

EMOTION AND CONFLICT: AN ANALYSIS OF STRATEGIC EMOTION MANAGEMENT  
DURING RELATIONAL CONFLICT

by

VALERIE BERENICE COLES

(Under the Direction of Jennifer A. Samp)

ABSTRACT

This project examines the relationship between emotion and conflict, with a focus on how the emotions individuals *feel* and emotions they *express* differentially impact how conflicts are managed in close relationships. Accordingly, this study attempted to observe *if* emotion management occurs in relational conflict, *how* individuals distinguish between felt emotions and expressed emotions during relational conflict, and *what* nonverbal behaviors people report strategically managing as part of emotion management. Two hundred and twenty-two participants completed a questionnaire wherein they were asked to reflect upon (a) a conflict when they expressed an emotion they did not feel and (b) a conflict when they felt an emotion they did not express. Results indicate that emotion management does occur in relational conflict and differences exist between felt and expressed emotions. Further elaboration of emotion management, each emotion, and the extent to which nonverbal behaviors are managed are discussed.

INDEX WORDS:    Interpersonal Conflict, Emotion, Emotion Management, Interpersonal Communication

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VALERIE BERENICE COLES

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**VALERIE BERENICE COLES**

Major Professor:      Jennifer A. Samp

Committee:            Jennifer L. Monahan  
                          Tina M. Harris

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso  
Dean of the Graduate School  
The University of Georgia  
May 2011

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## CHAPTER 1: EMOTION MANAGEMENT AND RELATIONAL CONFLICT

Interpersonal conflict is an emotional experience (Leith & Baumesister, 1998). While many emotions may arise during relational conflict, not all may be obvious to observers. Further, the display of emotions may be intensified or exaggerated for effect. Regardless of whether an emotional expression is simulated, intensified, miniaturized, inhibited, or expressed to the full extent that an individual experiences an emotion, decisions to manage one's emotions are indicative of *emotion management*. Emotion management is *strategic* in the sense that individuals consciously construct, manage, and maintain their communication behaviors, patterns, and identities through the emotions they express (Planalp, 1999). One interpersonal context in which emotion management may frequently occur is during conflict between romantic relationship partners. Indeed, Bodtker and Jameson (2001) stated "to be in conflict is to be emotionally charged" (p. 260). Conflict is also a significant part of romantic relationships, as Canary, Cupach, and Serpe (2001) observed individuals in established relationships engaged in conflicts approximately twice a week. Research indicates the emotions elicited from interpersonal conflict influence how people communicate and manage relational disagreements (Guerrero & La Valley, 2006). However, there is little reference to emotion in most theories of interpersonal conflict behavior and there are even fewer empirical investigations of emotion management during conflict interactions (Guerrero & La Valley, 2006; Nair, 2008).

The goal of this study is to explore how individuals strategically manage their emotions during conflict with romantic partners, with a focus on the differences between emotions individuals *feel* versus emotions they *express* during conflict. Specifically, this study aims to answer the following questions: *if* emotion management occurs in relational conflict, *how* do

individuals strategically manage their emotions during relational conflict, and *what* are the nonverbal behaviors individuals attempt to strategically manage that involve emotion expression (or lack thereof).

To begin, it is important to conceptualize emotion and differentiate it from related concepts. After explicating how this study approaches emotion, I will then turn to review existing research on emotion management and conflict as well as posit research questions attempting to describe if, how, and what emotion management processes occur in relational conflict.

### **Emotions and Relational Conflicts**

Obedid, Hipel, and Kilgour (2005) stated, “Unless emotions are understood, it is impossible to understand social integration and confrontation phenomena” (p. 482). Research on interpersonal conflict suggests individuals define and classify their conflicts based on the emotions they experience (Jones, 2000). It is important here to clarify what is meant by “emotion.” The concept of emotion is distinct from similar terms such as affect, mood, and feelings (Jones, 2000; O’Keefe, 2002; Scherer & Brosch, 2009).

*Affect* is a general term that refers to a positive or negative valence associated with one’s emotions or feelings (Guerrero & La Valley, 2006; Scherer, 1984). Moreover, affect is the larger domain that encompasses other mental and bodily states such as emotions, mood, attitudes, interpersonal stances, and affect dispositions (Scherer, 2005). *Mood* is a term often used synomously with emotion, yet the concepts differ in that mood is a different type of mental state that stems from a series of events, lasts longer than mood, and is not accompanied by distinctive facial expressions (Davidson, 1994; Ekman, 1984; Frija, 1994).<sup>i</sup> Davidson (1994) suggested the distinction between mood and emotion is best captured by focusing on the function

of each: emotions are elicited when adaptive action is necessary, while moods function to “modulate or bias cognition” (p. 52). Similar to the distinction between emotion/affect and emotion/mood, the terms emotion and feeling are often used interchangeably, yet inappropriately. *Feelings* are sensory perceptions that reflect a general awareness of a bodily sensation, while emotions are assumed to reflect the product of cognitive appraisal of an experience as harmful or beneficial (Lazarus, 1991). The commonness with which the terms are substituted with one another pinpoints a potential limit in our vocabulary for communicating about emotions and feelings (Frijda, 1994; Lazarus, 1991; Rice 2008). The aim of this study is to appropriately utilize the proper terminology when referencing emotion (the focus on this study); however, as noted above, there is limited vocabulary related to emotion.

While individuals may experience a variety of emotions in any relational encounter, nine emotions are particularly relevant to the interpersonal conflict context: anger, annoyance, anxiety, fear, frustration, guilt, happiness, sadness, and surprise (e.g., Lazarus, 1991; Lewis, 2008; Lindner, 2009; Nair, 2008; Plutchik, 2003). Of note, the emotions associated with interpersonal conflict are primarily negative. Prior research indicates negative emotions are more likely to be felt and expressed during perceived negative events, such as conflict, compared to perceived positive events (Guerrero & La Valley, 2006). Conflict is an event many people perceive as negative (Borisoff & Victor, 1998; Lindner, 2009), hence it is reasonable to focus on the emotions related to conflict—even if they are primarily negative.<sup>ii</sup> I now turn to define the nine emotions of relevance to conflict in detail.

**Conflict-related emotions defined.** *Anger* is a negative emotion commonly associated with interpersonal conflict (Guerrero & La Valley, 2006) and serves a variety of adaptive functions (Lemerise & Dodge, 2008). Anger can be beneficial for relationships (Guerrero, 1994; Kubany & Richard, 1992; Sereno et al., 1987) or harmful (Kubany & Richard, 1992; Leonard & Roberts, 1998; Sanford, 2007a; Sereno et al., 1987) depending on how if the anger is expressed constructively or aggressively during conflict. Anger is one of the six universal emotions expressed and perceived similarity across cultures (Ekman, 1972; Ekman, Sorenson, & Friesen, 1969). Many scholars contend anger emerges when one's goals or plans are interrupted (e.g., Lazarus, 1991; Lemerise & Dodge, 2008; Guerrero & La Valley, 2006; Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson, & O'Connor, 1987). The action tendency associated with anger is to attack (Lazarus, 1991). Behaviors through which one may attack may include hitting or yelling another individual. In romantic context anger has been linked to verbally and physically aggressive behavior (Sugarman & Hotaling, 1989). Common behaviors and expressions associated with anger include frowning, tensed mouth, furrowed eyebrows, narrowed eyes, and riveted eye gaze (Holodynski & Friedlmeier, 2006; Planalp, 1999).

