We will see many of these same themes in psychological perspectives on authenticity. In the following section, we briefly discuss authenticity from the perspective of several humanistically oriented psychological frameworks and describe how these frameworks informed our own conceptualization of authenticity, to which we then turn.

III. Psychological Perspectives on Authenticity

Self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci, 1980; Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2002) holds that people are authentic when their actions reflect their true- or core-self, that is, when they are autonomous and self-determining. Our multicomponent framework of authentic functioning owes a great deal to this conceptualization. Hodgins and Knee (2002) capture many aspects of this convergence in their description of autonomously functioning individuals. For example, they suggest that autonomously functioning individuals "will meet the continually changing stream of consciousness experience with openness. By 'openness' we mean a readiness to perceive ongoing experience accurately, without distorting or attempting to avoid the experience, and a willingness to assimilate novel experiences into self-structures" (p. 88). They further suggest that autonomously functioning individuals "grow toward greater unity in understanding and functioning" (p. 88), "have a high tolerance for encountering experience without being threatened or defending against it" (p. 88–89), "feel choiceful and endorsing of their behavior" (p. 90), and exhibit "greater honesty in interactions of all types" (p. 90). According to SDT, self-determination is one of three basic psychological needs (the others being competence and relatedness), the satisfaction of which is critical for optimal psychological health and well-being. Considerable research supports this claim (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Our conceptualization of authenticity also owes a great deal to Rogers' (1961) conceptualization of a self-actualizing or fully functioning individual (Maslow, 1968), who possesses the following characteristics (Cloninger, 1993). *First*, the fully functioning individual is *open to experience*, both objective and subjective, that life has to offer. Accompanying this openness is a tolerance for ambiguity and the tendency to perceive events accurately, rather than defensively distorting or censoring them from awareness. *Second*, fully functioning individuals can *live fully in the moment*, they are adaptable and flexible, and they experience the self as a fluid process rather than a static entity. *Third*, they inherently *trust their inner experiences* to guide their behaviors. *Fourth*, a fully functioning person experiences *freedom*. This freedom may be reflected in the attitudes one adopts toward experiences—even if the environment is immovable, one still has a choice about how to respond and feel about it. *Fifth*, the fully functioning individual is *creative* in his or her approach to living, rather than falling back on well-established modes of behavior that become unnecessarily restrictive. This creativity is fueled by a strong trust in one's inner experiences and a willingness to adapt to ever-changing circumstances.

IV. A Multicomponent Conceptualization of Authenticity

We have seen that most perspectives on authenticity stress the extent to which one's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors reflect one's true- or core-self. Moreover, most perspectives emphasize a nondefensive stance toward evaluative information, openness toward, and trust in, internal experiences, and fulfilling interpersonal relationships. In line with these perspectives, we (Goldman & Kernis, 2002; Kernis, 2003; Kernis & Goldman, 2005a,b) define authenticity as the unobstructed operation of one's true- or core-self in one's daily enterprise. However, instead of viewing authenticity as a single unitary process, we suggest that authenticity can be broken down into four separate, but interrelated, components. We refer to these components as *awareness*, *unbiased processing, behavior*, and *relational orientation*. Each of these components focuses on an aspect of authenticity that, while related to each of the others, is distinct. We turn now to a description of each component.

A. AWARENESS

The *awareness* component refers to possessing, and being motivated to increase, knowledge of and trust in one's motives, feelings, desires, and self-relevant cognitions. It includes, for example, knowing what type of food one likes and dislikes, how motivated one is to lose weight, whether one is

feeling anxious or depressed, in what circumstances one is most likely to be talkative, whether one desires to attend graduate or professional school, and so forth. Moreover, it involves being motivated to learn about such things as one's strengths and weaknesses, goals and aspirations, dispositional characteristics, and emotional states.

Having knowledge about one's propensities and characteristics (i.e., of one's true-self) promotes the integration of one's inherent polarities into a coherent and multifaceted self-representation. As Perls and his colleagues (Perls, Hefferline, & Goodman, 1951) and many others have suggested, people are not masculine *or* feminine, introverted *or* extroverted, emotional *or* stoic, and so forth. Instead, while one aspect of these dualities (''figure'') generally predominates over the other (''ground''), individuals invariably possess both aspects to some degree. As people function with greater authenticity, they become more aware of the fact that they possess these multifaceted self-aspects and strive to integrate them into a cohesive self-structure. In short, awareness involves knowledge and acceptance of one's multifaceted and potentially contradictory self-aspects (i.e., being both introverted and extraverted), as opposed to rigid acknowledgement and acceptance only of those self-aspects deemed internally consistent with one's overall self-concept.

As we have noted elsewhere (Kernis & Goldman, 2005a,b), our view differs from J. Campbell's conceptualization of self-concept *clarity* (Campbell, 1990; Campbell et al., 1996) and is more closely aligned with Sande, Goethals, and Radloff's (1988) approach to the multifaceted self-concept. According to Campbell, endorsing as self-descriptive both adjectives that reflect endpoints of bipolar trait dimensions (e.g., introversion, extraversion) reflects an internally inconsistent self-concept. In contrast, for Sande et al. (1988), such an endorsement strategy reflects a multifaceted self-concept.

We believe that this apparent contradiction can be resolved by taking into consideration Paulhus and Martin's (1988) concept of *functional flexibility*. Functional flexibility involves having confidence in one's ability to call into play multiple, perhaps contradictory, self-aspects in dealing with life situations. An individual high in functional flexibility believes that he or she will experience little anxiety or difficulty in calling forth these multiple selves because they are well-defined and can be enacted with confidence. These aspects of multiple selves can be thought of as constituting figure–ground aspects of personality because the ''selves'' under consideration are arranged around the interpersonal circumplex (Wiggins, 1979). In this circumplex model, 16 interpersonal trait characteristics are arrayed around two orthogonal dimensions (dominance and warmth). Examples of trait pairs include ambitious–lazy, warm–cold, dominant–submissive, agreeable–quarrelsome, extroverted–introverted, and arrogant–assuming. For each item constituting the eight pairs, respondents indicate the extent to

which "they are *capable* of being [insert trait] if the situation requires it," "it is *difficult* for them to behave in a [insert trait] manner," "how *anxious* they are when they behave in a [insert trait] manner," and "the extent to which they attempt to *avoid* situations that require them to behave in a [insert trait] manner." In Paulhus and Martin's (1988) research, functional flexibility related to a high sense of agency and other indices of adaptive psychological functioning.

Kernis, Goldman, Piasecki, and Brunnell (2003) (reported in Kernis & Goldman, 2005b) administered the Functional Flexibility Inventory (Paulhus & Martin, 1988) and the Authenticity Inventory (AI) (Version 2) to a sample of 84 individuals. We created summary indexes of *capable*, *difficulty*, *anxiety*, and *avoidance* scores by summing responses to the 16 traits (Paulhus & Martin, 1988). Total authenticity scale scores correlated significantly positively with *capability*, and negatively with *difficulty*, *anxiety*, and *avoidance* (Kernis & Goldman, 2005b). These findings support our contention that authenticity relates to a multifaceted and integrated self that is anchored in strong self-beliefs, self-confidence, self-acceptance, and agency rather than self-doubt, confusion, and conflict. Later in this chapter, we report additional findings linking authenticity to a "stronger sense of self" (Kernis, Paradise, Whitaker, Wheatman, & Goldman, 2000).

One of the premises underlying our conceptualization is that awareness of self is a component of healthy functioning. Awareness is really just a first step, however. Also important is that this awareness fosters self-integration and acceptance of self. As integration and acceptance of self-aspects increase, more information about them will become accessible. An important issue, therefore, is how individuals attain self-knowledge in ways that foster integration and acceptance of self. A number of techniques are available, some of which stem from the Gestalt therapy framework developed by Fritz Perls and his colleagues (Perls et al., 1951). These techniques emphasize deliberately attending to aspects of self without evaluating their implications. A similar principle underlies the use of techniques or strategies designed to enhance individuals' mindfulness. Through these exercises, people can become aware of currently ignored or unexamined self-aspects with which they often are uncomfortable. Other techniques can then be applied to understand and resolve the basis of the uncomfortableness, thereby fostering self-integration and acceptance.

B. UNBIASED PROCESSING

The second component of authenticity involves the *unbiased processing of self-relevant information*. This component involves objectivity with respect to one's positive and negative self-aspects, emotions, and other internal experiences, information, and private knowledge. In addition, it involves

not denying, distorting, or exaggerating externally based evaluative information. In short, unbiased processing reflects the relative absence of interpretive distortions (e.g., defensiveness and self-aggrandizement) in the processing of self-relevant information. To the extent that unbiased processing reflects an aspect of authentic functioning, variables that are theoretically related to authenticity should predict the relative absence of self-serving biases and illusions. Importantly, highly autonomous and self-determining individuals do not engage in self-serving biases following success or failure (Knee & Zuckerman, 1996).

Our characterization of the unbiased processing component of authenticity resonates with conceptualizations of ego defense mechanisms that link them to a wide range of important outcomes. For example, whereas adaptive defense mechanism styles that involve minimal reality distortions predict psychological and physical well-being many years into the future (e.g., Vaillant, 1992), maladaptive or immature defenses that involve considerable reality distortion and/or failure to acknowledge and resolve distressing emotions predict psychological and interpersonal difficulties (e.g., poor marital adjustment) (Ungerer, Waters, Barnett, & Dolby, 1997). Note that our perspective stands in direct contrast to perspectives in which defensive processing is considered to be an adaptive solution to inevitable threats (e.g., Terror Management Theory) (Greenberg, Pyszcynski, & Solomon, 1986; Solomon, Greenberg, & Pyszcynski, 1991). While we agree that people can and do react defensively to threat, we believe that people's natural inclinations are toward open and nondefensive processing of self-relevant information (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

The major benefit of unbiased processing is that it contributes to an accurate sense of self. This accuracy is highly beneficial for behavioral choices that have either short- or long-term implications. The more important the outcome, the more important is accuracy. Pursuing the right occupation, investing time in developing one's talents, and even finding a dance partner at a club all benefit from accurate or unbiased processing of evaluative information. Engaging in biased processing may unwittingly limit one's options because relevant self-knowledge is ignored or distorted.

We believe, as many have before us (e.g., Deci & Ryan, 2000; Rogers, 1961), that people are oriented toward growing, developing, and increasing in complexity. We believe that these processes are inherently geared toward obtaining accurate, not necessarily flattering, information. In essence, we believe that positive self-illusions generally are less healthy than accurate self-realities (in contrast to Taylor & Brown, 1988), even though the former may confer short-term benefits by helping individuals cope with unpleasant emotions (Crocker, 2002). In the end, possessing and portraying accurate

self-knowledge is more beneficial than possessing and portraying positive but false self-knowledge (e.g., Crocker, 2002; Robins & Beer, 2001).

Controversy currently exists over whether positive self-related illusions promote and reflect healthy psychological functioning (Robins & Beer, 2001; Taylor & Brown, 1988). Our view is that often these distortions stem from insecurity rather than strength (Kernis, 2000). In support of this contention, research has shown that people who function autonomously and are self-determining do not show such self-serving distortions (Knee & Zuckerman, 1996). In contrast, people who rely on defense mechanisms that involve major distortions of reality have relatively poor interpersonal and psychological outcomes throughout their lifetimes (Vaillant, 1992). While self-illusions may minimize negative affectivity in the short-run (Crocker, 2002; Kernis, 2003; Robins & Beer, 2001) and therefore seem to be adaptive, this adaptiveness is itself an illusion, as it does not holdup over time and, in fact, may contribute to poorer outcomes in the end (Robins & Beer, 2001). Other forms of defensive functioning also appear reflective of insecurity and sub-optimal functioning and are antithetical to authentic functioning, as we will describe shortly.

Individuals high in unbiased processing are motivated to evaluate themselves objectively with respect to both positive and negative self-aspects. Thus, processing self-relevant information in an unbiased manner is likely to reflect what Neff (2003) referred to as a sense of self-compassion (e.g., extending kindness and understanding to oneself rather than harsh self-criticism and judgment, and holding one's painful thoughts and feelings in balanced awareness rather than overidentifying them). Sample items on Neff's (2003) measure of self-compassion include ''I try to be understanding and patient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like'' and ''I'm disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies (reversed scored).'' In fact, Goldman, Lakey, and Kernis (2005d) found that higher unbiased processing was associated with greater self-compassion.

C. BEHAVIOR

The third component of authenticity involves *behaving* in accord with one's values, preferences, and needs as opposed to acting ''falsely'' merely to please others or to attain rewards or avoid punishments. In essence, this component reflects the behavioral output of the awareness and unbiased processing components. We acknowledge that instances exist in which the unadulterated expression of one's true-self may result in severe social sanctions. In such instances, we expect that, at the very least, authenticity will reflect heightened sensitivity to the fit (or lack thereof) between one's true-self

and the dictates of the environment, and a heightened awareness of the potential implications of one's behavioral choices. In contrast, blind obedience to environmental forces typically reflects the absence of authenticity (cf., Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Authentic behavior can be distinguished from inauthentic behavior by the conscious, motivated intentions that underlie it. Authentic behavior is guided by an honest assessment of one's self-aspects via the awareness and unbiased processing components. To the extent that one is conscious of the "figure" and "ground" inherent in one's self-aspects, one is afforded the opportunity to act in a manner that is consistent with these multifaceted self-aspects. In essence, authentic behavior is choiceful behavior oriented toward a "solution" derived from consciously considering one's self-relevant "problems" (e.g., potentially competing self-motives, beliefs, etc.). In contrast, inauthentic behavior does not reflect a choiceful and conscious regulatory focus designed to eventuate in behavior that resonates with one's complex, multifaceted self-aspects. Rather, inauthentic behavior involves being unaware of, ignoring, oversimplifying, and/or distorting self-aspects relevant to the behavioral context. In essence, whereas authentic behavior reflects the awareness and operation of one's true- or core-self, inauthentic behavior generally is oriented toward glorification and reverence by self and others (though on occasion it may be oriented toward excessive deprecation by self and others).

Authenticity is *not* reflected in a *compulsion* to be one's true-self, but rather in the free and natural expression of core feelings, motives, and inclinations. When this expression stands at odds with immediate environmental contingencies, we expect that authenticity will be reflected in short-term conflict. How this conflict is resolved can have considerable implications for one's felt integrity and authenticity as well as for one's overall functioning and well-being. An important implication of this reasoning is that it is insufficient to focus exclusively on whether one's actions per se reflect authenticity. Rather, it is crucial to focus also on the manner in which processes associated with the other authenticity components inform one's behaviors.