*Annoyance* is term often referenced along with rage, fury, and irritation as a subtype of the primary emotion anger (Russell, 1991; Scherer & Wallbott, 1994). Annoyance can stem from the “provocation from another person or group” (Mikolic, Parker, & Pruitt, 1997, p. 151). Some research assesses annoyance during conflict experiences by observing experiences that annoy the participants and how different levels of intensities of annoyance can lead to different persuasive effects (e.g., Laak, Olthof, & Aleva, 2003; Lindskold, Han, & Betz, 1986; Mikolic, Parker, & Pruitt, 1997). Eyetsemitan (2003) observed when participants identified and described

facial features that matched the emotion-expression behavior of “annoyed/irritated” the eyes and mouth were more salient than with other emotions.

*Anxiety* is a unique negative emotion that is comprises of ambiguity and uncertainty which then immobilizes and inhibits individuals with respect to coping (Frijda, 1986; Lazarus, 1991). Lazarus identified the core relational theme of anxiety as facing uncertain, existential threat. Individuals experiencing anxiety are unable to always pinpoint the cause or reason for their anxiety. Anxiety is distinct emotion state that is separate from fear, although not all distinguish the two. Averill (1988) identified the key differences between fear and anxiety: “Ask a person who is afraid what he fear, and generally he can tell you; ask him what he would like to do, and he can tell you that, too. By contrast, the person who is suffering an anxiety attack cannot say what he is anxious about or what he wants to do” (p. 264). There is no clear action tendency associated with anxiety due to the level of uncertainty that provokes the emotion; at times an individual may approach and attack but at others the action tendency may be avoidance and escape (Lazarus). Due to its nature conflict seems to be an experience that may foster anxiety. For example, if an individual’s partner instigates a conflict about a topic the individual was unaware was an issue and he or she is unsure of how to proceed this would be a situation where anxiety may foster.

*Fear* is a negative basic emotion that is also one of the six universal emotions identified by psychologists in the 1970s (Ekman, 1972; Ekman, Sorenson, & Friesen, 1969; Kaong & Cappella, 2008; Lazarus, 1991). Lazarus interchangeably referenced fright and fear, identifying the core relational theme of fright as “facing an immediate, concrete, and overwhelming physical danger” (p. 122). Individuals who anticipate negative consequences that rouse fear during interpersonal conflict situations may engage in defensive interpersonal behavior patterns such as

avoidance (Westerman & Steen, 2009). These findings mirror the action tendency associated with fear which is avoidance (Lazarus, 1991). Physiological changes associated with fear include sweating and clamminess (Matsumoto et al., 2008). Marks (1987) notes extreme levels of fear may lead individuals to a state of immobility. Common terminologies associated with this paralyzed conscious state include being “scared stiff” or “frozen with fear.” Facial and other behaviors expressions associated with fear include wide open eyes, open mouth, retracted lips, raised eyebrows, crouching, paleness, perspiration, and trembling (Matsumoto et al., 2008).

*Frustration* is an “ambiguous negative state” that can be classified as a common emotional response to opposition: “Frustration, like threat and challenge, is involved in emotion as an appraisal, even descriptive of an emotion-provoking person-environment relationship, but is not an emotion” (Lazarus, 1991, p. 83). Frustrated individuals may be inclined to attack the object of their frustration. Another way frustration may appear in behavioral expression is in the transference of frustration-aggression to another object (Miller, 1941). Yet another option is exhibiting regressive behavior such as throwing a temper tantrum or sulking. During conflict individuals may experience frustration due to the conflict issue, the communicative situation, their partner, or even themselves. While frustration is not an emotion but an emotional response, this study will include frustration in its analysis due to the prevalence of frustration during conflict.

*Guilt* is negative basic emotion (Kang & Cappella, 2008; Lazarus, 1991) that has a range of effectiveness with regard to guilt appeals (see O’Keefe, 2000). Leith and Baumesister (1998) observed during interpersonal conflict guilt lead to better perspective taking and beneficial relationship outcomes, whereas shame harmed relationships. However, strong negative emotion, either felt or expressed, can significantly hinder productive communication, which can harm the

relationship and both relational partners. Like conflict, guilt is relationally oriented and involves reflection and evaluation (Barrett, 1995; Guerrero & La Valley, 2006). Guilt can be positive for interpersonal conflict and relationships because it can motivate individuals to make amends and repair their relationships (Guerrero & La Valley, 2006; Lazarus, 1991). Frequent reactions associated with guilt include silence, increase in heart rate, irregular breathing, and muscle tensing (Barrett, 1995; Wallbott & Scherer, 1989).

*Happiness* is a positive basic emotion that is universally perceived and expressed (Ekman, 1972; Ekman, Sorenson, & Friesen, 1969; Kang & Cappella, 2008; Lazarus, 1991). The core relational theme identified by Lazarus is “making reasonable progress toward the realization of a goal” (p. 122). Unsurprisingly, happiness is reported more often in resolved conflicts than unresolved conflicts (El-Sheikh, Buckhalt, & Reiter, 2000). As noted before, negative emotions are more commonly associated with conflict than are positive emotions; however, it is not improbable for positive emotions, such as happiness, to be experienced during conflict. Individuals often express happiness with an enjoyment smile or “Duchenne smile” (Lazarus, 1991). Wrinkling around the eyes and “twinkling” eyes are also associated with happiness (Matsumoto et al., 2008).

*Sadness* is a universal and basic emotion that occurs when an individual experiences or perceives an unavoidable and irrevocable loss (Ekman, 1972; Ekman, Sorenson, & Friesen, 1969; Kang & Cappella, 2008; Lazarus, 1991; Lazarus & Smith, 1988). Sadness can be classified as a soft emotion experienced during interpersonal conflict (Sanford, 2007a). Soft emotions are theorized as “pro-social” emotions which are negatively valenced and reflect a sense of vulnerability (Sanford, 2007a, 2007b; Sanford & Rowatt, 2004). Soft emotions predict increases in the likelihood that individuals will appraise the resolution of interpersonal conflict as

important, facilitate conflict resolution, and are often associated with positive relationship outcomes (Feeney, Noller, & Robert, 1998; Sanford, 2007a). Sadness is often expressed by depressed corners of the mouth, raised inner corner eyebrows, tears and/or crying (Matsumoto et al., 2008) and a pouting mouth (Holodynski & Friedlmeier, 2006).

*Surprise* is one of the six universal emotions that are expressed and perceived similarly across cultures (Ekman, 1972; Ekman, Sorenson, & Friesen, 1969). If a conflict event is unexpected or a particular behavior is not anticipated surprise may be experienced during conflict. Behaviors associated with surprise include raised eyebrows, open mouth, wide and open eyes, protruding lips, positioning one's hands above one's head, holding out one's hand towards another person with the palm facing outward and the fingers straightened, and expiration (Holodynski & Friedlmeier, 2006; Matsumoto et al., 2008; Planalp, 1999).

**Expressing emotion.** While each of the emotions reviewed above have distinct characteristics, some emotions can be grouped with regard to their valence, intensity, or motivational force. Moreover, some emotions are expressed and perceived in similar ways around the world, regardless of race or culture (Beaupré & Hess, 2005; Ekman, 1993; Izard, 1992; Matsumoto, 2002, 2006; Scherer & Wallbott, 1994).<sup>iii</sup> Emotional expression and meaning often derives from changes in facial expressions, as well as bodily and vocal behaviors. For instance, sadness is often expressed by depressed corners of the mouth, raised inner corner eyebrows, tears, and/or crying (Matsumoto et al., 2008). Behavioral expressions that accompany anger include flared nostrils, compression of the mouth, furrowed eyebrows, erect head position, expanded chest, and reddening of the face (Matsumoto et al., 2008). Other nonverbal behaviors that may be observed include but are not limited to eye gaze, body orientation, postural openness, smiling, vocal qualities (e.g., pitch, rate, volume, and inflection), and adaptors.