For example, Goldman (in press) presents findings indicating that awareness scores negatively correlate with tendencies to engage in social comparison, self-monitoring, and public self-consciousness. He argues that such tendencies can undermine one's behavioral authenticity, because one fails to consider internal self-knowledge and instead depends primarily on externally derived information (by comparing oneself to others, relying on others' actions as the norm for one's own actions, or by habitually focusing on how one publicly appears). More generally, sometimes the needs and values of the self are incompatible with the views of the larger society (e.g., when an artist focuses on a highly controversial subject matter). In these instances,

authenticity *may* be reflected in awareness of one's needs and motives and an unbiased assessment of relevant evaluative information. Sometimes the resulting behavior may also reflect authenticity, but sometimes it may not (as when the aforementioned artist "sells out"). Consequently, while the awareness, unbiased processing, and behavior components of authenticity relate to each other, they clearly are separable. We return to this issue shortly.

D. RELATIONAL ORIENTATION

The fourth component of authenticity is *relational* in nature, and bears resemblance to Jourard's (1971, p. 133) proposition that "authentic being means being oneself, honestly, in one's relations with his fellows." In our view, relational authenticity involves valuing and striving for openness, sincerity, and truthfulness in one's *close relationships*. In essence, relational authenticity means being genuine rather than fake in one's relationships with close others. It is characterized by honesty in one's actions and motives as they pertain to one's intimates, and to accuracy in beliefs about oneself and one's intimates. Moreover, it involves endorsing the importance of close others seeing the "real" you and relating to them in ways that facilitate their being able to do so. Furthermore, given that dispositional authenticity involves heightened levels of self-knowledge and understanding (i.e., awareness), and the capacity to evaluate one's self objectively (i.e., unbiased processing), higher authenticity levels may enhance self–other perception congruence.

   Research focused on self-verification theory suggests that people are motivated by their need for self-knowledge (Swann, Stein-Seroussi, & Giesler, 1992) and are drawn toward others who confirm their preexisting self-conceptions (Swann, 1983). We believe that self-verification processes in close relationships are especially likely to occur when the other components of authenticity are operative within individuals (e.g., possessing high levels of awareness, unbiased processing, and behavioral authenticity). Conversely, self-enhancement processes that involve distorted evaluations within close relationships are especially likely to occur among individuals who are low in authenticity (i.e., those who are uncertain who they really are, and who resist accurate self-evaluation). Stated differently, low authenticity may reflect the presence of fragile self-feelings that motivate self-enhancement tendencies (Kernis, 2003; Kernis & Goldman, 2002). In such cases, incongruence between individuals' self-evaluation and their perceptions of how their intimates evaluate them may stem from motivations that stifle accuracy and consensus in favor of positive self-views. Consistent with this line of reasoning, Mikulincer, Orbach, and Iavenieli (1998) found that securely

attached people were more accurate in assessing self–other similarity than were insecurely attached people. In short, substantive intimate relationship adjustment is likely to involve feeling understood or "known" to intimates, and accuracy in such appraisals is likely to occur when authenticity is operative.

Authentic relationships involve a reciprocal process of self-disclosure and of mutual intimacy and trust (Reis & Patrick, 1996). Thus, relational authenticity involves developing and achieving secure attachments with intimates that further promotes the genuine expression of core self-aspects without threat of reprisal or criticism. In support of this contention, Kernis and Goldman reported that higher relational orientation related to higher secure attachment styles and lower preoccupied and fearful attachment styles (2005a), as well lower rejection sensitivity (2005b). In short, we expect that people high in relational authenticity will be involved in healthier, more satisfying, and fully functioning relationships than people low in relational authenticity. Later in the chapter, we report additional data relevant to examining these claims.

In other research, Harter, Waters, Pettit, Whitesell, Kofkin, and Jordan (1997) found that relationship partners who each viewed themselves as "mutual" (e.g., exhibiting a balance between one's personal needs and one's partner's needs) reported the highest levels of validation and authentic behaviors, whereas "self-focused autonomy" partners were perceived as least validating. In terms of well-being, Harter et al. (1997) found evidence for a process model. Specifically, the relationship between individuals' perceived validation from their partners and their own well-being (i.e., self-esteem and cheerfulness) depended on the extent to which they exhibited authentic self-behavior within their romantic relationship. Taken as a whole, Harter et al.'s (1997) findings demonstrate that behavioral authenticity within one's intimate relationships involves adopting a relationship orientation that fosters mutuality. Furthermore, their findings suggest that how a person's intimate relationships influence his or her well-being is affected by the extent to which one acts in accord with one's true-self within those relationships.

E. MORE ON THE SEPARATENESS OF THESE COMPONENTS

We view these multiple components of authenticity as related to, but separable from, each other (Table I). For instance, situations invariably exist in which environmental pressures may inhibit the expression of one's true-self (e.g., a person may not express his true opinion to a close friend who is highly depressed). Although behavioral (and perhaps relational) authenticity may be thwarted in such instances, authenticity at the levels of awareness and unbiased processing may be operative. Specifically, awareness may

TABLE I
AUTHENTICITY COMPONENTS

Awareness

- Awareness and knowledge of, and trust in, one's motives, feelings, desires, and self-relevant cognitions
- Includes awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, dominant–recessive aspects of personality, powerful emotions, and their roles in behavior

Unbiased Processing

- Minimal, if any, denial, distortion, exaggeration, or ignoring of private knowledge, internal experiences, and externally based self-evaluative information
- Objectivity and acceptance with respect to one's strengths and weaknesses

Behavior

- Acting in ways congruent with one's values, preferences, and needs
- Rather than acting merely to please others or to attain rewards or avoid punishments

Relational Orientation

- Value and make efforts to achieve openness and truthfulness in close relationships
- Important for close others to see the real you, those deep, dark, or potentially shadowy self-aspects that are not routinely discussed
- Relational authenticity means being genuine and not "fake" in one's relationships with others

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involve active attempts to resolve conflicting motives and desires involved in knowing one's true opinion and the implications expressing it may have for one's friendship and the well-being of one's friend.

In many respects, the awareness component of authenticity is the most fundamental. Self-knowledge is at the heart of both behavioral and relational authenticity. Although we can envision instances in which behavioral and relational authenticity emerge spontaneously with little or no conscious deliberation, ultimately the self-aspects that are involved will be available and accessible with the growth of one's self-knowledge. Unbiased processing may involve acknowledgment of the fragile underpinnings of one's attitude. In contrast, inauthenticity may involve actively ignoring or denying one's opinion or emphasizing the superiority of one's judgmental abilities. In short, it is possible for a person to be operating authentically at some levels but not at others. Therefore, it is important to examine the processes associated with each component of authenticity (Kernis, 2003).

F. CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER CONSTRUCTS

Each of these aspects of authenticity has received some attention in the past, although not usually with explicit reference to the construct of authenticity. For example, researchers have examined aspects of the awareness

component in research on public and private self-consciousness (e.g., Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss, 1975). Some implications of biased processing of self-relevant information have been examined in research on self-serving biases (e.g., Blaine & Crocker, 1993). Aspects of behavioral authenticity have been examined in research on personality–behavior and attitude–behavior consistency (Koestner, Bernieri, & Zuckerman, 1992; Snyder, 1987). Finally, aspects of relational authenticity have been studied in research on attachment processes and self-disclosure (Mikiluncer & Shaver, 2005). Readers of this chapter undoubtedly will recognize aspects of our theory in this prior work. However, our theory has the capacity to integrate these various strands of research to explicate the processes associated with the construct of authenticity in a way not done before. For research to be conducted, however, an empirically based measure of authentic functioning is needed. We turn now to our efforts to develop such a measure.

V. Measuring Individual Differences in Dispositional Authenticity: The Authenticity Inventory

We started with a large pool of items that we believed would tap into these four components, and we administered them to several samples of male and female college students. We eliminated items based on interitem correlations and exploratory factor analyses. In the research reported in this chapter, we used three successive versions of the scale. The final scale (AI-3, Goldman & Kernis, 2004) consists of 45 items (Awareness—12 items, Unbiased Processing—10 items, Behavior—11 items, and Relational Orientation—12 items). We include the scale items, along with instructions for its administration and scoring, in the Appendix. Coefficient alphas for the scale as a whole (.90) and for each of the subscales (Awareness = .79, Unbiased Processing = .64, Behavior = .80, and Relational Orientation = .78) are acceptable. Test retest reliabilities (over approximately 4 weeks, $N = 120$) were high (Total = .87, Awareness = .80, Unbiased Processing = .69, Behavior = .73, and Relational Orientation = .80).

How do these proposed authenticity components relate to the construct of authenticity? One possibility is that these four components of authenticity reflect conceptually distinct but interrelated aspects of authenticity. Stated differently, authenticity may be a multifaceted construct that consists of four distinct components. In factor analytic terminology, this would equate to a four-factor model.

A second possibility is that authenticity is a unidimensional rather than multidimensional construct. That is, while the components we introduced may be conceptually distinct, empirically they may be so highly interrelated

that they are not distinguishable and, therefore, represent a single broad authenticity construct. In factor analytic terminology, each component may load very highly on a single factor.

A third possibility combines aspects of the two previous possibilities. That is, on the one hand, authenticity may reflect four conceptually distinct facets as in the first possibility. Nevertheless, it is unrealistic to suppose that these four aspects are going to be completely unrelated to one another. However, it is also unrealistic to expect that they would be completely redundant with one another. Consequently, there may be value in conceiving of a broad authenticity construct at a higher level of abstraction that subsumes each of the four facets of authenticity. In this instance, while the four components are distinct, they may also measure a single latent construct of authentic functioning. Thus, parsimony exists, but at a higher level of abstraction than with a single-factor model. In other words, a hierarchical structure exists in which overall authenticity exerts its effects through the four separable, but interrelated, components of *awareness, unbiased processing, behavior,* and *relational orientation.*

We anticipated finding the greatest support for the third possibility—a second-order factor model in which interrelations among the authenticity components are not so high that they are redundant with one another, but are high enough so that they are summarized adequately with a single second-order authenticity factor. If supported, this model would provide evidence for a broad latent construct of authenticity, while simultaneously providing support for treating the components as valid indicators of distinct, but interrelated, aspects of authentic functioning.

We used confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to test these alternative conceptions of authenticity. When developing measurement models for theoretical constructs, one faces a number of options for operationalizing them, ranging from (a) a total disaggregation model in which individual elements (e.g., questionnaire items) are used as manifest indicators of the latent constructs, to (b) some intermediate level of aggregation, such as creating item parcels (''testlets''), for use as manifest indicators in latent variable models, to (c) a total aggregation model in which a single composite indicator is used to represent the latent construct (Bagozzi & Phillips, 1991; Edwards, 2000). We opted for a meso-level of aggregation by creating multiple-item parcels for each authenticity dimension. Use of item parcels poses several advantages over use of individual items as manifest indicators. Specifically, as compared to individual items, item parcels are more reliable, have smaller ratios of unique to common variance, are less likely to violate distributional assumptions, are more parsimonious, are less likely to have unmeasured correlated disturbances, are less subject to sampling fluctuations, and usually result in less biased CFA solutions (Bandalos, 2002; Little,
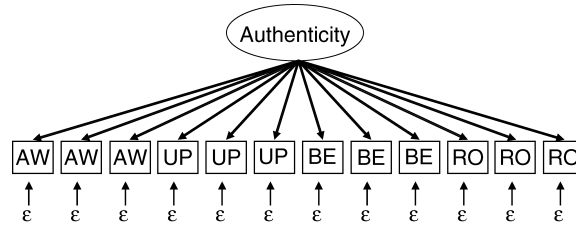
A. Single-Factor Authenticity Model
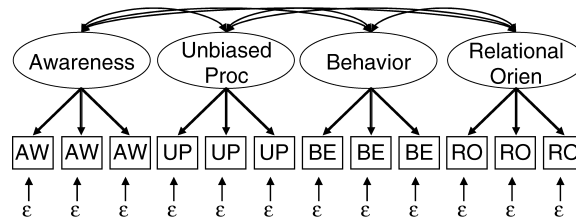
B. Four-Factor Authenticity Model
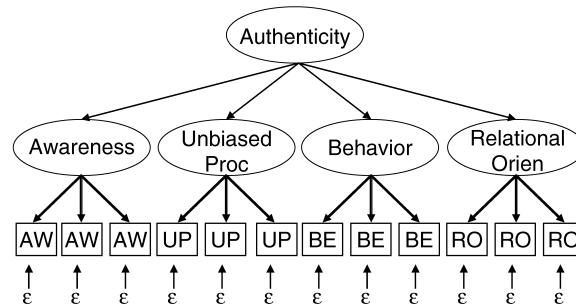
C. Hierarchical Authenticity Model

Fig. 1.   Proposed theoretical models of dispositional authenticity.

Cunningham, Shahar, & Widaman, 2002). There are a number of app-
roaches to forming item parcels (Hagtvet & Nasser, 2004; Hall, Snell, &
Faust, 1999; Landis, Beal, & Tesluk, 2000), but random assignment is a
generally effective approach. As such, we randomly assigned items to three
item parcels each for the awareness (AW), unbiased processing (UP), behav-
ior (BE), and relational orientation (RO) subscales. The three models we
tested are shown in Fig. 1. Figure 1A shows a unidimensional Authenticity
model in which all item parcels (shown in rectangles) are presumed to reflect
a single authenticity factor. The second model, shown in Fig. 1B, is a
four-factor model, which differs from the unidimensional model in that it

proposes that authenticity is comprised of four distinct, yet possibly corre-
lated, components discussed earlier. The final model we tested, shown in
Fig. 1C, was a hierarchical model, which proposes that any interrelation-
ships among the four facets of authenticity proposed by the model shown in
Fig. 1B can be explained parsimoniously on the basis of their common
dependency on a more general, second-order authenticity factor.

Goodness-of-fit indices for these three models are shown in Table II. The
χ^2 statistic was significant for each model indicating that all three models
should be rejected statistically, but this is a common finding in CFA re-
search. Consequently, we shifted attention to alternative overall model fit
indices and comparisons between these rival models. The unidimensional
model provided a poor fit to the data by all conventional standards for
acceptable model fit (Marsh, Balla, & McDonald, 1988). By comparison, the
four-factor model provided a much better fit to the data [$\Delta\chi^2$ (6) = 242.64,
$p < .01$], and its goodness-of-fit indices satisfied (or approached) even more
stringent criteria suggested by Hu and Bentler (1998, 1999) (SRMSR $\leq$ .08,
RMSEA $\leq$ .06, CFI and TLI $\geq$ .95). This indicates that authenticity is best
regarded as a multidimensional construct and supports the discriminant
validity of the factors specified in the four-factor model. The remaining
question, however, is whether a general, higher-order authenticity factor can
explain any relationships that exist between the four first-order authenticity
factors. To test this idea, we compared the fit of the four-factor model to that
of the hierarchical model and found that their fit to the data was not signifi-
cantly different from one another ($\Delta\chi^2 = 1.89$, ns). Alternative goodness-of-fit
indices were practically identical as well, indicating that the more parsi-
monious hierarchical model should be preferred as a plausible explanation
of the interrelationship among the first-order authenticity factors. Results

TABLE II
CFA MODEL GOODNESS-OF-FIT INDICES

Model	df	χ^2	SRMSR	RMSEA	CFI	TLI
1. Unidimensional Model	54	402.03*	.073	.130	.82	.79
2. Four-factor Model	48	159.39*	.048	.075	.94	.92
1 versus 2	6	242.64*	—	—	—	—
3. Hierarchical Model	50	161.28*	.049	.074	.94	.92
2 versus 3	2	1.89	—	—	—	—

*$p < .01$.
Note: df = degrees of freedom, χ^2 = model chi-squared statistic, SRMSR = standardized
root mean squared error, RMSEA = root mean squared error or approximation,
CFI = Bentler's (1990) comparative fit index, TLI = the Tucker-Lewis index.
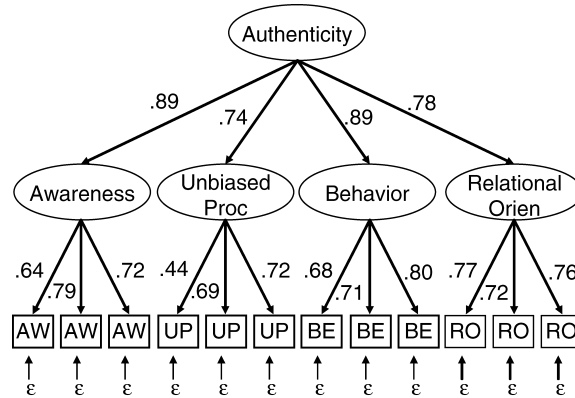
Fig. 2. Confirmatory factor analysis findings for hierarchical model of authenticity.

(LISREL's completely standardized factor loadings) for the hierarchical model are shown in Fig. 2. All parameters were statistically significant ($p < .01$) and, with the exception of the first item parcel for the Unbiased Processing factor, were uniformly large.

We turn now to a research in which we used the AI-3 (unless otherwise noted) to examine various aspects of psychological and interpersonal functioning and well-being. First, we focus on aspects of healthy psychological functioning, including verbal defensiveness, mindfulness, coping styles, self-esteem, and self-concept structure. We then turn to examining the implications of authenticity for social role functioning, goal pursuits, well-being, and close relationships.

VI. Authenticity and Healthy Psychological Functioning

A. AUTHENTICITY AND ABSENCE OF VERBAL DEFENSIVENESS

Emotions, thoughts, behaviors, or information that are discrepant with one's consciously held self-image often are threatening, producing decreases in self-esteem and/or increases in negative affect. To ward off these threats, people may utilize a wide range of defense mechanisms. "Defense mechanisms can be thought of as motivated cognitive-behavioral strategies that protect the self from perceived threat, maintain or augment self-esteem,

reduce negative affect, and maintain positive representations of attachment figures (Feldman Barrett et al., 1996)'' (Feldman Barrett, Cleveland, Conner, & Williams, 2000). That is, defense mechanisms reduce the perception of threat by altering how people represent these events in conscious thought. When people perceive a self-esteem threat, for example, they may attempt to deal with surfacing unpleasant affect by controlling whether the threat enters consciousness (awareness) or by controlling the specific content of the thoughts or feelings that enter consciousness (distortion) (Feldman Barrett et al., 2000). The result is that people distance themselves from the threat and their emotional experience to some extent, and they avoid thoughts and feelings that threaten their consciously held self-image or self-feelings. The framework presented here suggests that people low in dispositional authenticity will be especially likely to utilize defensive strategies to ward off potentially threatening events or experiences. We theorize that people high in dispositional authenticity are motivated to understand themselves, to experience affect as it is felt, and to not distort evaluative information. Thus, they should have the strength and personal resources to acknowledge information that is potentially threatening without being overly defensive.

A number of verbal markers of defensiveness exist (Feldman Barrett et al., 2000) that provide clues to the nature of people's motivational strategies for protecting the self against threat. Do they rationalize by blaming others? Do they deny awareness of conflicting emotions, choosing only to identify positive affect? Examining the nature of these motivational strategies has the potential to provide significant insight into differences in the ways those individuals who are low or high in authenticity deal with threatening events.

Feldman Barrett, Williams, and Fong (2002) reported a structured interview technique (and sophisticated coding scheme) for eliciting threatening experiences and defensive processing. Specifically, individuals engage in a taped 40–60-minute stressful interview about their experiences. Respondents first answer five nonstressful items to acclimate them to the interview context. They then respond to 15 mild to moderately stressful items (e.g., "Tell me about a time when you felt that your parents were really disappointed in you," "Tell me about a time when you've broken the rules," "Tell me about a time when you have done something unethical on an assignment," "Describe a time when someone has come to you for help and you didn't want to help them," "Tell me about a time when you have disappointed someone.") The interview concludes with five items designed to gradually restore a nonthreatened self-view.

Two highly trained coders rated responses to each of the 15 stressful items, which we summed to form an overall verbal defensiveness score. Raters incorporated two aspects of defensiveness into their ratings: awareness and

distortion. Awareness is defined as the conscious understanding and acceptance of one's cognitions, emotions, and behaviors in the face of threat. Distortion is characterized as the reinterpretation of events through rationalization or justification to fit one's preexisting self-concept (Feldman Barrett et al., 2002). As such, individuals can respond in a way that is nondefensive (high awareness and acceptance and low distortion), mildly defensive (moderate awareness with mild distortion), moderately defensive (limited awareness and moderate distortion), or highly defensive (highly unaware and high distortion of information). The training manual graciously provided to us by Lisa Feldman Barrett contains extensive coding information and numerous examples to facilitate the training of event coders.

This measure is well-grounded in research and theory that have focused on defensiveness and defense mechanisms (e. g., Cramer, 1990; Sackeim & Gur, 1979; Shedler, Mayman, & Manis, 1993; Vaillant, 1992; Weinberger, 2003). The defensive verbal behavior assessment (DVBA) is "...a method for detecting traces left by defensive processes in the content and structure of speech" (Feldman Barrett et al., 2002, p. 777). Although individuals may use different defense mechanisms, the DVBA focuses on the shared consequences of using these mechanisms.

The DVBA provides a unique opportunity to assess the validity of our authenticity measure. Specifically, some skeptics have argued that people who are highly defensive will falsely answer items on our authenticity inventory so that they appear to be authentic, especially on the subscale of unbiased processing ("Of course I am authentic—are you trying to say I am a phony?"). The line of reasoning provided by skeptics suggests that higher authenticity would relate to greater defensiveness. Although we recognize that people are motivated to present themselves in a positive light, we attempted to minimize these considerations in the assessment of authentic functioning (with the AI) by avoiding asking people directly about whether or not they are authentic. Instead, we query individuals about the extent to which their motives, emotions, and behaviors reflect processes and mechanisms theoretically linked to authentic functioning. These processes include the tendency not to distort negative self-relevant information and to be comfortable with experiencing unpleasant emotions, or motivations reflective of one's "dark side." Thus, we predicted that overall, greater authenticity would relate to *lower, not higher*, defensiveness on the DVBA. Moreover, we anticipated that higher awareness and unbiased processing subscale scores would relate to lower defensiveness because these subscales deal specifically with the extent to which people are aware of, and feel comfortable experiencing, unpleasant self-relevant thought and affect. Finally, we anticipated that higher behavioral authenticity would relate to lower verbal defensiveness because one's behaviors are choiceful and reflective of one's

true-self, and therefore one should be more accepting of their implications and consequences regardless of whether they are positive or negative. To the extent that our findings support these predictions, they would provide important construct validation support for the AI.

To test these hypotheses, we (Kernis, Lakey, Heppner, Goldman, & Davis, 2005) had 101 male and female undergraduates participate in individual DVBA interviews with one of three trained interviewers. We then trained two additional raters to code the interviews according to the criteria described in detail in a manual provided to us by Feldman Barrett. Interrater reliability was excellent, exceeding .80. Total authenticity correlated inversely with defensiveness ($r = -.25$, $p < .02$). In addition, awareness correlated inversely with defensiveness, ($r = -.21$, $p < .04$), as did behavior ($r = -.28$, $p < .01$), and unbiased processing, although the latter only marginally ($r = .19$, $p < .062$). Finally, relational authenticity was nonsignificantly correlated with defensiveness ($r = -.10$).

Other data collected in this study indicated that especially high levels of defensiveness were associated with fragile forms of high self-esteem, namely unstable and contingent high self-esteem (Kernis, 2003; Kernis & Paradise, 2002). These findings further corroborate conclusions we can draw from measures of overall subjective and psychological well-being that we administered. To the extent that defensiveness is adaptive and reflective of optimal functioning, greater tendencies toward defensiveness should correlate positively with these measures of well-being. However, this clearly was not the case. Total scores on Ryff's (1989) multicomponent measure of psychological functioning were inversely correlated with defensiveness ($r = -.25$, $p < .02$), as were scores on the Life Satisfaction Scale ($r = -.25$, $p < .02$). Taken as a whole, our findings indicate that the higher the individuals' dispositional authenticity, the more they were able to deal with self-threatening information in an aware and nondistorting manner, which, as it turns out, related to better overall psychological functioning, secure forms of high self-esteem and greater subjective well-being. Whereas the current study examined how dispositional authenticity related to individuals' defensive reactions to a specifically threatening context, in the next study we report, we sought to examine individuals' general tendencies toward actively and openly attending to their experiences in a mindful and nonevaluative manner.

B. AUTHENTICITY AND MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness refers to a state of relaxed and nonevaluative awareness of one's immediate experience (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Research has linked mindfulness with positive immediate experiences (LeBel & Dubé, 2001)

and greater psychological health and well-being (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Moreover, the capacity for mindfulness is an aspect of being fully functioning, so we expected that it would be associated with greater authenticity. The mindfulness measure we used in our earlier research was the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Greater mindfulness, as assessed by the MAAS, relates to greater psychological well-being and positive affect and lower stress (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Sample items, endorsement of which reflects low mindfulness, include: ''I could be experiencing some emotion and not be conscious of it until some time later''; ''I do jobs or tasks automatically, without being aware of what I am doing''; ''I find myself listening to someone with one ear, doing something else at the same time.'' Kernis and Goldman (2005) reported that MAAS mindfulness scores correlated significantly with total authenticity scores, as well as with each subscale score.

In more recent research, Lakey, Kernis, Heppner, and Davis (2005) administered both the MAAS and the Kentucky Inventory of Mindfulness Skills (KIMS), which measures the specific mindfulness components of *observing (OBSERVE), describing (DESCRIBE), acting with awareness (AWARENESS),* and *accepting or allowing without judgment (ACCEPTANCE). Observing* refers to ''observing, noticing, or attending to a variety of stimuli, including internal phenomena, such as bodily sensations, cognitions, and emotions, and external phenomena, such as sounds and smells'' (Baer, Smith, & Allen, 2004, p, 193). Sample items include ''I pay attention to whether my muscles are tense or relaxed'' and ''I notice the smells and aromas of things.'' *Describing* refers to ''describing, labeling, or noting of observed phenomena by covertly applying words. ... This type of describing is done nonjudgmentally and without conceptual analysis'' (Baer et al., 2004, p. 193). Sample items include ''I'm good at finding the words to describe my feelings'' and ''Even when I am feeling terribly upset, I can find a way to put it into words.'' *Acting with awareness* refers to ''Engaging fully in one's current activity with undivided attention or focusing with awareness on one thing at a time….'' (Baer et al., 2004, p. 193). Sample items include ''When I'm doing something, I'm only focused on what I am doing, nothing else'' and ''I'll get completely absorbed in what I'm doing, so that all my attention is focused on it.'' *Accepting or allowing without judgment* refers to ''…accepting, allowing, or being nonjudgmental or nonevaluative about present moment experience ... to refrain from applying evaluative labels such as good/bad, right/wrong, or worthwhile/worthless ….'' (Baer et al., 2004, p. 194). Sample items include ''I make judgments about whether my thoughts are good or bad (reverse-scored)'' and ''I tend to make judgments about how worthwhile or worthless my experiences are (reverse-scored).''

TABLE III
Correlations Between Authenticity, Mindfulness, and Psychological
Functioning Measures

Measure	Total	Awareness	Unbiased processing	Behavior	Relational orientation
Self-actualization	.61**	.53**	.42**	.41**	.41**
Vitality	.23*	.26*	.16	−.02	.27*
Psychological stress	.30**	.31**	.14	.25*	.13
Physical symptomatology	−.21	−.22*	−.07	−.14	−.15
Mindfulness (KIMS)	.64**	.67**	.40**	.43**	.45**
KIMS-OBSERVE	.26*	.24**	.06	.12	.29**
KIMS-DESCRIBE	.62**	.60**	.40**	.50**	.42**
KIMS-AWARENESS	.36**	.44**	.11	.25**	.27**
KIMS-ACCEPTANCE	.28**	.27**	.39**	.18	.10
Mindfulness (MAAS)	.49**	.45**	.37**	.40**	.28**

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.
Note: Higher Psychological Stress scores reflect lower levels of stress. See text for description of KIMS subscales.

As shown in Table III, the findings obtained by Lakey et al. (2005) for the MAAS scale replicated those reported by Kernis and Goldman (2005). Specifically, total authenticity scores, as well as each authenticity subscale score correlated significantly with total MAAS scores. In addition (and new to this study), total authenticity and authenticity subscale scores correlated positively with total KIMS scores as well as its subscales. Specifically, awareness correlated with each KIMS subscale, relational orientation correlated with each KIMS subscale with the exception of KIMS-Acceptance, unbiased processing correlated significantly with KIMS-Describe and KIMS-Acceptance, and behavior correlated significantly with KIMS-Describe and KIMS-Awareness. Most of these relationships were moderate in strength. The relationships that emerged between the subscales of the two measures have many interesting theoretical implications. For example, the awareness authenticity subscale, which reflects a basic awareness of, trust in, and openness toward, self-knowledge, correlated with each of the KIMS subscales. These relationships suggest that an open and trusting stance toward one's self-aspects goes hand-in-hand with tendencies to observe internal and external stimuli, competence in describing one's internal states, ability to focus one's attention on the task at hand, and a nonjudgmental stance in general. In addition, the significant correlations between our unbiased processing subscale and the KIMS describe and awareness subscales suggests that engaging in biased processing may reflect a more general tendency to engage in evaluative judgments. Finally, the fact that

high behavioral authenticity related to competence in describing observed phenomena and to focusing one's attention on the task at hand is consistent with research and theory on intrinsic motivation. When intrinsically motivated, people are highly absorbed in activities that match their interests and talents (Deci, 1975). Interestingly although, the relational orientation authenticity subscale is explicitly interpersonal in nature, it is related to many intrapersonal aspects of mindfulness processes.