Some behaviors related to emotional expression are automatic behaviors that are arguably uncontrollable (e.g., heart rate, pupil dilation, and skin conductance) (Bradley, Miccoli, Escrig, & Lang, 2008; Kring & Gordon, 1998; Lang, Greenwald, Bradley, & Hamm, 1993). Other behaviors are controllable, some to a larger or lesser extent than others (Ekman, 1984; Planalp, 1999). For example, the mouth is an area that manifests emotional expression and may be controlled; one may suppress a smile or display a frown to indicate a particular emotional experience (e.g., happiness and sadness respectfully). In sum, emotions evoke changes in multiple systems, including behavioral, experiential, and psychological response systems (Lang, Greenwald, Bradley, & Hamm, 1993). The category of emotional expressions includes controllable behaviors also represents behaviors that may be monitored and adjusted during emotion management.

### **Emotion Management**

The process of strategically manipulating emotion is referenced in many ways: emotion control (Keith, & Frese, 2005; Ochsner & Gross, 2005; Watson & Greer, 1983), emotion suppression (Butler, Lee, & Gross, 2007; Campbell-Sills, Barlow, Brown, & Hofmann, 2006), emotion work (Bolton, 2004; Zapf & Holz, 2006), emotion management (Bolton, 2005; Bono & Vey, 2005; Francis, 1997; Planalp, 1999; Shipman, Zeman, Penza, & Champion, 2000), emotional intelligence (Schutte et al., 1998; Smith, Heaven, & Ciarroch, 2008), and emotion regulation (Frijda, 2007; Gross, 2008; Gross, Richards, & John, 2006; Holodynski & Friedlmeier, 2006; Kring & Sloan, 2010). Emotion management, emotion control, and emotional intelligence all fall under the umbrella of emotion regulation, which encompasses many other aspects of emotion processes. While related, each process differs from the others in

significant ways.<sup>iv</sup> Most important for this thesis is the distinction between *emotion regulation* and *emotion management*.

**Emotion regulation versus emotion management.** *Emotion regulation* reflects “attempts individuals makes to influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how these emotions are experienced and expressed,” noting such actions may be automatic or controlled, conscious or unconscious (Gross et al., 2006, p. 14). Further, Frijda (2007) observed “Regulation can affect all components of the emotion process: not merely outward expression, but also feeling, attention for emotional events, emotional appraisal, affect and action readiness” (p. 167). Frijda also noted each component can be affected separately and some concepts are automatic while others are more deliberate.

What differentiates emotion management from emotion regulation is the degree to which actions are goal-driven in a conscious and deliberate manner. Goals are desired future states that reflect concerns individuals want to achieve or maintain (Dillard, Segrin, & Harden, 1989). Some scholars contend goals are the source of most communication behavior (e.g., Dillard, 1997; Samp, 2009; Wilson, 2002). In the context of emotion management, goals can be influential in deliberately managing the expression of one’s emotional state (e.g., Davis, Levine, Lench, & Quas, 2010). Therefore, emotion management reflects a cognitive approach when it comes to strategically deciding which emotions to express and to what degree (Planalp, 1999). In particular, emotion management is not concerned with the extent to which individuals have control over the emotions they feel, but with the extent to which individuals have control over the expression of emotions. As previously noted, the elicitation of emotional states is sometimes an instantaneous and subconscious process. However, with regard to emotion management, to make strategic decisions regarding emotional expression individuals must be consciously aware

of their decisions to adapt their behavior. Furthermore, expressed emotion may or may not be genuinely felt. Meaning, it is possible individuals may express emotions they do not feel. For example, if an individual insults his or her relational partner in hopes of starting a conflict but the relational partners acts happy (i.e., expresses happiness) to avoid the conflict when, in reality, he or she feels anger, annoyance, fear, sadness, and/or surprise the relational partner is engaging in emotion management. In this scenario one individual consciously and deliberately decided to express an emotion he or she did not feel (i.e., happiness) to achieve a goal (i.e., avoid the conflict).

Like emotion regulation, emotion management is complex and may involve more than inhibiting one's actions or stopping action tendencies from occurring. Similar to emotion regulation, emotion management involves the integration of four components that deal with emotion as a process: object, appraisal, physiology, and action tendencies/expression (Planalp, 1999). For instance, emotion management involves dealing with the object, recognizing the individual or situation and making a conscious decision to take some action (which may include inaction). Second, appraisals of the situation must be managed. Here, one may take in more information about the situation and further assess the event taking place. Next, emotion management may involve managing physiological reactions (e.g., deep breathing). Finally, emotion management requires one to attend to and manage his or her action tendencies (e.g., recognizing screaming or running away from the situation is not productive and changing or adapting behaviors). My interest for this project lies in the emotion management aspect of emotion regulation. More specifically, the *conscious* and *strategic* decisions one makes when electing which emotions to express and to what extent those emotions should be expressed.

## **Emotion Management in the Context of Interpersonal Conflict**

Interpersonal conflict occurs when an individual is interdependent with another person, and faces a situation in which his or her needs, wants, goals, or values are perceived as incompatible with the partner's needs, wants, goals, or values (Cahn, 1992; Canary, 2003; Hocker & Wilmot, 1978). Conflict is also a strategic situation (Canary, 2003); it stimulates individuals' communicative goals and the behaviors used to achieve such goals (Keck & Samp, 2007; Samp & Solomon, 2005). In the context of romantic relationships conflict is especially significant, because if handled poorly, conflict can have negative implications for the health of a relationship. Yet, if conflict is handled well, it can result in improved understanding of oneself, a partner, and/or how to better manage relational difficulties (see Caughlin & Vangelisti, 2006; Siegert & Stamp, 1994).

*Conflict management* refers to an individual's actions that are designed to maximize goal achievement (Earley & Northcraft, 1989; Rahim, 1986). The goals pursued during interpersonal conflict in a close relationship may reflect a variety of foci, including self-interested, partner-focused, or relational concerns (see Keck & Samp, 2007). Similarly, individuals managing conflict may display behaviors reflective of a variety of conflict management styles, which vary in a focus on self-interests, relational concerns, or some combination of both.<sup>v</sup> One way to achieve these goals is to manage how the expression of particular emotions is manifest in messages directed toward a relational partner. Hochschild (1979) stated individuals may engage in strategic emotion management by inducing or inhibiting their emotions to "render them 'appropriate' to a situation" (p. 551). In other words, individuals may be concerned with how they "should" feel according to social and relational rules (Goffman, 1961; Lazarus, 2001). For instance, consider the situation where a couple is dining out at a restaurant and begin to discuss a

subject that frustrates one partner. The frustrated partner may choose to inhibit or minimize his or her frustration to prevent the conversation from continuing and/or escalating.

An additional possibility is individuals may not adjust their emotions to tailor to social rules, but rather to express emotions that will elicit a certain response. Consider a relational partner throwing a temper tantrum in a public setting because he or she wants to elicit a reaction from his or her partner and knows the public setting will ensure some type of response. The individual may not feel the intensity of the anger or sadness expressed, but rather strategically enhances his or her displayed emotions to evoke a response. Such action does not conform to social or relational rules, but rather is utilized to elicit a wanted response.<sup>vi</sup> As exemplified, the reasons and situations for which individuals may engage in emotion management are all applicable in conflict contexts and are all goal related. Therefore, an aim of this study is to examine the reasons of which individuals strategically and consciously express certain emotions during conflicts with their relational partners.