Other findings obtained in our lab and reported in Table III indicate that higher authenticity relates to other aspects of positive psychological functioning. Specifically, higher authenticity relates to greater *self-actualizing tendencies* (Jones & Crandall, 1986) and *vitality* (Ryan & Frederick, 1997) and to lower *psychological distress* (Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983) and (marginally) *physical symptoms*.

C. AUTHENTICITY AND THE USE OF VARIOUS COPING STRATEGIES

If our assertion that authentic functioning is associated with greater adaptive functioning is correct, we should find corroborating evidence by examining people's characteristic ways of coping with stressful events. The adaptive value of coping strategies vary from healthy and helpful to unhealthy and counterproductive (Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989; Moos & Schaefer, 1993; Vaillant, 2000). For instance, Folkman and Lazarus (1980, 1985) described healthy coping styles with respect to *problem-focused* and *emotion-focused* strategies. *Problem-focused* coping strategies aim toward solving the problem or modifying the source of the threat (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980, 1985). *Emotion-focused* coping strategies aim toward managing or reducing the emotional distress associated with the threatening circumstances (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980, 1985). Although this distinction has proven highly useful, Carver et al. (1989) argued that each of these broad categories is comprised of a number of distinct coping strategies. They developed a multidimensional coping inventory (the COPE) to assess the various ways that people cope with stressful events. *Active coping:* taking active steps to remove the threat or reduce its impact (I concentrate my efforts on doing something about it). *Planning:* thinking about how to cope with the threat such as the steps to take to deal with the problem (I think about how I might best handle the problem). *Suppression of competing actions:* putting other things aside to deal with the problem at hand (I put aside other activities in order to concentrate on this). *Instrumental social support:* seeking information, help, or advice about how to deal with the stressor (I try to get advice from someone about what to do). An example of

emotion-focused coping is *emotional social support:* seeking sympathy, moral support, and the like (I discuss my feelings with someone). In addition, the COPE assesses a number of potentially maladaptive strategies, as in the following: *venting one's emotions*—focusing on and venting one's distress (I get upset and let my emotions out); *behavioral disengagement*—withdrawing one's effort to either deal with the stressor or achieve the goal hampered by the stressor (I just give up trying to reach my goal); *mental disengagement*—engaging in alternative activities to distract oneself from the problem at hand (I sleep more than usual); *substance use*—using alcohol or drugs to take one's mind off the problem (I drink alcohol or take drugs, in order to think about it less); and *denial*—refusing to accept that the stressor is real (I pretend that it hasn't really happened). (The measure contains several other subscales, but they are not discussed here because they did not relate to our authenticity measure.)

To test the hypothesis that greater authenticity would relate to greater reliance on adaptive coping styles and to less reliance on maladaptive coping styles, Goldman and Kernis (2005) administered the AI-3 and then subsequently administered the COPE measure approximately 4 weeks later. The correlations displayed in Table IV indicate that authentic functioning is related to the (self-reported) use of more adaptive and less maladaptive coping strategies (Goldman & Kernis, 2005). First, scores on each authenticity dimension, as well as total scores, correlated significantly

TABLE IV
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN AUTHENTICITY AND COPING STYLES

Coping scale	Total	Awareness	Unbiased processing	Behavior	Relational orientation
Problem-Focused Coping					
Active coping	.48**	.37**	.27*	.49**	.26*
Planning	.31**	.32**	.10	.37**	.09
Suppress	.14	.11	−.05	.21*	.12
Instrumental support	.15	.03	−.01	.11	.32**
Emotion-Focused Coping					
Emotional support	.19	.03	.08	.09	.38**
Suboptimal Coping					
Mental disengage	−.21[a]	−.13	−.23*	−.17	−.07
Behavior disengage	−.21[a]	−.22*	−.11	.10	−.18[a]
Emotion venting	−.12	−.25*	−.15	−.03	.13
Denial	−.22*	−.23*	−.10	−.07	−.24*
Substance use	−.25*	−.22*	.09	−.29**	−.30**

Note: [a]$p < .10$, *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$.

with scores on the active coping subscale. Thus, greater authentic functioning involves "taking the bull by the horns" and directly tackling the problem at hand. Second, higher awareness and behavioral authenticity, as well as total authenticity, related to greater use of planning. This makes sense, as thinking through stressors and how best to deal with them often involves a thorough assessment of one's qualities relevant to the situation and a willingness to act on one's values. Third, greater behavioral authenticity related to greater suppression of competing activities. This finding suggests that behavioral authenticity involves the capability to self-regulate one's actions with respect to task relevant demands. Fourth, greater relational authenticity related to greater seeking of emotional and instrumental social support. Thus, the more people value and achieve honesty and sincerity with their intimates, the more they are willing to rely on them in times of stress by seeking their informational and emotional support.

Authenticity also related inversely to the use of mostly dysfunctional or maladaptive strategies. For example, substance use related to lower overall authenticity, as well as lower awareness, behavior, and relational orientation scores. These findings indicate that authentic functioning relates to constructive and active efforts to deal with problems and stressors, rather than shying away from them or simply venting one's emotions. Interestingly, the fact that awareness subscale scores related to lower emotional venting suggests that the desire to know one's self does not include becoming fixated on one's emotional distress in times of stress. Instead, becoming fixated on one's distress appears to signal a relative *lack* of self-knowledge. We would argue that authentic self-knowledge involves knowledge about one's sensitivities that interact with stressors to produce certain emotions and that such knowledge reflects a level of mature self-understanding antithetical to the notion of venting one's emotions, either to self or to others. Finally, total authenticity scores, as well as awareness and relational orientation scores, related to less denial of a stressor. As we have suggested, these aspects of authenticity involve a desire for accuracy in self-knowledge and comfortableness with close others, each of which would seem to mitigate the need to deny the existence of a stressor.

We conducted additional analyses to examine whether overall authenticity predicted coping styles independent of self-esteem level. Overall authenticity uniquely predicted a number of coping styles, namely, *active coping, planning, emotional support,* and *substance abuse.* These data provide important support for considering dispositional authenticity to be an important construct that cannot be reducible to self-esteem level. Later in the chapter, we report additional findings regarding the independent predictive utility of dispositional authenticity, and we consider in detail the interrelation between self-esteem and authenticity.

D. AUTHENTICITY, SELF-CONCEPTS, AND
ROLE FUNCTIONING

In his dissertation, Goldman (2004) examined the relationship and predictive utility of dispositional authenticity with respect to a diverse set of measures assessing (1) aspects of self-esteem and self-concepts (self-esteem level and contingency, self-concept organization, and self-theories) and (2) social role functioning (markers reflecting general and authenticity-related aspects of social role adjustment) across the five commonly enacted social roles of being a student, a romantic partner, a son/daughter, a friend, and an employee.

Self-esteem and self-concept can be represented with an enormous number of variables. Goldman narrowed the field by making reference to the notion of a *stronger sense of self*, which Kernis et al. (2000) suggested is comprised of three components: (1) feelings of self-worth that are well-anchored and secure, (2) actions that reflect a strong sense of agency and self-determination, and (3) self-concept that is clearly and confidently defined so that it contributes to a coherent sense of direction in one's daily experience. With respect to *self-esteem*, Goldman's study included measures of self-esteem *level* (Rosenberg, 1965) and *contingent* self-esteem (the Contingent Self-esteem Scale, Kernis & Paradise, 2004; reported in Kernis & Goldman, in press). Previous research and theory indicate that the higher and less contingent (i.e., less dependent on specific achievements or outcomes) one's self-esteem, the healthier it is (Deci & Ryan, 1995; Kernis, 2003).

Self-concept organization reflects aspects of cognitive structures that organize and guide the processing of self-related information. Implicit in most conceptualizations of self-organization is a hierarchical organization of self-knowledge wherein specific contents or domains of one's self-concept are subsumed by more global self-representations (e.g., general evaluations of one's self). This organization can reflect varying degrees of consistency, unification, coherence, versus fragmentation, differentiation, confusion, and the like. A number of variables capture aspects of this organization. *Self-concept clarity* (Campbell et al., 1996) is defined as the extent to which the contents of the self-concept are clearly and confidently held, internally consistent, and temporally stable. *Identity integration* (O'Brien & Epstein, 1988) reflects the extent to which one's self-concept is efficacious in organizing and directing life experiences and in assimilating new information. Stated differently, identity integration reflects the overall adequacy of one's self-concept in one's general functioning. *Self-concept differentiation* (Donahue et al., 1993) reflects the extent to which individuals see themselves as having different personality characteristics in different social roles. Thus, higher differentiation reflects greater fragmentation in one's self-concept because

one's personality is judged to differ depending on the social role being considered. *Implicit theories* (Dweck, Chiu, & Hong, 1995) pertain to individuals' beliefs regarding the extent to which such characteristics as intelligence, morality, and personality traits are fixed and unchange- able (entity theory), or are malleable and subject to change and development (incremental theory). Endorsement of an incremental self-theory reflects a mastery orientation characterized by personal development and self- improvement as opposed to performance displays at any given point in time.

Self-organization also involves how individuals adjust their self-concepts to assimilate experiences into an identity, as they actively cope with emerging social demands and developmental challenges (Erickson, 1959). Berzonsky (1988) proposed that how individuals engage and negotiate identity- relevant issues involves specific social-cognitive processing orientations that he refers to as *identity styles*. Three identity styles are proposed: information- al, normative, and diffuse/avoidant (Berzonsky, 1988, 1990). Individuals characterized by an *informational identity style* ''actively seek out, process, and evaluate self-relevant information before making identity decisions. They are skeptical about their self-constructs, open to new information and alter- natives, and willing to revise and modify their self-views in response to discrepant feedback'' (Nurmi, Berzonsky, Tammi, & Kinney, 1997, p. 556). Individuals characterized by a *normative identity style* conform to standards and expectations held by authority figures and significant others, whereas individuals characterized by a *diffuse/avoidant identity style* are unwilling to confront directly and to deal with problems and identity issues.

We anticipated that higher authenticity would relate to higher self-esteem level, clarity, identity integration, incremental self-theories, and informa- tional identity styles and would relate to lower contingent self-esteem, self- concept differentiation, and normative and diffuse/avoidant identity styles. Table V displays the correlations. As can be seen, the data strongly sup- ported our expectations. Specifically, higher dispositional authenticity scores related to feelings of self-worth that were both more favorable (higher self- esteem level) and more secure (less contingent feelings of self-worth). In addition, higher authenticity scores related to aspects of self-organization that are characterized by possessing a self-concept that (1) is clearly and confidently defined (high self-concept clarity) and (2) exhibits less variability or fragmentation across one's social roles (low self-concept differentiation). Furthermore, with respect to identity styles, higher authenticity related to greater tendencies to actively explore identity relevant information (high informational identity styles) and lower tendencies to avoid acknowledging, deciding, or reconciling their identity (low diffuse identity styles). Finally, higher dispositional authenticity reflected heightened tendencies toward growth motivations reflected by possessing implicit self-theories characterized

TABLE V
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN AUTHENTICITY AND SELF-CONCEPT
VARIABLES (GOLDMAN, 2004)

	Total authenticity	Awareness	Unbiased processing	Behavior	Relational orientation
Self-concept clarity	.68**	.67**	.47**	.55**	.29*
Identity integration	.57**	.61**	.33**	.56**	.16
Identity styles: diffusion	−.51**	−.52**	−.32**	−.42**	−.19[a]
Self-concept differentiation	−.32**	−.28*	−.28*	−.16	−.22[a]
Entity	−.24*	−.29*	−.14	−.23*	−.03
Contingent self-esteem	−.58**	−.43**	−.51**	−.50**	−.24*
Self-esteem level	.60**	.56**	.44**	.37**	.39**

Note: [a]$p < .10$, *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$.

in incremental terms (i.e., believing one's efforts have meaningful implications for changing outcomes in important self-aspects). In sum, greater dispositional authenticity reflected components of self-esteem, self-organization, and self-theories that involved a stronger, as opposed to weaker, sense of self.

Dispositional authenticity reflects heightened self-knowledge and understanding and openness toward knowing one's self accurately. In contrast to most measures of self-concept organization that focus on structural or meta-knowledge features of self-concept (e.g., how clearly the self-concept is defined), dispositional authenticity also assesses one's prevailing motivational tendencies toward acquiring and processing self-relevant information (i.e., awareness and unbiased processing component). Consequently, the strong relations that emerged between dispositional authenticity and these structural aspects of self-concept suggest that dispositional authenticity reflects an interface between self-concept organization and its motivational properties. For instance, higher authenticity reflected greater self-concept clarity and identity integration. Likewise, greater authenticity related to greater beliefs that people felt they could change themselves through their efforts (i.e., incremental self-theorists), a stance toward the self that is central to philosophical and psychological perspectives that emphasize personal choice and responsibility.

Goldman (2004) conducted additional analyses to examine the extent to which dispositional authenticity predicted these aspects of a stronger sense of self independently of self-esteem level. Both self-esteem level and dispositional authenticity independently predicted a number of these aspects,

namely, self-concept clarity, contingent self-esteem, identity integration, and self-actualization. In addition, whereas only authenticity predicted diffuse and informational identity styles, only self-esteem level predicted normative identity styles such that higher levels of self-esteem related to greater normative identity styles. The pattern of findings for identity styles underscores the importance of differentiating authenticity from self-esteem level. Specifically, whereas dispositional authenticity uniquely predicted greater openness in exploring one's identity, and less avoidance and confusion in reconciling one's identity, self-esteem level predicted heightened tendencies to reconcile one's identity by integrating social norms. In sum, these analyses indicate that dispositional authenticity predicts important outcomes independent of self-esteem level.

E. SOCIAL ROLE FUNCTIONING

A complete framework of authentic functioning necessitates taking into consideration individuals' social roles. When individuals respond to open ended questions, such as ''Who am I?,'' they spontaneously describe themselves with reference to specific social roles, in addition to decontextualized personal attributes (Côté & Levine, 2002; Gordon, 1968). Thoits (1992) reported that 85% of respondents indicated one or more social roles as self-descriptors to a five-item ''Who am I?'' Social roles involve identifying oneself as a certain kind of person in relation to specific role partners. Some scholars assert that social roles represent an especially important component of self-conception because ''most daily interactions occurs in role relationships ... and, many, if not most, social roles imply auxiliary or embedded social characteristics'' (Thoits & Virshop, 1997, p. 123).