**Display rules.** The conscious and strategic decisions an individual makes to express emotions are often manifest in display rules, which reflect societal norms about when, where, how, and to whom one should express emotions given societal norms (Lazarus, 1991; Lemerise & Dodge, 2008; Matsumoto, 1990).<sup>vii</sup> Hochschild (1983) observed individuals engage in emotion management to maintain a presentation of self that conforms to emotion ideologies, cultural feeling rules, and/or cultural display rules.<sup>viii</sup> For instance, an individual may feel happiness but not express his or her happiness if it is not appropriate to do so at the time. Let us assume societal and cultural rules dictate that individuals are inclined to feel negative emotions during a conflict with a relational partner, if an individual does not feel or experience these emotions internally he or she may appear to experience these emotions through emotional

expression (e.g., encourage frowning, furrowed brow, tears). The motivation to maintain one's self presentation can derive from concern for oneself, one's partner, a third party, or a mixture (Samp & Solomon, 2005). All of these actions require conscious, cognitive, and strategic actions from an individual, thus distinguishing the concept of emotion management from other emotion processes.

Display rules can be also distinguished between a display of felt and expressed emotions. *Felt emotions* refer to the detection of emotion and the “inner emotional state” (e.g., I feel happy, I am angry) whereas *expressed emotions* reflect the “observable outcome in behavior and expression” (e.g., I smile to show I am happy or grimace to show I am angry) (Lazarus, 1991, p. 358). The expression may occur verbally or nonverbally. However, emotions are often expressed through nonverbal behaviors and cues (Andersen & Guerrero, 1998; Dillard, 1998). Nonverbal cues include, but are not limited to, facial expressions, hand gestures, spatial proximity, adaptors, and vocalic cues. For example, anger is often accompanied by flared nostrils, compression of the mouth, furrowed eyebrows, erect head position, expanded chest, and reddening of the face (Matsumoto, Keltner, Shiota, O’Sullivan, & Frank, 2008). If an individual is feeling happy than he or she is more likely to express an enjoyment smile or “Duchenne smile” (Lazarus, 1991). Sadness is often accompanied by tearing or crying (Matsumoto et al., 2008). An individual may suppress or fabricate many of these expressions and behaviors to express a particular emotion, even if that emotion is not genuinely *felt*.

According to Ekman and Friesen (1975), the difference between felt and expressed emotions may actualize in five ways: intensification, deintensification, inhibition, simulation, and masking. First, individuals may follow a display rule to *intensify or maximize* emotion to express an emotion more so than the emotion is felt (Andersen, Andersen, & Landgraf, 1985;

Ekman & Friesen, 1975; Saarni, 1985). For example, an individual may express more guilt than he or she actually feels to persuade his or her partner he or she is sorry and regretful about a transgressed behavior. He or she may express guilt through verbal cues (“I feel very guilty) or through nonverbal expression (e.g., remain silent or avoid eye contact). An individual may heighten the amount of anger he or she expresses to “get his or her point across” more clearly (e.g., increase volume). With regard sadness an individual may increase the amount of sadness expressed to make his or her partner feel bad with the goal of resolving or ending the conflict in a faster manner (e.g., frown or cry). In each of these situations the individuals have conscious goals in mind and strategically and consciously maximize the expression of their felt emotions in hopes of achieving those goals.

Another display rule is to *deintensify, suppress, or miniaturize emotion* to express less than what is felt (Andersen et al., 1985; Ekman & Friesen, 1975; Saarni, 1993). This display rule is a product of socialization that begins at a young age. Andersen, Andersen, and Mayton (1985) reported children showed less emotion as they develop and mature. As individuals age they learn what is and is not socially appropriate to express. For example, it may not be productive to throw a temper tantrum or express all of your negative emotions and then hope to have a constructive discussion about the issues surrounding the conflict. Conversely, adults may suppress the expression of their felt emotions to encourage a healthy discussion that focuses on the issues at hand and not their expressed behaviors. In addition, individuals may feel showing less emotion leads to less vulnerability during conflict. For example, if a partner does not know how an individual feels it becomes more difficult for the partner to manipulate the individual. In this situation the goal of emotion management may be self-defense. Individuals may also deintensify their emotions to avoid conflict or conflict escalation. For example, if an individual

lessens the expression his or her anger, fear, or frustration than his or her partner may not realize the conflict bothers the individual as much as it does and avoid in the potential conflict situation. Individuals may also engage in miniaturization of emotion to remain calm and rationale. If an individual deintensifies the amount of negative emotion expressed he or she may remain calmer himself or herself and may also prevent the conflict from further escalation. For instance, if an individual's partner ruins a load of white clothes by failing to remove the red shirt which in turn infuriates the individual he or she may deintensify the expression of his or her felt anger to avoid conflict escalation and attempt to calm himself or herself down.

A third display rule reflects efforts to *simulate* an emotion, which requires the expression of an emotion that is not felt (Andersen et al., 1985; Ekman & Friesen, 1975; Shennum & Bugental, 1982). For example, an individual may express happiness (e.g., smiling) to avoid conflict. Conversely, an individual may simulate anger to push the conflict to a quicker resolution (e.g., simulate an angry facial expression, raised voice). Sadness or frustration may be simulated to get attention, make the other individual feel badly, or terminate the conflict (e.g., tears, turning one's body away from his or her partner, frowning, changing vocal behaviors).

Another display rule concerns a decision to *inhibit* or *neutralize* emotion; this requires a person to act as if they feel no emotion at all (Andersen et al., 1985; Ekman, 1978; Ekman & Friesen, 1975). Some individuals may choose to "shut down" so they show no vulnerability through emotional expression. For instance, an individual may hold back tears to avoid displaying his or her emotional state. Another goal may be conflict avoidance; if an individual chooses not to express the emotions felt then the relational partner will not know how that individual is affected. Others may inhibit their emotions to make their partner feel guilty for engaging in the conflict and not terminating it.

Finally, individuals may pursue a display rule defined by attempts to *mask* or *substitute* emotion. During masking, an individual expresses one emotion when another emotion is actually felt (Ekman & Friesen, 1975; Ekman, 1978; Saarni, 1993). For example, an individual may replace sadness with frustration because he or she may feel as if showing sadness leads to more apathy from his or her relational partner than productive discussion and conflict resolution. In public settings, one may replace anger or disgust with sadness or frustration to avoid creating a scene. Conversely, sadness or frustration may replace anger or disgust to quickly terminate the conflict situation. Another option is positive emotions (e.g., happiness) may replace negative emotions (e.g., anger, frustration, sadness, fear) to encourage a more productive environment. Masking develops later than the other display rules because it involves considerable communication skill to feel one emotion but express another (Saarni, 1993).

An addition to Ekman and Friesen's (1975) five display rules, it is possible individuals may express emotions to the *real* and *full extent* they feel the emotions. Some individuals may feel they should express their emotions to the full and real extent they feel them to be honest with their partners and themselves. With the exception of the sixth option, each of these displays requires the strategic management of emotion. However, prior research does not provide insight as to if and how people engage in emotion management during relational conflict situations.

Therefore, I propose the following research questions:

RQ1: Do individuals engage in emotion management by distinguishing between felt emotions and expressed emotions during relational conflict?

RQ2: How do individuals distinguish between felt emotions and expressed emotions during relational conflict?

**Expressing emotions via nonverbal behaviors.** If individuals attempt to control their emotional expressions a natural question concerns *how* they are doing so. As previously noted, emotions involve changes in the behavioral, experiential, and psychological response systems (Lang, Greenwald, Bradley, & Hamm, 1993). Unfortunately, there has not been much research investigating which aspects of the emotional response individuals control when managing their emotions (Gross, Richards, & John, 2006). However, in a study on emotion regulation, Gross et al. (2006), observed that participants focused almost equally on expressive behaviors and subjective experiences. These findings provide justification for why emotion management processes, including nonverbal expressions of emotion, should be studied. In addition, Gross et al.'s results further confirm that emotion management is a large enough phenomena to be studied. In conjunction, other research investigating emotions has observed emotions are revealed more frequently in nonverbal cues more so than in verbal behaviors (Andersen & Guerrero, 1998, Dillard, 1998).<sup>ix</sup> Four domains of nonverbal behavior that can be strategically managed during the experience of emotion management are the face, eyes, voice, and body.<sup>x</sup>

*Facial expressions* are commonly identified as locations for emotional expression (e.g., Eyetsemitan, 2003; Holodynski & Friedlmeier, 2006; Lazarus, 1991; Matsumoto et al., 2008). Planalp (1999) notes many individuals fail to differentiate between emotion communication and facial expressions, often considering the two as synonymous elements. While not indistinguishable from one another, the face is the main site of emotion communication (Andersen & Gerrero, 1998). Individuals differ in their ability to manage, identify, recognize, and interpret facial expressions (Buller & Burgoon, 1998; Elfenbein, Foo, Boldry, & Tan, 2006; Grinspan, Hemphill, & Nowicki, 2003; Schnall & Laird, 2003).

Changes in the eyes, eyelids, and bridge of the nose are considered one of the three areas where emotional expressions occur (Boucher & Ekman, 1975). In addition to assessing facial expressions as a whole this study will examine eye changes independently. For instance, when an individual is experiencing happiness wrinkling around the eyes and “twinkling” of the eyes are nonverbal cues communicate happiness (Matsumoto et al., 2008). In addition to changes of the eye, eye contact and eye gaze may be used to communicate emotion. Eye contact may serve several functions (Kendon, 1967). For instance, eye contact regulates communicative interaction (making the verbal stream longer or shorter), expresses involvement, may create intimidation, signal attentiveness, regulate interpersonal immediacy, and regulate the intimacy of the interaction. Individuals who wish to express negative emotions through their eyes may narrow their eyes, use prolonged stares and/or avoid eye contact. Kendon also identified eye gaze may be used to express emotions; moreover, eyes change for each distinct emotion experienced. Common terms related to emotional expression and the eyes are “the evil eye,” “shifty eyes,” and “sad eyes.”

*Vocalics or paralinguistics* are tones, pitches, and other nonverbal elements of the voice. Research contends individuals are almost as accurate at distinguishing emotions through vocal cues as they are at identifying emotions through facial expressions (Planalp, 1999; Scherer, 2003). Scherer and Wallbott (1994) reported cross cultural-similarities in the vocal expression of emotions. For instance, anger is often communicated through yelling, screaming, shouting, and increased vocal variation. Happiness is expressed through laughter and a higher pitch. Sadness is often accompanied by tears or crying. Trager (1958, 1961) identified the structural features of the voice: voice set and speech (voice qualities and vocalizations). More recent research has identified several voice cues that form the vocalic profile (see Segrin, 1998). The voice is not

always a controllable or conscious element; however, some elements are controllable and may be strategically managed (e.g., volume and tempo). This study is interested in the extent to which individuals consciously adjust their voice (e.g., pitch, articulation control, tempo, rhythm control, and volume) to manage emotion.

General *body* behaviors are also involved in emotional expression. Certain behaviors and postures communicate different emotions states (Planalp, 1999). For instance, clenching hands or fists communicates may communicate anger or another negative emotion whereas being physically energetic (bouncing or jumping up or down) does not. In addition, trembling communicates fear (Matsumoto et al., 2008). Moreover, the distance one places between himself or herself and the other communicator may be related to emotional expression (Andersen & Guerrero, 1998). Individuals communicate positive emotions through enthusiastic gestures, closer interpersonal distances, and increase touching behaviors (Andersen & Guerrero, 1998). Research has observed touch can convey several universal emotions (anger, fear, disgust, love, gratitude, and sympathy) in the absence of other cues (Hertenstein, et al., 2006; Hertenstein, Holmes, McCullough, & Keltner, 2009).

Therefore the question arises if individuals are attempting to control their emotional expressions how are they doing so in terms of nonverbal behaviors. As identified above, nonverbal behaviors are related to emotional expressions and may be consciously and strategically managed. Formally:

RQ3: What nonverbal behaviors do people report strategically managing the most when attempting to manage their emotions?

To summarize, this thesis is guided by the assumption that individuals strategically and consciously manage their emotions during conflict, such that they will alter the expression of the emotions they feel during a conflict situation with their relational partner. Given the dearth of research on emotion management in conflict situations, this project was designed to explore if individuals distinguish between felt emotions and expressed emotions during relational conflict, and if so, how individuals distinguish between felt emotions and expressed emotions during relational conflict, and finally, what nonverbal behaviors people report strategically managing in situations of relational conflict. The next chapter describes the method utilized for this project.

## CHAPTER 2: METHOD

### Participants

Two hundred and ninety-one individuals were solicited for this study. One hundred and eighty seven undergraduate participants were solicited from students enrolled in basic-level or upper-level courses offered by the Department of Communication Studies at the University of Georgia. Interested students signed up either online through the department website or in person through a sign-up sheet posted on the department research board. The majority of students (177) then were sent a link to the survey hosted on [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com); the remaining 10 students completed a paper and pencil version of the survey. One hundred and four individuals were solicited via the snowball technique in which an email was sent to friends and family members known to the researcher that contained a link to the survey and a request to forward the opportunity to other potentially interested individuals. Of the 291 participants, 10 participants did not complete any other items except for the informed consent screen.<sup>xi</sup> In addition, 59 participants (a) only completed the demographic information, (b) did not complete or completed less than half of the questions pertaining to conflict experiences, and/or (c) did not write about a relational conflict issue. Due to incomplete information, these 69 participants were not included in the analyses. Therefore, data reported from this point on are from the remaining sample of 222 participants.

## Final Sample

The mean age of participants was 21.34 years ( $SD = 6.15$ ) and ranged from 18 to 60 years old. Four participants did not report their age. Of the 222 participants, 144 (64.9%) were female and 78 (35.1%) were male. The majority of participants ( $n = 174$ ; 78.4%) identified as White (Non-Hispanic), 24 (10.8%) Asian American, 11 (5.0%) African American/Black, 10 (4.5%) Other, 2 (.9%) Hispanic/Latino, and 1 (.5%) Pacific Islander.

Participants reported partners to be on average 21.95 years old ( $SD = 6.74$ ; range: 17-69 years). Three participants did not report their partners' ages. One hundred and forty-five (65.3%) of partners were identified as male and 77 (34.7%) as female. There were 13 same sex couples (6 female-female and 7 male-male). The majority of partners (184; 82.9%) were identified as White (Non-Hispanic), 14 (6.3%) Asian American, 13 (5.9%) African American/Black, 7 (3.2%) Hispanic/Latino, and 4 (1.8%) as Other.

**Relationship reports.** To qualify for this study, participants were required to be involved in a romantic relationship. A romantic relationship was broadly defined to include individuals who are in the “talking” stage of a relationship, causally dating, exclusively involved, living together, or married. Exclusive involvement included dating, engagement, marriage, and serious partnerships. The majority of participants ( $n = 137$ ; 61.7%), reported they were in a serious dating relationship; 55 (24.8%) identified casual dating; 13 (5.9%) were married; 10 (4.5%) indicated they were at the talking stage; 6 (2.7%) were engaged; and 1 participant (.5%) did not report his relationship status. Participants' relationships were on average rather lengthy, with an average time together reported as 25.4 months ( $SD = 51.43$ ; range: 1-437 months).

One hundred and ninety-one (86.0%) participants indicated they were in exclusive relationships, while 31 (14.0%) participants reported they were not exclusive with their partners. Chi-square analyses including all relationship type categories indicated the majority of respondents were engaged in exclusive relationships,  $\chi^2(4) = 37.40, p < .001$ . All married ( $n = 13$ ) and engaged ( $n = 6$ ) couples indicated they were exclusive, 129 serious dating couples were exclusive (8 were not exclusive), 37 casual dating couples were exclusive (18 were not exclusive), and 5 talking couples were exclusive (5 were not).