Numerous investigators have examined the relationship between aspects of individuals' functioning in their role-identities and psychological adjustment. For instance, researchers have examined adjustment as it relates to role-accumulation (e.g., Thoits, 1992), role-balance (Marks, 1986), role-overload (e.g., Hecht, 2001), role-strain (e.g., Thoits, 1986), and role-conflict (e.g., Sheldon, Ryan, Rawsthorne, & Ilardi, 1997). Investigations examining role-accumulation have found that possessing a greater number of roles buffers against threats to adjustment (e.g., Thoits, 1986). Marks (1986, p. 420) examined role balance, defined as ''the tendency to become fully engaged in the performance of every role in one's total role system, to approach every typical role and role partner with an attitude of attentiveness and care.'' Individuals higher in role-balance reported significantly higher role-ease and self-esteem, and lower levels of role-overload and depression, than did those lower in role-balance. Thus, research on role-accumulation

and role-balance indicates that to the extent one possesses an adequate number of roles in which one is fully engaged, psychological adjustment may be enhanced. In contrast, *role-overload* (when a person is faced with too many expectations), *role-strain* (when a person's roles are overly difficult to enact), and *role-conflict* (when concurrent roles are not compatible) all have been found to be associated with heightened stress levels (Biddle, 1986).

Of particular importance in the present context is the extent to which one's role-identities are personally chosen and experienced as authentic. When enacting roles that foster feelings of choice and authenticity, perceived stress within such roles should be low, and individuals should more fully integrate these roles into their self-systems (Ryan & Deci, 2003; Thoits, 1992). Sheldon et al. (1997) examined the relation of self-integration (authentic role func-tioning) to well-being and adjustment in two studies. They assessed self-integration in terms of participants' felt authenticity across the same five social roles examined by Goldman (2004). Authentic role-functioning was assessed through items such as "I experience this aspect of myself as an authentic part of who I am" and "I have freely chosen this way of being." A number of interesting findings emerged. First, higher scores in role-specific authenticity significantly correlated with greater satisfaction in all five roles and with greater preference to spend more time in four of five roles (the friend role was the exception). Second, role-authenticity ratings negatively correlated with self-concept differentiation ($r = -.61$), indicating greater-felt authenticity was associated with lower levels of self-fragmentation across social roles. Third, role authenticity ratings and self-concept differentiation (SCD) scores independently predicted other indices of psychological adjust-ment. In short, Sheldon et al.'s (1997) findings demonstrate the importance of experiencing authenticity in one's social roles for fostering healthy psychological adjustment.

We anticipated that dispositional authenticity would relate to indices reflecting healthier role functioning. Highly operative authenticity presum-ably provides individuals with a depth of inner resources that serve to enhance their global interpersonal and psychological adjustment. For in-stance, by having greater self-understanding, individuals high in authenticity seemingly are capable of self-selecting appropriate niches in their interper-sonal milieu that sustain and promote their interpersonal and psychological adjustment. Whereas some people may experience social roles with great distress, other people may experience them as opportunities for personal growth or meaning. In addition, by exhibiting greater self-acceptance in processing self-relevant information in an unbiased manner, individuals with higher levels of authenticity may perhaps inoculate themselves from the adverse influence of others when evaluating themselves in their social roles. That is, individuals who are oriented toward self-acceptance will find joy and

happiness enacting social roles even when their objective performance may not meet others' standards (as in a marathon runner who finishes in over 5 hours). In sum, we presumed that dispositional authenticity reflects a wide range of important psychological characteristics that differentiate how individuals experience their social environment and social roles. The correlations are displayed in Table VI in which it can be seen that dispositional authenticity related consistently to the role functioning variables as we anticipated.

Higher dispositional authenticity related to healthy role functioning across a range of commonly enacted social roles (i.e., being a son/daughter, a student, a romantic partner, a friend, and an employee). For instance, higher dispositional authenticity related to positive aspects of general role functioning including greater satisfaction and positive affectivity experienced within one's social roles, as well as greater ''balance'' of one's total role-system. In addition, higher dispositional authenticity related to less negative aspects of general role functioning as reflected in less stress within their commonly enacted social roles, and less ''overload'' in their social roles in general. Finally, heightened levels of dispositional authenticity also reflected authentic aspects of role functioning. Specifically, greater dispositional authenticity relates to role experiences that were: (1) reflective of greater expressiveness of their true beliefs and opinions (role-voice), (2) more fully involved the enactment of their true-selves (greater true-self role enactment), (3) subjectively deemed to be authentic (role authenticity), and (4) regulated

TABLE VI
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN AUTHENTICITY AND ROLE FUNCTIONING
VARIABLES (GOLDMAN, 2004)

	Total authenticity	Awareness	Unbiased processing	Behavior	Relational orientation
Role Variable					
Balance	.35**	.29*	.17	.25*	.33**
Overload	−.06	−.03	−.17	.06	−.05
Satisfaction	.42**	.44**	.36**	.21[a]	.23*
Stress	−.23[a]	−.16	−.14	−.23*	−.13
Strain	−.25*	−.16	−.30**	−.13	−.16
Voice	.55**	.51**	.28**	.36**	.45**
Authenticity	.46**	.40**	.25*	.29*	.43**
Net positive affect	.44**	.45**	.28**	.27*	.30**
True-self	.43**	.36**	.29**	.28*	.35**
Self-determination	.24*	.20[a]	.18	.20[a]	.10

Note: [a]$p < .10$, *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$.

by more self-determined reasons. In sum, higher dispositional authenticity related to diverse aspects of healthy role functioning that also included several markers of authentic role experiences.

An important characteristic of this study is that social role variables represent "middle-level units" of personality functioning (Cantor & Zirkel, 1990) that involve a complex of motivations and precepts that function to guide experiences and behaviors. In a similar vein, individuals' goal pursuits reflect middle-level units that organize their day-to-day experiences and contribute to their overall sense of well-being. In the following study, we report how authentic goal pursuits are linked with more general aspects of well-being.

F. AUTHENTICITY, GOAL PURSUITS, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ADJUSTMENT

Goldman, Kernis, Foster, Herrmann, and Piasecki (2005b) examined the extent to which dispositional and goal-based indexes of authentic functioning related to each other and to markers of well-being. The *eudaimonic* view of well-being calls upon people to live their lives in accord with their daimon, or true-self (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Waterman, 1993). From this perspective, psychological health and well-being (eudaimonia) occur when people's lives are congruent with their deeply held values and core self, that is, when people are authentic.

This theme is prominent in a number of major theories. For example, Rogers (1961, p. 351) emphasized the *actualization tendency*, described as ". . . the directional trend which is evident in all organic and human life—the urge to expand, extend, develop, and mature—the tendency to express and activate all the capacities of the organism, or the self. " In a similar vein, SDT (Deci, 1980; Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2002) holds that people are authentic when their actions reflect their true- or core-selves, that is, when they are autonomous and self-determining. Considerable research supports this claim (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Building on SDT, Sheldon and Elliot (1999) proposed a model of *self-concordance* that links goal strivings, self-regulation, and basic need satisfaction. Self-concordant goals are those that satisfy basic needs and are congruent with the true-self. When individuals select and strive for goals that satisfy their basic needs, they tend to regulate their behavior in a highly self-determined manner via intrinsic and identified motivations. Several studies show that highly self-concordant goal strivings enhance psychological adjustment and well-being (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999; Sheldon & Kasser, 1995, 1998).

Other researchers substantiate the claim that self-concordant goals promote health and well-being. McGregor and Little (1998) examined the meaning that people ascribed to their goal pursuits (i.e., personal projects) and its relationship with psychological well-being. They reported that the more individuals rated their personal projects as reflecting personal integrity, the higher their psychological well-being as assessed with Ryff's (1989) measure. In another study, Sheldon et al. (1997) found that subjective role authenticity (i.e., the extent to which an individual feels authentic in each of five social roles) predicted greater psychological well-being.

Thus, theory and research suggest that authentic functioning (operating from one's daimon) is critical to need satisfaction and optimal well-being. The study by Goldman et al. (2005b) builds on prior study in several ways. First, we examined how individual differences in authentic functioning relate to psychological health and subjective well-being. We predicted that the greater one's authenticity, the healthier and more positive one's psychological and subjective well-being. Second, we examined how individual differences in authentic functioning relate to undertaking goals that are self-concordant and fulfill one's basic psychological needs. We predicted that the greater one's authenticity, the more self-concordant and need satisfying his or her goal pursuits. Third, we examined whether dispositional authenticity and undertaking need-fulfilling goals independently predict well-being. To the extent that they are independent predictors, this would offer strong support for the assertion that trait level authenticity and authenticity expressed via goal pursuits both are important to incorporate into conceptualizations of well-being.

One hundred and eleven participants completed the AI (AI-2). Subsequently, approximately 3 weeks later, they self-identified various goal pursuits (i.e., personal projects) and rated them on various aspects of authentic goal processes (i.e., authenticity, efficacy, stress/pressure, and intrinsic motivation). Ratings from these aspects were combined to form a *project need-fulfillment index* that reflected the overall degree to which people's projects afforded them authentic, need-fulfilling experiences. Specifically, higher project need-fulfillment reflected greater goal-based authenticity (e.g., "To what extent is this project consistent with the values which guide your life?" and "... to what extent does this project reflect who you really are?"), efficacy (e.g., "How competent are you to complete this project?" and "How successful do you think you will be at this project?"), and intrinsic motivation (e.g., "How much do you enjoy working on this project?" and "To what extent is this project pleasurable, i.e., comfortable, relaxing, self-indulgent, or hedonistic?"), and lower goal-based stress or pressure (e.g. "How difficult do you find it to carry out this project?" and "How much do you feel the amount of time available for working on this project is adequate?").

Participants also completed measures assessing subjective well-being, specifically, life satisfaction (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) and net positive affect (Brunstein, 1993), and psychological forms of well-being, specifically, Ryff's (1989) multicomponent measure of psychological well-being, 3 weeks after completing the AI-2.

Our findings indicated that dispositional authenticity and project need-fulfillment positively correlated with each other ($r = .29$, $p < .01$) and with all assessed markers of well-being. In addition, as shown in Table VII, both dispositional authenticity and project need-fulfillment independently predicted participant's subsequent ratings of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being, as well as the vast majority of specific well-being components (all in the case of dispositional authenticity). These findings suggest that authentic functioning, exhibited at the personality level and in middle-level goal representations, meaningfully accounts for broad aspects of well-being.

The fact that dispositional authenticity and project need-fulfillment positively correlate with one another suggests that we can conceptualize and measure authentic functioning in multiple ways. However, this bivariate relationship does not establish a causal direction with regard to these two indices of authentic functioning. Although it may be tempting to presume that dispositional authenticity may account for the extent to which people experience their goals as authentic and need fulfilling, alternative possibilities exist. For instance, people's direct experiences in their goal pursuits may affect their degree of dispositional authenticity. In other words, by satisfying needs for autonomy and competence through enacting need-fulfilling goals, individuals may further promote their overall level of dispositional authenticity and its individual components. For example, awareness may increase when goal pursuits confer opportunities to discover and identify one's interests and talents. Similarly, by satisfying needs for autonomy and competence, people may become less prone to use self-esteem maintenance strategies that bias their processing of self-relevant information (Goldman, in press; Kernis, 2003; Knee & Zuckerman, 1996).

Our findings also indicated that individual differences in authentic functioning, as measured by the Authenticity Inventory, related to measures of both psychological and subjective well-being. In fact, individual differences in authenticity predicted each facet of Ryff's measure (and its composite), net positive affect, and life satisfaction independently of our project need-fulfillment index, which itself was a consistent predictor of well-being. We had anticipated the possibility that the need-fulfillment index would mediate relationships that emerged between authenticity and other markers of well-being, but our findings did not bear this out. Instead, simultaneous regression analyses indicated either that both authenticity and goal need-fulfillment

TABLE VII
PREDICTING WELL-BEING FROM DISPOSITIONAL AUTHENTICITY AND
PROJECT NEED-FULFILLMENT

Predictor	Beta	t	$p <$	Model R^2
Life Satisfaction				
Authenticity	.24	2.60	.01	
Project need-fulfillment	.29	3.11	.01	.18
Net Positive Affect				
Authenticity	.26	3.18	.01	
Project need-fulfillment	.45	5.44	.01	.34
Autonomy				
Authenticity	.50	5.90	.01	
Project need-fulfillment	.11	1.31	.19	.29
Environmental Mastery				
Authenticity	.30	3.49	.01	
Project need-fulfillment	.32	3.71	.01	.25
Personal Growth				
Authenticity	.35	3.85	.01	
Project need-fulfillment	.21	2.32	.02	.20
Positive Relationships				
Authenticity	.32	3.46	.01	
Project need-fulfillment	.17	1.79	.08	.16
Purpose in Life				
Authenticity	.29	3.08	.01	
Project need-fulfillment	.14	1.43	.16	.13
Self-Acceptance				
Authenticity	.24	2.57	.01	
Project need-fulfillment	.25	2.71	.01	.15
Eudaimonic Well-Being Composite				
Authenticity	.49	6.28	.01	
Project need-fulfillment	.29	3.78	.01	.41
Hedonic Well-Being Composite				
Authenticity	.27	3.24	.01	
Project need-fulfillment	.40	4.75	.01	.39

Note: Eudaimonic composite = sum of autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relationships, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. Hedonic composite = sum of life satisfaction and net positive affect (with z-score transformation). All Model R^2 significant at $p < .01$.

predicted well-being or that only authenticity was an independent predictor; in no case was goal need-fulfillment the only independent predictor.

The fact that goal need-fulfillment did not mediate the impact of dispositional authenticity on other measures of well-being raises the question of

what mechanisms or processes might account for this relationship. One possibility is that a chronic tendency for one's true- or core-self to be operative confers direct benefits on one's well-being. That is, being true to oneself in thought, feeling, and behavior may promote eudaimonia (e.g., a sense of meaning, autonomy, growth, and mastery over one's environment), as well as positive affect and life satisfaction. This view of authenticity is similar to Rogers' conceptualization of the fully functioning individual as one who is open to experience, lives fully in the present moment, trusts inner experience, is creative, and possesses a strong sense of freedom. These qualities are akin to those that Ryff emphasizes in her model of eudaimonic well-being.