When asked whether participants cohabitated with their partners 193 (86.9%) identified they resided separately from their partners, 28 (12.6%) reported living with their partners, and 1 participant did not report on cohabitation status. Thus largely, respondents did not live with the partners referenced in this study,  $\chi^2(4) = 107.99, p < .001$ . All couples identified as talking ( $n = 10$ ) and causal dating ( $n = 55$ ) resided apart from one another. Most of the serious dating couples lived separately ( $n = 124$  did not cohabit,  $n = 12$  did cohabit). Three of the six engaged couples cohabitated with one another. All of the married couples ( $n = 13$ ) lived together. Cohabitation status was not significantly related to whether a couple was exclusive or not,  $\chi^2(1) = 2.91, ns$ .

**Conflict frequency.** Participants were asked to report the number of days per week they experienced conflict with their partner (0-7days). On average participants reported experiencing conflict with their partner 2.41 ( $SD = 1.06$ ) days per week; this pattern is consistent with previous research (Canary et al., 2001). A One-Way ANOVA comparing the conflict frequency and relationship status indicated there was not a significant difference between relationship types  $F(4, 216) = 2.38, ns$ , however, the difference *approached* significance,  $p = .052$ . These results suggest that the couples experienced a typical frequency of conflict, regardless of relationship

status. Additional information about conflict frequency and relationship status may be found in Table 2.1.

A comparison of conflict frequency and cohabitation status indicated participants who did not cohabit ( $n = 193, M = 2.31, SD = 0.95$ ) reported experiencing conflict two to seven days per week. Participants who cohabitated ( $n = 28, M = 3.14, SD = 1.51$ ) reported experiencing conflict one to six days per week. Zero participants reported experiencing conflict zero days per week. A One-Way ANOVA comparing the conflict frequency and cohabitation status indicated there was a significant difference between groups  $F(1, 219) = 15.92, p < .001$ . An independent samples t-test indicated that couples who cohabitated were more likely to experience conflict more often than couples who did not cohabit,  $t(30.15) = -2.84, p < .01$ .

Table 2.1

*Conflict Frequency and Relationship Status*

Relationship Status	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range (0-7 days per week)
Talking	10	1.90	0.74	1-3
Casual	55	2.16	0.71	1-4
Serious	137	2.48	1.07	1-6
Engaged	6	2.67	2.25	1-7
Married	13	2.92	1.44	2-7

Note:  $n = 222$ . No one reported experiencing conflict zero days per week.

**Conflict resolution.** In response to the question: “Typically, are the conflicts that you have with your partner resolved?,” a vast majority of participants indicated conflicts were typically resolved ( $n = 198$ , 89.2%). Twenty-four (10.8%) participants reported conflicts were not typically resolved. There were no significant differences between relationship status and a couple’s likelihood to resolve conflicts,  $\chi^2(4) = 6.88$ , *ns*. However, cohabitation status was associated with conflict resolution,  $\chi^2(1) = 6.62$ ,  $p = .01$ . Of the 193 participants who did not cohabit, 176 reported conflicts were typically resolved, while 17 reported conflicts were not typically resolved. Twenty-eight participants cohabitated with their partner, 21 responded conflicts were typically resolved and 7 reported conflicts were not resolved.

**Conflict topicality.** When asked if participants’ conflicts generally revolved around the same topic or a similar set of topics, participants generally reported engaging in serial disputes. One hundred and seventy-two (77.5%) participants indicated that their conflicts usually revolved around the same topic or a similar set of topics, while 48 (21.6%) reported their conflicts do not tend to resolve around the same topic or a similar set of topics, and 2 (0.9%) participants did not answer the question. In a comparison of frequencies, results indicated there was not a significant difference between relationship status and serial conflict topicality,  $\chi^2(4) = 7.50$ , *ns*, nor was there a significant relationship between cohabitation status and conflict topicality,  $\chi^2(1) = 1.09$ , *ns*.

**Conflict initiation.** One hundred and seventeen (52.7%) participants reported they usually initiate conflict with their partner, 102 (45.9%) identified their partner as the most frequent conflict initiator, and 3 (1.4%) participants did not respond to the question. Whether the

participant or partner usually initiates conflict was not significantly associated with relationship,  $\chi^2(4) = 6.06$ , or cohabitation status,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.07$ , ns.

## Measures

**Retrospective conflict descriptions.** Participants were asked to remember two conflicts experienced within their romantic relationship, whereby: they (a) expressed an emotion they did not feel (herein referred to as *expressed*) and (b) felt an emotion they did not express (referred to throughout as *felt*). As seen in Appendix A, participants completed items assessing the degree to which they felt or expressed a given emotion during the conflict, using the following 6-point categorical scale: (1) did not feel or express, (2) felt but not expressed, (3) expressed to a lesser extent than felt, (4) expressed to the extent that felt, (5) expressed to a greater extent than felt, and (6) expressed but not felt a certain emotion. The emotions assessed included anger, annoyance, anxiety, fear, frustration, guilt, happiness, sadness, and surprise. Participants were asked to evaluate how they experienced each emotion.

Next, participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they felt and expressed each emotion using a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = did not feel (or express); 5 = felt (or expressed) to a great extent). Once again, participants were asked to evaluate whether each emotion was felt or expressed. This measure, herein referenced as the *Emotion Display Scale*, was created for this study, as there was no known existing measure. The measure was modeled after Ekman and Friesen's (1975) five ways in which individuals alter their emotions expressions (intensification, deintensification, inhibition, simulation, and masking), with the addition that an individual may express an emotion to the real and full extent to which that emotion is felt.

Lastly, participants were asked to reflect on how they strategically managed their emotions via nonverbal behaviors and cues. Participants wrote down the three emotions they thought of most during the conflict and reflected on what behaviors (changes in the eyes, face, body, and voice) they attempted to control during the conflict for each emotion. The four domains of nonverbal behaviors were chosen because they can be strategically managed during the experience of emotion management and reflect large categories that are appropriate for an initial study. As seen in Appendix A, the scale asked participants to assess the extent to which they attempted to control the expression of each emotion through their eyes, facial expressions, body, and/or voice on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = not at all; 5 = very much).

### **Procedure**

Students enrolled in introductory-level Communication Studies courses at the University of Georgia as well as other friends and family members known to the researcher were recruited to participate. This study was primarily completed through a survey website. Undergraduate participants completing this study for research credit also had the opportunity to take a paper and pencil version in lieu of the online assessment. Upon their agreement to participate and arrival to the website, all participants responded to a consent script notifying them of their right to confidentiality and their freedom to discontinue their participation at any time (See Appendix B). As seen in Appendix C, participants who took the paper and pencil version signed an informed consent form and were given one copy of the informed consent for their own records. As seen in Appendix D, after consenting, participants completed an assessment of demographic information (e.g., age, gender, race, partner's age, partner's gender, partner's race, relationship type, and relationship duration in months).

Next, as seen in Appendix A, participants were instructed to recall a conflict when they (a) expressed an emotion they did not feel or (b) felt an emotion they did not express. Everyone received both prompts. Each scenario included three sections for each conflict episode. As seen in Appendix E, Section A asked participants to provide a description of the conflict. Specifically, they were asked (a) to briefly describe the nature of the conflict, (b) to identify when the conflict occurred, (c) to identify who instigated the conflict, (d) if they had ever discussed this issue before and if so how many times (e) where the conflict occurred, (f) if the conflict was resolved, (g) if they thought the issue will come up in the future, (h) to classify the conflict compared to the couple's normal disputes, (i) how they would classify their mood before the conflict, and (j) how satisfied they were with the outcome of the conflict. As seen in Appendix A, Section B asked participants to evaluate their emotions and emotion displays during the conflict. Participants were asked to identify whether a particular emotion was (a) felt but not expressed, (b) expressed to a lesser extent than felt, (c) expressed to the extent that felt, (d) expressed to a greater extent than felt, and (e) expressed but not felt. Participants were also asked the intensity to which they felt and expressed each emotion (1 = did not feel (or express), 5 = felt (or expressed) to a great extent). Next, participants were then asked to reflect on the nonverbal behaviors they managed (face, eyes, voice, and body). As seen in Appendix E, when participants completed the questionnaire they read a debriefing form and were thanked for their participation in the study.