VII. Authenticity, Relationship Functioning, and Relationship Satisfaction

We believe that authentic functioning involves a number of processes and characteristics that aid in the development and maintenance of close relationships. In this section, we elaborate on such processes and characteristics and we report on a study in which we examined their operation within the context of romantic relationships among college students.

A. SELF-DISCLOSURE, TRUST, INTIMACY

Our view of authentic functioning emphasizes that an authentic relationship involves placing a premium on valuing, striving, and achieving openness and honesty. Therefore, we presume that highly authentic individuals will foster healthy growth and development of their intimate relationships by disclosing self-aspects that reflect who they really are, both good and bad. Thus, when authenticity is high, meaningful and honest self-disclosure emerges and presumably facilitates intimacy that is rooted in feeling accepted by one's relationship partner for being who one really is. This line of reasoning is largely consistent with Reis and Shaver's (1988) proposition that two conditions are necessary for self-disclosure to create intimacy. Specifically, they propose that intimacy develops in circumstances when (1) individuals engage in self-disclosure that is emotional, as opposed to merely factual, and (2) their partners are responsive to the self-disclosure, making them feel understood, validated, and cared for. Moreover, prior studies (e.g., Meeks, Hendrick, & Hendrick, 1998; Sprecher & Hendrich, 2004) demonstrate that self-disclosure tendencies relate positively to relationship satisfaction.

   In the present investigation, we assessed emotional and intimate forms of self-disclosure and people's perceptions of their partners validation of them. To assess emotional self-disclosure we administered Snell, Miller, and Belk's

(1988) *Emotional Self-Disclosure Scale*, a 40-item measure that assesses participants' willingness to discuss with their partner, those times when they felt various emotions (e.g., depressed, enraged, serene, happy). In addition, we administered the *Self-Disclosure Index* (Miller, Berg, & Archer, 1983), a 10-item measure that assesses the degree to which individuals had discussed various intimate topics with their relationship partner (e.g., "your deepest feelings" and "what you like and dislike about yourself"). Ratings were made on five-point scales (1 = not at all; 5 = fully and completely).

Rempel, Holmes, and Zanna (1985) theorized that *interpersonal trust* in close relationships is comprised of three components: predictability (the belief that the partner's behavior is consistent), dependability (the belief that the partner can be counted on to be honest, reliable, and benevolent), and faith (the conviction that the partner will be caring and responsive in the future). Rempel et al. (1985) found that faith and dependability subscale scores significantly correlated with reported feelings on a composite measure of relationship adjustment that included love and liking toward one's partner, and present levels of relationship happiness, satisfaction, and success.

Descutner and Thelen (1991. p. 218) proposed that *fear-of-intimacy* reflects people's "inhibited capacity, because of anxiety, to exchange thoughts and feelings of personal significance with another individual who is highly valued." Specifically, fear-of-intimacy was theorized to be comprised of three features: (1) content (the communication of personal information), (2) emotional valence (strong feelings about the personal information exchanged), and (3) vulnerability (high regard for the intimate other). In two separate studies, Descutner and Thelen (1991) reported that higher fear-of-intimacy scores negatively correlated with participants' satisfaction with the quality of their dating relationships. In our view, fear-of-intimacy reflects a barrier to authentic relationship functioning and consequently relationship satisfaction. We administered Descutner and Thelen's 35-item individual difference measure of fear-of-intimacy and modified the instructions to ask participants to make ratings based on their romantic partner. These ratings were made with respect to such content as how they would feel sharing personal things about the past, entrusting their most private thoughts with another person, their comfort with having open and honest communication, and taking the risk of being hurt in the context of a close relationship.

B. PARTNER VALIDATION

Perceptions of *partner validation* were determined by questionnaire responses to a "Perceived Relationship Qualities" scale (Goldman & Kernis, 2005) we had generated for the purpose of the present study. The partner validation

subscale was composed of six-items (e.g., ''I feel my partner values me for who I really am as a person,'' ''I would like my partner to value me more than he/she does (reverse-scored),'' and ''I feel my partner is supportive of my feelings on matters central to who I am''). Internal consistency ratings indicated that the subscale had reasonably good reliability, alpha = .79.

C. REACTIONS TO PARTNER'S BEHAVIORS AND RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS

We also examined how authenticity and relationship satisfaction relate to reactions to partner's ambiguously negative reactions. Kernis, Goldman, and Paradise (2004) reasoned that individuals with secure high self-esteem would interpret and react to ambiguously negative actions by their partner by treating them as innocuous, either by *minimizing* their negative aspects or by offering a *benign interpretation* of them. In contrast, Kernis et al. (2004) reasoned and that individuals with fragile high self-esteem would imbue these events with negative implications, either by *internalizing* their negative implications or by resolving to *reciprocate* in kind to get even with their partner.

To test these hypotheses, Kernis et al. (2004) developed the Relationship Reaction Inventory (RRI) to gauge the extent to which people report defensive, highly ego-involved reactions to ambiguously negative actions by their relationship partner. The RRI consists of nine scenarios that depicted ambiguously negative events in which their partner might engage. Each event has multiple plausible causes and implications for self, partner, and the relationship. Participants rated the likelihood that they would respond in each of four different ways designed to capture this multiplicity of potential causes and implications. Two response options signaled overinvestment of the self and implied that the self somehow was threatened by the event. Of these, one (*Personalizing*) involved magnifying the event's negative implications for the self. The other (*Reciprocating*) involved resolving to ''get even'' with one's partner as a way to deal with the self-esteem threat. The two remaining response options captured reactions or interpretations that did not involve overinvestment of the self. One of these (*Benign*) involved a transient externally based (usually partner related) explanation and the other (*Minimize*) involved taking the event at ''face value,'' that is, not making a big deal of it. An example scenario and response options is as follows:

Your partner gives you a nice birthday present, but it is not what you have subtly let him/her know that you really wanted. How likely is it that you would ...

(a) Think that you must not be important enough to him/her (Personalize)
(b) Enjoy the present you got (Minimize)
(c) Think that circumstances beyond his/her control must have prevented it (Benign)
(d) In the future give him/her a present other than what you know he/she clearly wants (Reciprocating)

Consistent with these hypotheses, Kernis et al. (2004) found that whereas *unstable* high self-esteem individuals reported being most likely to engage in *personalizing* and *get even* reactions, *stable* high self-esteem individuals reported being least likely (low self-esteem individuals fell between). Conversely, whereas *stable* high self-esteem individuals reported being most likely to engage in *benign* and *minimizing* reactions, *unstable* high self-esteem individuals reported being least likely (again, low self-esteem individuals fell between). These findings are important because they point to the operation of dynamics associated with fragile high self-esteem that until now have been ascribed to low self-esteem individuals (Murray, Holmes, MacDonald, & Ellsworth, 1998) or to those highly sensitive to rejection (Downey, Freitas, Michaelis, & Khouri, 1998).

Elsewhere (Kernis, 2003; Kernis & Goldman, 2004, 2005), we theorized that complementary processes may be operative in authenticity and secure high self-esteem development, and thus, we reasoned that high authenticity would similarly be related to low ego-involved reactions (i.e., greater minimizing and benign reactions and less personalizing, and reciprocating reactions). We anticipated these findings for several reasons. First, high authenticity relates to secure forms of high self-esteem, which Kernis et al. (2004) showed related to this pattern of reactions. Second, high authenticity (particularly the unbiased processing component) reflects objective, nondefensive processing of evaluative information. Third, correlations between authenticity and mindfulness reported in this chapter suggest that authenticity relates to non-ego-involved attentiveness and awareness of internal and external stimuli.

Whereas the RRI asks respondents to indicate how they would respond to hypothetical partner transgressions, other work has examined various responses that people have when experiencing relationship problems. Specifically, Rusbult, Verette, Whitney, Slovik, and Lipkus (1991) developed a self-report measure of accommodation tendencies. Participants respond to four separate stems (e.g., "When my partner is unintentionally unpleasant or thoughtless"), each of which is followed by four response options. Specifically, participants indicate the extent to which they engage in constructive reactions: *voice* (actively and constructively attempting to improve conditions, e.g., "I talk to him or her about what's going on, trying to work

out a solution'') and *loyalty* (passively but optimistically waiting for conditions to improve, e.g., ''I give my partner the benefit of the doubt and forget about it''), and destructive reactions—*exit* (actively destroying the relationship, abusing one's partner, or threatening to leave or separate, e.g., ''I feel so angry that I want to walk right out the door'') and *neglect* (ignoring or criticizing one's partner, or avoiding spending time or discussing relevant issues, e.g., ''I sulk and try to stay away from my partner for awhile''). Across a variety of studies, Rusbult et al. (1991) reported that destructive reactions predicted lower relationship satisfaction, and constructive reactions predicted greater relationship satisfaction. In the present study, we predicted that higher authenticity would relate to greater constructive and lesser destructive conflict reactions.

D. RELATIONSHIP MOTIVES

Finally, we asked people about their motives for being in their current relationships, using a variant of the self-regulatory styles measure developed by Ryan and Connell (1989) in which people are asked to report on the reasons why they engage in a particular behavior. In this instance, respondents were asked to report their reasons for *their behaviors as a romantic* partner. Reasons reflect varying degrees of self-determination. *Intrinsic* (e.g., I do things because of the pleasure and fun of doing them) and *identified* (e.g., I do things because they tie into my personal values and beliefs) reasons reflect *high self-determination*, whereas *introjected* (e.g., I force myself to do things to avoid feeling guilty or anxious) and *external* (e.g., I do things because somebody else wants me to or because I will get something from somebody if I do them) reasons reflect *low self-determination*. Likewise, participants completed the measure of relationship motivation reported by Rempel et al. (1985) that taps into the extent to which individuals' relationships are intrinsically satisfying to them. Rempel et al. (1985) found that the more individuals endorsed possessing greater intrinsic motives, whereby relationship rewards involve mutual satisfaction, empathic concern, and value for both partners, the more they reported feeling love and faith in their relationship. In contrast, extrinsic motives that involved obtaining rewards exclusively outside the relationship (e.g., parental approval) were unrelated to the measures of relationship adjustment. Thus, possessing motivations that involve rewards obtained within one's relationship (as opposed to gains obtained external to the couple) appears to confer benefits to the quality of a couple's relationship. Sample items tapping into intrinsic motives include: (1) ''We have a rewarding intellectual relationship. We have meaningful discussions which are stimulating and enriching.''

(2) "We are close and intimate. We have special ways of demonstrating affection and letting each other know how we feel." (3) "He/she lets me be myself. He/she doesn't tie me down and doesn't try to change me." We predicted that higher relationship authenticity would relate to more self-determined self-regulation and intrinsic relationship motives.

In order to examine the relationship between dispositional authenticity and relationship satisfaction, and the previously described relationship functioning variables, Goldman, Brunell, Kernis, Heppner, and Davis (2005a) administered the AI-3 in an initial session to 61 heterosexual couples involved in a committed relationship of 3 or more months. Participants subsequently completed the remaining measures (except for relationship satisfaction, to be discussed) in two additional sessions that took place over an 8-week period. We assessed relationship satisfaction twice, during the first and last sessions, using Rusbult's five-item satisfaction measure (Rusbult, 1983; Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998). Items included were "I feel satisfied with my relationship," "My relationship is much better than others' relationships," "My relationship is close to ideal," "Our relationship makes me very happy," and "Our relationship does a good job of fulfilling my needs for intimacy, companionship, etc." Each item was answered on a nine-point scale (0 = do not agree at all, 8 = agree completely). We first examined the extent to which dispositional authenticity and participant gender predicted Time 2 satisfaction and change in satisfaction from Time 1 to Time 2. In both cases, significant main effects emerged for authenticity, such that higher authenticity related to higher subsequent satisfaction and greater positive change in satisfaction. In neither case did gender produce any significant effects, either as a main effect or as interacting with authenticity. Consequently, we did not include gender in further analyses.

We developed composite measures for a variety of relationship processes in order to examine more broadly based theoretical domains of close relationship functioning. Specifically, these relationship process composites include the following: self-disclosure and relationship motives. For each composite an overall summary score was created by first calculating z-scores for each measure and then adding the z-scores. *Self-Disclosure* reflected both emotional, (i.e., Snell et al.'s measure) and intimate (i.e., Miller et al.'s measure) forms. In addition, we included fear-of-intimacy scores (reverse scored so that higher summary scores reflected less fear) to reflect people's tendencies to inhibit their thoughts and feelings from being shared with their partners. *Relationship motives* reflected the degree to which participants reported self-determined reasons for relationship behaviors (i.e., self-determination index scores) and were motivated by rewards obtained within their relationships (i.e., intrinsic relationship motives).

In addition, defensiveness in response to hypothetical partner transgressions involved responses on the RRI. Specifically, the *defensive reactions*

composite reflected *ego-involved* reactions (i.e., personalizing and reciprocat-ing) and the *nondefensive reactions* composite reflected *non-ego-involved* reac-tions (i.e., minimizing and benign explanations). With respect to Rusbult et al.'s (1991) accommodation measure, a *destructive resolution tactic* com-posite reflected the sum of exit and neglect subscales and a *constructive resolution tactic* composite reflected the sum of voice and loyalty subscales.

We computed correlations between dispositional authenticity and each of the relationship process variables. In addition, we computed separate regression analyses in which we predicted relationship satisfaction from dispositional authenticity and each of these relationship process variables.

Table VIII displays the correlations between overall dispositional auth-enticity and relational orientation scores with the relationship process

TABLE VIII
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN AUTHENTICITY AND RELATIONSHIP
PROCESS VARIABLES

Variable	Authenticity total	Relational orientation
Satisfaction T2	.29**	.31**
Partner trust	.41**	.41**
Self-regulation	.41**	.36**
Intrinsic motives	.34**	.45**
Relationship motives composite	.48**	.51**
Miller-Berg's self-disclosure	.34**	.38**
Emotional self-disclosure	.32**	.30**
Fear-of-intimacy	−.40**	−.44**
Self-disclosure composite	.43**	.44**
Minimize	.29**	.25**
Benign	.30**	.33**
Internalize	−.28**	−.15
Reciprocate	−.32**	−.32**
Ego-involved composite	−.33**	−.26**
Non-ego-involved composite	.31**	.31**
Voice	.14	.31**
Exit	−.31**	−.30**
Loyalty	−.08	.09
Neglect	−.42**	−.42**
Destructive composite	−.42**	−.41**
Constructive composite	.04	.23**

Note: Relationship motives = self-regulatory styles and intrinsic relationship motive; self-disclosure composite = Miller-Berg's self-disclosure scale, emotional self-disclosure scale, and fear-of-intimacy (reversed); ego-involved = internalize and reciprocate; non-ego-involved = minimize and benign explanation; destructive = exit and neglect; constructive = voice and loyalty.

variables. Consistent with our view that authentic people value openness and intimacy in their close relationships, we find that higher authenticity relates to more self-disclosure. In addition, higher authenticity relates to greater self-determined reasons and intrinsic relationship motives. When responding to hypothetical partner transgressions, higher authenticity relates to greater non-ego-involved (benign and minimizing) and less ego-involved reactions (personalizing and reciprocating). In addition, higher authenticity relates to greater constructive reactions and less destructive reactions to relationship problems, although this was less true for passive (loyalty) than for active (voice) constructive reactions.