### **Conflict Experiences**

Participants were asked to reflect upon a time when they (a) *expressed but did not feel* an emotion (i.e., *expressed*) and (b) *felt but did not express* an emotion (i.e., *felt*). Of the 222 participants, all participants completed questions pertaining to the *expressed* scenario and 190

(85.59%) participants completed questions pertaining to the *felt* scenario. The later response number was smaller, as some participants reported being unable to recall an emotion they felt but did not express or did not write about a conflict with a relational partner.

Participants were asked to describe the nature of the reported conflict including the conflict topic, who instigated the conflict, when the conflict occurred, how the conflict progressed, the location of the conflict, who was present during the interaction, if the conflict topic had been discussed before, how or if the conflict was resolved, and if they believed the conflict issue will come up in the future. In order to better understand the nature of the conflict reported, the types of conflicts were categorized via an inductive analysis conducted by the author. All 412 conflicts were coded using 17 different categories: jealousy/jealousy inducing behavior, spending time with others versus partner, (un)desired behavior, communication issues, past relationships, money, state of the relationship, time management, what to do/where to go, difference of beliefs/opinions/positions/values, deceit, infidelity/(mis)trust, actions while intoxicated/alcohol, long distance, children, sex, and not specific/other.

**Jealousy/jealousy inducing behavior.** Conflict categories labeled as *jealousy/jealousy inducing behavior* included actions that made one relational partner feel threatened in some way (e.g., partner flirting and/or spending time with others). Often these conflicts involved interactions with individuals who were not involved in the relationship. For example, one participant wrote about a situation involved her and her boyfriend; this situation came from the felt scenario (i.e., the participant felt an emotion she did not express):

My boyfriend and I got into an argument about his relationship with another girl, whom he just called a good friend. Although I was pretty certain that they were only friends, I wasn't comfortable with him spending time with her or even talking to her for long periods of time. Their relationship actually made me really angry. I confronted him about it one day and tried to handle it as maturely as possible. I even tried to remove most of my emotions from it so that it wouldn't get heated. Although I was angry, upset,

and a little bit threatened by their relationship I tried not to convey that to him because I didn't want to come off as the crazy and jealous girlfriend. We argued about it and we each presented our opinions on the matter and he stated that he should be allowed to have friends of the opposite sex. We eventually concluded that trust was the most important thing in a relationship and that we shouldn't try to control each other or who we are friends with.

In addition, several participants wrote about conflicts involving ex-relationship partners. Such conflicts were coded jealousy/jealousy inducing behavior and not past relationships if the conflict interactions involving the ex-partner were current and not based on past events (in which case the conflict was coded as past relationships). For example, one participant wrote, "She saw that an ex of mine sent me a facebook message and she got upset thinking I was talking to my ex[e]s behind her back."

**Spending time with others versus partner.** Conflicts coded as *spending time with others versus partner* included issues where a relational partner felt his or her partner was spending time with others in lieu of spending time with him or her. Often participants wrote about conflicts involving spending time with friends over spending time with him or her (e.g., "We got in a conflict because I wouldn't make plans with him right away because I wanted to see what my friends were doing"), others wrote about spending time with family versus him or her. For instance, for the expressed scenario (i.e., a conflict in which a participant expressed an emotion he or she did not feel), one participant wrote:

The conflict was after we moved in next door to his sister and brother-in-law, he was spending so much time over there and I just wanted him to stay home more. I would be at home by myself while he spent all his time next door. The conflict happened when I said something to him asking him why he never wanted to be at home with me why he always had to go next door. The conflict was partially resolved because he still spends a lot of time next door but it made me feel better to get my feelings out and let him know how I felt. Since then we set aside some date time for just us away from the family.

In a different scenario, a participant wrote about her boyfriend having a date night with another woman and the conflict that coincided with the event (this situation derives from the felt scenario in which the participant felt an emotion she did not express):

Earlier on in my relationship, my boyfriend was "unable" to attend my birthday celebration because he had "previously committed" to attending another girl's date night. He alerted me of this conflict via text, while I was in my dorm room with my roommate. I was distraught because I had imagined spending my birthday with him and now he was telling me that not only would I not see him, but he would be with another girl. The conflict was not resolved.

**(Un)desired behavior.** The *(un)desired behavior* category included conflict issues where an individual wanted some behavior change from his or her partner. One participant wrote of her desire for her husband to clean the cat litter box. Another participant wrote about his disapproval of his partner's attire for the expressed scenario (i.e., he expressed an emotion he did not feel during the conflict):

The conflict occurred the day after me and my partner went to a party. The conflict was about the top she wore to the party. It was a little low cut, but it was really loose on top so that when she bent over it revealed more than I thought appropriate. I tried to drop a few hints before we went to the party that I didn't want her to wear the top, but she didn't get them. When I brought it up and explained how I felt about the top, she immediately felt ashamed and got defensive against me. She thought I was expressing anger when I felt no anger and thought I was just explaining that I did not like the top and just didn't want her to wear it again. I assured her I wasn't angry and she promised not to wear the top again and the conflict was over.

This coding category also included issues revolving around public displays of affection (e.g., "My partner wanted to show more public displays of affection than I was comfortable with in a school setting. I was initially not ok with this, but since it mattered to him I went along with it anyways").

**Communication issues.** The *communication issues* category included two types of conflicts: (1) metacommunication issues and (2) miscommunications/misunderstandings between relational partners. One of the common metacommunication issues stemmed from one partner

feeling ignored by the other partner. The following description is an example of such a conflict (this conflict was written for the expressed situation):

My partner has told me time and time again that he hates being ignored. So one day we were riding in the car and he asked me a question, and I unintentionally ignored his question and sparked up another conversation. In essence he got mad and we started arguing. I did not mean to overlook his question, sometimes my brain just thinks a certain way, and I end up ignoring him. Or I assume he knows the answer so I do not respond.

Below is an example that stemmed from miscommunication/misunderstanding between a participant and her partner for the felt scenario:

One of the recent conflicts we dealt with was how I felt bad that he was still living at home, working to put himself through college and start next semester while his friends were all off at school together having a good time. He took my sympathy as a shot to his pride when I only meant well.

**Past relationships.** Conflicts coded as *past relationships* involved altercations revolving around a participant or his or her relational partner's past history. This coding category is distinguished from jealousy/jealousy inducing behavior in that the relational partner did not enact a present behavior to induce jealousy. For example, a participant described a situation involving her, her boyfriend, and his ex-girlfriend. This conflict from the expressed scenario was not coded as jealousy/jealousy inducing behavior because the participant's boyfriend did not enact any behavior to induce jealousy:

About two weeks ago, I caught wind of some information regarding my boyfriend's ex-girlfriend. She was constantly calling and texting him (with no response from him, of course). She was also talking badly about my relationship with Ryan to some of her friends. I became angry with Ryan because his relationship with his ex-girlfriend was directly affecting my life.