Tables IX and X, respectively, report the regression analyses with overall dispositional authenticity and each relationship process variable entered simultaneously as predictors of subsequent relationship satisfaction and change in satisfaction, respectively. With respect to subsequent satisfaction, we find that the tendency to self-disclose, intrinsic relationship motives, and trust, each mediate the relationship between authenticity and satisfaction that emerged. That is, when authenticity and disclosure tendencies,

TABLE IX

PREDICTING RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION FROM AUTHENTICITY AND RELATIONSHIP PROCESS VARIABLES

Predictor	Beta	t	$p <$	Model R^2
1. Authenticity	.29	3.37	.01	.09
2. Authenticity	.08	0.91	.38	
Self-disclosure	.51	5.90	.01	.30
3. Authenticity	.07	0.80	.43	
Relationship motives	.48	5.46	.01	.26
4. Authenticity	.22	2.37	.03	
Ego-involved reactions	−.20	−2.17	.04	.12
5. Authenticity	.26	2.78	.01	
Non-ego-involved reactions	.12	1.34	.19	.10
6. Authenticity	.15	1.65	.10	
Destructive reactions to problems	−.34	−3.77	.01	.17
7. Authenticity	.03	0.43	.67	
Trust	.63	8.17	.01	.41

Note: Constructive reactions to problems did not predict relationship satisfaction and therefore were not included in regression models. *Relationship motives* = self-regulatory styles and intrinsic relationship motives; *self-disclosure composite* = Miller-Berg's self-disclosure scale, emotional self-disclosure, and fear of intimacy; *ego-involved RRI reactions* = personalize plus reciprocate reactions; *Non-ego-involved reactions* = benign plus minimize reactions, *Destructive reactions* = exit and neglect.

TABLE X
PREDICTING CHANGE IN RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION FROM
AUTHENTICITY AND RELATIONSHIP PROCESS VARIABLES

Predictor	Beta	t	$p <$	Model R^2
1. Authenticity	.16	2.09	.05	
Time 1 satisfaction	.55	7.31	.01	.37
2. Authenticity	.05	0.65	.53	
Self-disclosure	.32	3.84	.01	
Time 1 satisfaction	.43	5.47	.01	.43
3. Authenticity	.05	0.61	.54	
Relationship motives	.29	3.42	.01	
Time 1 satisfaction	.45	5.67	.01	.41
4. Authenticity	.12	1.51	.14	
Ego-involved reactions	−.12	−1.49	.14	
Time 1 satisfaction	.53	6.70	.01	.38
5. Authenticity	.14	1.74	.08	
Non-ego-involved reactions	.07	0.92	.36	
Time 1 satisfaction	.54	7.18	.01	.37
6. Authenticity	.09	1.14	.26	
Destructive reactions	−.19	−2.33	.03	
Time 1 satisfaction	.50	6.47	.01	.38
7. Authenticity	.02	0.25	.80	
Trust	.46	5.63	.01	
Time 1 satisfaction	.35	4.59	.01	.49

Note: Constructive reactions to problems did not predict relationship satisfaction and there-fore were not included in regression models. *Relationship motives* = self-regulatory styles and intrinsic relationship motives; *self-disclosure composite* = Miller-Berg's self-disclosure scale, emotional self-disclosure, and fear of intimacy; *ego-involved RRI reactions* = personalize plus reciprocate reactions; *non-ego-involved reactions* = benign plus minimize reactions, *Destructive reactions* = exit and neglect.

relationship motives, or trust, are entered simultaneously, only disclosure tendencies, relationship motives, or trust remain predictive of relationship satisfaction. These mediation findings indicate that being able to open up and share intimate information with one's partner, trusting one's partner, and possessing intrinsic and self-determined motives for one's romantic relationship are important components of the relatively high relationship satisfaction experienced by authentic individuals.

In contrast to findings from Kernis et al. (2004), RRI reactions did not mediate the association between authenticity and relationship satisfaction in the current study. Rather, change in satisfaction was marginally predicted by authenticity when entered simultaneously with non-ego-involved relation-ship reactions, whereas no significant predictors emerged with ego-involved

relationship reactions. When predicting subsequent relationship satisfaction (i.e., no change in satisfaction), authenticity was an independent predictor when either ego-involved or non-ego-involved relationship reactions also were in the equation. However, with respect to the Rusbult's measure of accommodation, the composite assessing destructive reactions to relationship problems did mediate the association between authenticity and change in relationship satisfaction, suggesting that authenticity may influence changes in satisfaction by buffering against the use of destructive reactions.

The findings from this study shed some light on how dispositional authenticity relates to the nature of individuals' intimate relationships. Individuals high in dispositional authenticity report greater self-disclosure and intrinsic relationship motives and exhibit less defensive ego-involved reactions to either hypothetical partner transgressions or problems within their relationships. In turn, a number of these factors appear to account for why higher dispositional authenticity relates to higher relationship satisfaction.

VIII. Authenticity and Retrospective Accounts of Parental Authority Styles

Kernis (2003) suggested that the awareness component of authenticity is facilitated by what is called *intersubjectivity* (Stern, 1985), "a state of connection and mutual understanding that emerges during interaction with another person …. A reasonable degree of match between the child's experience and the adult's feedback is necessary in order to establish a state of intersubjectivity; different types of mismatches, such as when the caregiver fails to reflect the same emotional tone or energy level that the infant is feeling, can make the infant quite distressed and may lead to a disrupted sense of self" (Stern, 1985; as cited in Hoyle et al., 1999, pp. 31–32).

Kernis (2003) further suggested that the most damaging type of exchange for a child's developing awareness involves a parent explicitly denying the legitimacy of a child's inner experience, perhaps even punishing it. Continual punishment or contradiction of a child's inner experiences may lead the child to ignore or dismiss these experiences in favor of those of the parental figure (cf., Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan, 1993). Some years ago, Sullivan called these self-aspects the "bad me" or "not me." Elements of the "bad" or "not" me also figure in the display of inauthentic or "false-self" behaviors (Harter, 1997). In contrast, familial environments that support the child's expression of core aspects and that facilitate choicefulness should promote authentic functioning (Grolnick & Beiswenger, in press). Thus, it is important to

examine parental characteristics that promote or undermine the development of authenticity in children and young adults.

Goldman et al. (2005c) examined how authenticity among college students related to their memories of their parents' childrearing styles. Baumrind (1971, 1991), as cited by Berzonsky (2004) identified three major types (authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive) that . . .

> vary along a number of dimensions including the extent to which parents: establish firm guidelines and limits; explain and justify demands and expectations; assert power and control; and provide emotional support. *Authoritative* parents set clear, reasonable guideline and they exercise reliable control in a legitimate and loving fashion. They explain and justify their expectations and actions and they are responsive to feedback. However, authoritative parents will assert power and control when adolescents are too immature or self-centered to listen to reason. . . . *Authoritarian* parents set definite limits and make rules that are not open to discussion. They make unilateral demands and use power to reinforce them. *Permissive* parents are responsive and indulging but make few demands and exercise limited control (Berzonsky, 2004, p. 214).

Authoritative parents are warm and supportive, foster autonomy in their children, and allow them voice. From our perspective, such behaviors on the part of parents will promote children's developing confidence and trust in their own views, desires, motives, and so forth. We anticipated that higher authenticity would relate to higher ratings of authoritative parenting styles. In contrast, *authoritarian* parents stifle autonomy and children's voice, instead coldly attempting to exert power and control with their demands. Finally, *permissive* parents, while warm and indulgent, do not provide the structure that most children need; instead, they leave children to their own devices. Consequently, we anticipated that authoritarian and permissive parental styles would relate to lower authenticity. We measured parenting styles using Buri's (1991) parental authority questionnaire.

Correlations are displayed in Table XI. The strongest relationships emerged between authenticity and both mothers' and fathers' authoritative styles; as anticipated, the higher the parents' authoritative styles, the higher their adult children's total authenticity, awareness, and unbiased processing. Although behavioral authenticity was unrelated to reports of parents' authoritative styles, it did relate (inversely) to parental permissiveness in the manner we expected. Unbiased processing inversely correlated with mothers' permissiveness, and total authenticity marginally correlated inversely with permissiveness. Surprisingly, no relationships emerged between parental authoritarianism and dispositional authenticity.

In future research, it will be important to examine more directly the extent to which parents are autonomy-supportive versus controlling. As noted by Vansteenkiste, Zhou, Lens, and Soenens (2005):

TABLE XI
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN AUTHENTICITY AND RETROSPECTIVE
ACCOUNTS OF PARENTAL AUTHORITY

Measure	Total	Awareness	Unbiased processing	Behavior	Relational orientation
Authoritarian					
Mother	.04	.05	−.00	.10	−.01
Father	−.11	−.14	−.14	.03	−.08
Combined	−.05	−.06	−.09	.07	−.05
Permissiveness					
Mother	−.22[a]	−.01	−.31**	−.25*	−.10
Father	−.20[a]	−.02	−.17	−.30**	−.13
Combined	−.24*	−.04	−.26*	−.31**	−.14
Authoritative					
Mother	.38**	.47**	.27*	.20[a]	.20[a]
Father	.29*	.36**	.28*	.04	.18
Combined	.36**	.45**	.31**	.13	.21[a]

Note: [a] $p < .10$, *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$.

> Parents promote volitional functioning in their children by being attuned to and empathic toward the child's needs, by encouraging the child to act on his or her personally valued interests, and by minimizing the use of controlling parenting techniques (Grolnick, Deci, & Ryan, 1997). Conversely, parents will induce a controlled regulation when they use overtly controlling strategies (e.g., rewards, deadlines, punishments; see Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999) or more subtle and implicit pressures (e.g., guilt-induction, shaming, love withdrawal; Barber, 2002; Vansteenkiste, Simons, Lens, Soenens, & Matos, 2005) that are aimed to push adolescents to think, act, or feel in particular ways. Past research in Western samples has clearly demonstrated the beneficial well-being and learning effects of parental autonomy support (Grolnick, 2003). Conversely, consistent evidence has documented the negative developmental outcomes of controlling parenting (Barber, 2002, p. 468).

Although autonomy-support and control are implied in authoritative and authoritarian styles respectively, these styles capture broader orientations than these dimensions per se. We believe that parental autonomy-support and control are key elements in developing or undermining children's and adolescents' authentic functioning, but demonstration of such processes awaits future research. Similarly, studies that explicitly examine degrees of parental support for the components of dispositional authenticity are likely to play a pivotal role in distinguishing the effects of parenting on authentic functioning.

IX. Authenticity and Self-Esteem

Earlier in this chapter, we reported findings indicating that dispositional authenticity predicted aspects of coping and self-concepts independently of self-esteem level. However, the issue of how authenticity and self-esteem relate is complex because high self-esteem has multiple forms, some more closely related to psychological health and well-being than are others (Jordan, Logel, Spencer, & Zanna, in press; Kernis, 2003; Kernis & Waschull, 1995; Paradise & Kernis, 2002). Specifically, whereas some forms of high self-esteem reflect *secure* high self-esteem, other forms reflect *fragile* high self-esteem (Kernis, 2003). *Secure* high self-esteem involves feeling worthwhile and valuable, liking and satisfaction with oneself, accepting one's weaknesses, having a solid foundation, and NOT requiring continual validation or promotion. In contrast, *fragile* high self-esteem involves feeling very proud and superior to others, not liking to see weaknesses in oneself, or for others to see such weaknesses, and exaggerated tendencies to defend against possible threats to self-worth and to engage in self-promoting activities.

Existing theory and literature provide several ways to distinguish between secure and fragile forms of high self-esteem. Each of these forms has been discussed extensively elsewhere, along with supporting evidence (Kernis, 2003; Kernis & Paradise, 2002), so we only briefly discuss them here. *Unstable (fragile)* self-esteem reflects substantial short-term fluctuations in contextually based immediate feelings of self-worth, whereas *stable (secure)* self-esteem reflects minimal short-term fluctuations. *Contingent (fragile)* self-esteem is dependent on achieving specific outcomes, meeting expectations, matching standards, etc., whereas *true (secure)* self-esteem is secure self-worth that arises naturally from satisfaction of basic psychological needs, and that is not in need of continual validation. A match between individual's *implicit (nonconscious)* and *explicit (conscious)* positive feelings of self-worth reflects *secure* high self-esteem. In contrast, a mismatch between individual's *implicit (nonconscious)* and *explicit (conscious)* feelings of self-worth (one is negative) reflects *fragile* high self-esteem. Optimal self-esteem reflects the sum total of these secure self-esteem markers. It arises naturally from: (1) successfully dealing with life challenges; (2) the operation of one's core, true, authentic self as a source of input to behavioral choices; and (3) relationships in which one is valued for whom one is, and not for what one achieves (Kernis, 2003).

We believe that authenticity and each aspect of secure (versus fragile) high self-esteem likely are reciprocally related to each other. That is, authenticity may provide both the foundation for achieving secure high self-esteem and the processes through which secure high self-esteem relates to psychological and interpersonal adjustment (Kernis & Goldman, 2004). When

TABLE XII
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN AUTHENTICITY AND SELF-ESTEEM VARIABLES

	Total authenticity	Awareness	Unbiased processing	Behavior	Relational orientation
Spring 2005 Sample (61 Individuals)					
Self-esteem					
Level	.68**	.63**	.57**	.52**	.48**
Contingent	−.58**	−.58**	−.43**	−.56**	−.34**
Stability	−.43**	−.37**	−.42**	−.39**	−.23[a]
Fall and Spring 2004 Sample (101 Individuals)					
Self-esteem					
Level	.47**	.48**	.34**	.39**	.24*
Contingent	−.34**	−.35**	−.37**	−.45**	−.25
Stability	−.34**	−.32**	−.31**	−.29**	−.15

Note: [a] $< .10$ * $p < .05$, **$p < .01$.

breakdowns in authenticity occur, they are likely to reverberate through the self-system and cause decreased or more fragile self-esteem. Conversely, possessing fragile self-esteem may undermine or interfere with various processes associated with authenticity. For example, to ease the sting associated with failure, people with fragile self-esteem may be more likely to engage in biased than unbiased processing, or to modify their behavior merely to please a potential evaluator. To date, we have obtained data linking authenticity to secure forms of high self-esteem. Specifically, in several samples, we have found that higher dispositional authenticity relates to higher self-esteem levels, more stable self-esteem, and less contingent self-esteem. These data are displayed in Table XII. An important agenda for future research will be to further examine the interplay of these components of self-esteem and dispositional authenticity.

X. Potential Downside of Authenticity

The findings reviewed in this chapter reveal that dispositional authenticity relates to a diverse set of markers reflecting healthy psychological and interpersonal functioning. Why, then, is not everybody highly authentic? Elsewhere (Kernis & Goldman, 2005), we tackled this issue in depth and suggested that authenticity can have its costs. Here, we briefly review these costs.

A. AWARENESS

Certain forms of self-knowledge may be painful. Becoming aware of the limitations in one's social skills may be painful, as may finding out that one is not as athletically talented as one had hoped. Perceived self-discrepancies between one's actual qualities and ideal qualities or between qualities one believes one should possess may produce negative emotional consequences (Higgins, 1989). In addition, powerful emotional experiences may be unsettling and even threatening, as they expose one's vulnerabilities and sensitivities. Furthermore, self-reflection itself may heighten unpleasant affect, particularly when it involves attempts to understand one's role in important negative outcomes or experiences. Finally, incorporating a diverse set of social roles into a multifaceted self-concept may promote role strain and accompanying distress (Thoits, 1986).

B. UNBIASED PROCESSING

The major drawback associated with unbiased processing is that it makes one susceptible to encountering negative information about the self. Although undoubtedly true, distorting or repressing negative self-information is costly for a number of reasons. As we reported earlier in this chapter, defensively processing stressful information about oneself relates to lower, not higher, psychological functioning. Likewise, positively distorting self-relevant information leaves one open to the social consequences associated with an arrogant self-image. In any case, distorting self-relevant information reflects heightened ego-investment with its attendant rigidity and overreactivity (Hodgins & Knee, 2002).

C. BEHAVIOR

Behaving authentically sometimes takes courage because one's true inclinations may conflict with those of one's peers or authority figures who have strong evaluative or controlling tendencies (Deci & Ryan, 1995). Sometimes behaving authentically runs the risk of prompting others' scorn or ridicule, costs which can be very powerful inhibitors. However, behaving in ways that are at odds with one's true-self merely to satisfy controlling pressures can also undermine well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Neighbors, Larimer, Geisner, & Knee, 2004). When people conform to environmental dictates they are not always behaving in ways that conflict with their true-selves. At times exhibiting false-self behaviors can be an expression of role-experimentation whereby people may facilitate self-discovery and enrich the depth of their

self-understanding. Harter (1999) notes that people's motives for their inauthentic behaviors differentiate the consequences these actions have for their well-being. For instance, inauthentic actions that are motivated by self-uncertainty, or disdain for oneself, are likely to undermine well-being more so than inauthentic actions that reflect a process of electing to express preexisting self-inclinations (e.g., role-experimentation). Furthermore, people can, and often do, internalize social contingencies and freely adopt them as self-guides (Ryan & Connell, 1989). In such cases, conflict is minimal or absent and it is relatively easy for people to behave authentically.

D. RELATIONAL ORIENTATION

The potential costs of confrontations over relational authenticity are many, including self and partner defensiveness, overreactivity, and lack of intimacy. In turn, these costs contribute to shallow, unsatisfying relationships that are prone to dissolve over time or be continually fraught with problems and challenges (Kernis, Goldman, & Paradise, 2004). One can minimize these costs by choosing partners who also value relational authenticity.

E. IMPLICATIONS FOR HEDONIC AND EUDAIMONIC WELL-BEING

Thus, it is evident that authenticity can have potential costs. For example, accurate self-knowledge can be painful, behaving in accord with one's true-self may occasion others' disfavor, and opening oneself up to an intimate makes one vulnerable to rejection or betrayal. Such adverse consequences potentially associated with authenticity are likely to undermine individuals' *hedonic*, or subjective, well-being. For instance, research on identity statuses demonstrates that optimal well-being occurs when individuals experience identity achievement by resolving their identity crises through engaging in high levels of identity exploration and then committing to ways of resolving them (Marcia, 1966). Thus, for people to attain optimal well-being through identity formation, they may have to temporarily endure costs to well-being in the course of exploring who they can be. Similarly, authenticity may not always be pleasurable. However, we would argue that the benefits of authentic functioning to individuals' *eudaimonic* well-being (i.e., the extent to which they are fully functioning, Ryan & Deci, 2000) are substantial. When functioning authentically, people are likely to think, feel, and behave in ways that promote the fulfillment of their needs and heighten the degree to which they are fully functioning (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Rogers, 1961). Thus, people can be faced with choosing between experiencing pleasure (or avoiding displeasure)

and maximizing the extent to which they are fully functioning. How they resolve this dilemma has enormous implications, both short- and long-term.

XI. Future Directions

The findings reported in this chapter provide initial support for our multi-component conceptualization of authenticity. The Authenticity Inventory appears adequate psychometrically, and confirmatory factor analyses support our view that the four components, while distinct, reflect a broad latent authenticity factor. Although we have accrued considerable validity data, we also recognize that our work is just beginning and many questions remain for us to address. An important avenue for future research is to obtain data relating our measure to outcomes other than that obtained from self-reports. We have begun to do that (e.g., our study on verbal defensiveness), but more research needs to be done.

We recognize that our self-report measure of authenticity has the same inherent difficulties as the majority of self-report measures. Respondents may either deliberately misrepresent themselves or have limited access to the information needed for valid responses. One way to deal with such issues is to obtain validity data that cannot easily be explained in terms of response biases. In this chapter, we presented data showing that scores on two self-esteem fragility measures (contingent SE and unstable SE, the latter represented by high response *variability* across multiple assessments) related to lower scores on the Authenticity Inventory. Likewise, we presented data demonstrating that higher authenticity scores related to less defensiveness while answering provocative questions during an interview. Although these findings are informative and difficult to explain purely in terms of response biases, it would be beneficial to examine additional outcomes that involve behaviors or reactions to experimental manipulations. Elsewhere (Kernis & Goldman, 2005), we described a number of questions that we felt were interesting and important to examine in future research. We rely on that exposition in the discussion here.

A. AWARENESS

One question pertains to whether high awareness relates to lower susceptibility to misattribution of arousal effects. A second question is whether high awareness relates to individuals' understanding better their emotions, motives, etc. when they describe a meaningful past experience in detail.

A third question is whether high awareness relates to greater interest and investment in gaining knowledge about one's strengths and weaknesses.

B. UNBIASED PROCESSING

It would be interesting to examine whether unbiased processing relates to the relative absence of the self-serving bias, as it does for autonomously functioning individuals (Knee & Zuckerman, 1996). A second question is whether unbiased processing relates to more mature or adaptive defense mechanisms that involve little reality distortion. Additional questions involve whether unbiased processing relates to less self-enhancing retrospective memories pertaining to one's performances or personal qualities and less idealized childhood memories.

C. BEHAVIOR

A number of questions revolve around whether behavioral authenticity actually relates to behaviors that are more congruent with one's core-self. For example, if people are made uncomfortable or anxious, does high behavioral authenticity relate to fewer instances of smiling and laughter (behaviors incongruent with one's internal state)? Furthermore, does high behavioral authenticity relate to less susceptibility to "symbolic self-completion manipulations" in which people's actual goal completion efforts are thwarted and they instead tend to symbolize completion? In addition, does high behavioral authenticity relate to greater behavioral consistency across audiences and contexts and does it relate to greater attitude–behavior consistency?

D. RELATIONAL ORIENTATION

We would expect relational orientation to relate to a number of relationship process variables. For example, we would expect that high relational orientation relates to valuing and behaviorally engaging in intimate self-disclosures with partners. In addition, we would expect that high relational orientation relates to less game-playing (ludus) and manipulativeness in close relationships, and less idealization of one's relationship or relationship partner (e.g., greater accuracy in evaluating aspects of the relationship or relationship partners).

   To the extent that our future research yields theoretically predicted findings to questions such as those just posed, it presumably will quiet concerns regarding the validity of our authenticity measure. Until that time, we will

remain vigilant in our sensitivity to its limitations. Although the research and theory reported in this chapter are in their early stages, they support the viability of a multicomponent conceptualization of authenticity. To do so, we had to overcome the extreme difficulty of capturing authenticity within a scientific framework. We are convinced that, despite its elusiveness, authenticity deserves its place alongside other critical aspects of the human condition that define who we are and what we are able to become. Our hope is that our work stimulates other scholars to join in our quest to understand it.

XII. Summary

Our goal was to present a comprehensive overview of our multicomponent conceptualization of dispositional authenticity. We define authenticity as the "unimpeded operation of one's true- or core-self in one's daily enterprise." Our framework distinguishes four interrelated components of authentic functioning: *awareness, unbiased processing, behavior,* and *relational orientation*. We reported confirmatory factor analyses indicating that the AI (AI-3) (Goldman & Kernis, 2004) measures these four discriminable components, which comprise a higher-order latent authenticity factor. Thus, researchers can either use the total score as an index of overall authentic functioning, or each of the subscale scores if they are interested in specific aspects of authentic functioning. We reported research indicating that higher dispositional authenticity relates to many aspects of adaptive functioning, including problem-focused coping strategies, mindfulness, positive role functioning, healthy aspects of self-concept structure, hedonic and eudaimonic well-being, authentic goal pursuits, and low verbal defensiveness. In addition, higher dispositional authenticity relates to higher couple satisfaction and functioning. We considered the relation between authenticity and self-esteem, the potential costs of authenticity, and future research directions. Much more study is needed, but we believe that we have provided a solid foundation on which we and other researchers will be able to build.

Acknowledgments

Appendix

AUT3

The following measure has a series of statements that involve people's perceptions about themselves. There are not right or wrong responses, so please answer honestly. Respond to each statement by writing the number from the scale below, which you feel most accurately characterizes your response to the statement.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

1. I am often confused about my feelings.
2. I frequently pretend to enjoy something when in actuality I really don't.
3. For better or for worse I am aware of who I truly am.
4. I understand why I believe the things I do about myself.
5. I want people with whom I am close to understand my strengths.
6. I actively try to understand which of my self-aspects fit together to form my core- or true-self.
7. I am very uncomfortable objectively considering my limitations and shortcomings.
8. I've often used my silence or head-nodding to convey agreement with someone else's statement or position even though I really disagree.
9. I have a very good understanding of why I do the things I do.
10. I am willing to change myself for others if the reward is desirable enough.
11. I find it easy to pretend to be something other than my true-self.
12. I want people with whom I am close to understand my weaknesses.
13. I find it very difficult to critically assess myself.
14. I am not in touch with my deepest thoughts and feelings.
15. I make it a point to express to close others how much I truly care for them.
16. I tend to have difficulty accepting my personal faults, so I try to cast them in a more positive way.
17. I tend to idealize close others rather than objectively see them as they truly are.
18. If asked, people I am close to can accurately describe what kind of person I am.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neither Agree Nor Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**

19. I prefer to ignore my darkest thoughts and feelings.
20. I am aware of when I am not being my true-self.
21. I am able to distinguish those self-aspects that are important to my core-or true-self from those that are unimportant.
22. People close to me would be shocked or surprised if they discovered what I keep inside me.
23. It is important for me to understand my close others' needs and desires.
24. I want close others to understand the real me rather than just my public persona or "image."
25. I try to act in a manner that is consistent with my personally held values, even if others criticize or reject me for doing so.
26. If a close other and I are in disagreement I would rather ignore the issue than constructively work it out.
27. I've often done things that I don't want to do merely not to disappoint people.
28. I find that my behavior typically expresses my values.
29. I actively attempt to understand myself as best as possible.
30. I'd rather feel good about myself than objectively assess my personal limitations and shortcomings.
31. I find that my behavior typically expresses my personal needs and desires.
32. I rarely if ever, put on a "false face" for others to see.
33. I spend a lot of energy pursuing goals that are very important to other people even though they are unimportant to me.
34. I frequently am not in touch with what's important to me.
35. I try to block out any unpleasant feelings I might have about myself.
36. I often question whether I really know what I want to accomplish in my lifetime.
37. I often find that I am overly critical about myself.
38. I am in touch with my motives and desires.
39. I often deny the validity of any compliments that I receive.
40. In general, I place a good deal of importance on people I am close to understanding who I truly am.
41. I find it difficult to embrace and feel good about the things I have accomplished.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neither Agree Nor Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**

42. If someone points out or focuses on one of my shortcomings I quickly try to block it out of my mind and forget it.
43. The people I am close to can count on me being who I am regardless of what setting we are in.
44. My openness and honesty in close relationships are extremely important to me.
45. I am willing to endure negative consequences by expressing my true beliefs about things.

THE AUTHENTICITY INVENTORY (AI-3)

Version 3 Goldman and Kernis, 2004

The preceding measure is conceptually designed to assess the unimpeded operation of one's true- or core-self in one's daily enterprise. There are four components to how we conceive of authenticity: *awareness*, *unbiased processing*, *behavior*, and *relational orientation*. These components can be measured via content domains that were constructed as subscales in the Authenticity Inventory and are described below:

1 Awareness: Awareness of, and trust in, one's motives, feelings, desires, and self-relevant cognitions. Conceptually, this includes awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, figure–ground personality aspects, emotions, and their roles in behavior.

2 Unbiased Processing: Not denying, distorting, exaggerating, nor ignoring private knowledge, internal experiences, and externally based self-evaluative information. Conceptually then, this includes objectivity and acceptance of one's positive and negative aspects.

3 Behavior: Acting in accord with one's values, preferences, and needs. Conceptually, this contrasts acting merely to please others, or to attain rewards, or avoid punishments even if it means acting "falsely."

4 Relational Orientation: Valuing and achieving openness and truthfulness in one's close relationships. Conceptually, the relational component presumes it is important for close others to see the real you, good and bad. Moreover, relational authenticity means being genuine and not "fake" in one's relationships with others.

Subscales

Awareness: 1R, 3, 4, 6, 9, 14R, 20, 21, 29, 34R, 36R, 38
Alpha = .79
Unbiased Processing: 7R, 13R, 16R, 19R, 30R, 35R, 37R, 39R, 41R, 42R
Alpha = .64
Behavioral: 2, 8R, 10R, 11R, 25, 27R, 28, 31, 32, 33R, 45
Alpha = .80
Relational Orientation: 5, 12, 15, 17R, 18, 22R, 23, 24, 26R, 40, 43, 44
Alpha = .78
Composite Scale Alpha = .90
***NOTE: R = Reverse Scored Item

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