The following is an example from the expressed scenario where a participant recalled how her past history jeopardized her current relationship:

My boyfriend was upset with me about one of my ex boyfriends. The ex was a jerk and my boyfriend couldn't understand why I ever liked him. He was threatening to break up and acting irrationally. The conflict happened in his room about a month ago. Only he and I were present. The conflict was resolved when I explained that my past relationships are over for a reason and that they were DEFINITELY in the past. I explained that I've changed a lot as a person in the time between those relationships and when I met him (my current boyfriend).

**Money.** Conflicts revolved around the issue of money were labeled *money*. Below is an example of a conflict that stemmed around the concept of money from the expressed scenario:

Usually we argue over money. About four months ago he said while we were watching television that he was buying me a new laptop for Christmas; my laptop has pretty much lived its life and always gives me problems. I feel that he should not spend that much money on me. We're both college students and need to save as much as we can. If we were married it would be a different story. This is a reoccurring conflict. He still will not listen to reason. In order to stop the conflict for that evening so that our entire night was not ruined I started crying, making him believe he upset me in a different way which made him feel guilty so he dropped the argument.

Another participant recalled a conflict involving money and responsibility:

Our most common conflict theme is money. The exact nature of the fight varies, but mostly has to do with his unchecked spending and my need to save money. For example, last week he did not give me his share of the rent when it was due, but he spent more than he should've on a night out with his friends. He said he could spend his money as he wished because I had spent money on things for our new home (a rug, a kittie castle, etc.) I argued that it was my money that I had earned, and that I had paid the bills first, before buying the other things. He said I was selfish and that I did not want him to enjoy life. In all honesty, I think the fight is actually about his fear that he has lost his freedom more than it is about money, but it always comes back to money. I make more than he does, which may also contribute to the conflict as he may feel emasculated. The fight took place in our home (though it often originates when we are out to dinner/drinks).

**State of the relationship.** The *state of the relationship* grouping incorporated conflicts in which relational partners had different opinions about the status of their relationship, level of commitment to one another, or the future and its effect on the relationship. The following is conflict description in which a participant reflected on her and her boyfriend's state of the relationship in the felt scenario:

One day my boyfriend and I were arguing about how I should introduce him to my parents. We've had several arguments about this. We decided to wait on it, finally we just forgot about it. This occurred when we first started dating four years ago. It was him and me present only. It was never resolved, I never told my parents or introduced him to them as my boyfriend; we just forgot about it.

The next conflict revolved around commitment levels between a participant and his partner (this conflict came from the expressed scenario):

We got into an argument about saying "I love you." She said it to me while we were laying in her bed, and I said I wasn't ready. She was upset because she thought it meant I wasn't committed to the relationship. However, I just felt uncomfortable by saying it because in past relationships saying those words normally makes my partner overly committed and over-bearing. I didn't say this to her because I didn't want her to argue that she wasn't like other girls I've dated so to avoid the conflict I just said I needed more time.

The last conflict featured for this coding category derives from the felt scenario and reflects a participant and her boyfriend's plans to move to another city which would impact their relationship:

The conflict occurred between my boyfriend and I, about five weeks ago, and in a restaurant. My boyfriend and I were the only two people present at our dinner table, but it was in a public place. The conflict began when my boyfriend told me he planned to move to a different state for six months in December. After he expressed what his plans were, I just sat quietly to avoid expressing extreme anger. I began to tear up, but I held back my tears and just focused on my dinner because I did not want to express my feelings so openly in a public restaurant.

**Time management.** Some participants wrote about a desire for their partners to change or better manage how they spent their time – these conflicts were labeled as *time management* conflicts. For instance, the following conflict from the expressed scenario revolved around a desire to spend time together: "The conflict was our busy schedules and how we didn't have enough time to see each other. It occurred when school started and we just resolved it by making sure we set out time to see each other during the week, like eating meals together and stuff."

Another participant wrote about her desire for her boyfriend to spend more time with her for the expressed scenario:

The last conflict we had was about 3 weeks ago. I got mad at him because he hasn't been making the effort to spend time with me. A lot of the time he's lazy and just wants to sit around watching TV or hanging out with his roommate and other guy friends. I expressed to him that I don't expect him to have something formal planned for us to do but I would appreciate it if he tried to spend time with me when he can, even if it's just taking a walk or hanging out in the dorms. I was feeling a little worried about the future of our relationship since he was acting like he didn't care about spending time together but I didn't express this to him. It happened in my room when we were talking and he could tell I was upset. It was just us two present. It was resolved when he apologized and seemed genuinely sorry and he said he would make more of an effort to spend time with me.

**What to do/where to go.** Conflicts revolved around a difference of opinion about some activity were labeled as *what to do/where to go*. Common conflict topics included arguments about where to eat dinner and what movie to watch (e.g., "We argued about going out to dinner. I wanted to stay in to watch a football game and she wanted to go out. I told her we could order in, but she wanted to eat a place that didn't deliver"). With regard to movie examples, one participant for the felt scenario wrote: "Once my partner and I were going to a movie and she wanted to see a girl movie when I wanted to see an action movie; I lied and said that I'd love to see the girly movie with her." Other what to do/where to go coded conflicts involved holiday plans. For instance, "We got in a discussion about where we should go for thanksgiving, either spend it with my family or his. He wanted to spend it with his, I wanted to spend it with mine, we finally decided to try and do both." Finally, another common what to do/where to go conflict revolved around Friday or Saturday night plans. The following conflict revolved around what to do/where to go on a Saturday night:

We had a conflict over what we would do one Saturday night. She wanted both of us to go to a movie with some friends and I wanted us to go downtown with some friends. The conflict was between just the two of us and at my apartment. We resolved the problem by going downtown that night and seeing the movie the next day.

**Difference of beliefs/opinions/positions/values.** While the conflict coding category of *difference of beliefs/opinions/positions/values* is very broad, the conflicts grouped in this manner revolves around a difference of opinion of some kind. For example, one participant wrote about him and his girlfriend's religious differences in the expressed scenario:

I am a Lutheran Christian and my girlfriend is Catholic. Although there are many similarities between the two, we always seem to disagree on some differences. We both are firm believers in our respective faiths and although we might stop talking about the particular issues at hand, we never really seem to resolve the conflict. At first, we experienced the conflict almost daily and now, after almost 1 2/3 years of being in a relationship, we've gotten that number down to about once-a-week. We just try to stay away from the topic of religion because we both know that no matter what we say, we will always end up mad at each other.

Another participant wrote about who was messier, her or her boyfriend, for the felt scenario:

We had a conflict over who left bigger messes in my apartment. It occurred between the two of us in my apartment after she commented on me leaving some trash on the table. This made me happy because I thought she had been trashing my apartment but I could not bring myself to say anything. The conflict was resolved by us spending less time at my apartment and her helping out sometimes at my place and me helping out at hers.

Finally, one participant wrote about a conflict that revolved around a friend: "We argued about my best friend. He doesn't like her and doesn't want me to be friends with her because he thinks she's trying to make us break up. It occurred at our home. Two days ago. It wasn't really resolved we just stopped talking about it."

**Deceit/infidelity/(mis)trust.** The conflict code *deceit/infidelity/(mis)trust* involved conflicts where deceit or assumed deceit occurred, instances or speculations of infidelity (e.g., "My partner accused me of being interested in another person at work"), or issues revolving around trust ("The conflict was about me going out. It happened over the phone about a week ago. The conflict was resolved when she believed me that I wasn't going out to meet other girls"). The following felt scenario conflict is about a participant lying to her partner:

I had recently lied to my partner about my intentions for a Friday night and she found out. I claimed that I had to work when really I wanted to go out with some friends, mainly to have some time away from her. However, a friend of hers saw me out with my friends that night and relayed the information back to my partner. The next day, while at her house, she brought the situation up while we were watching tv. The conversation turned into a heated argument where she attacked me for lying while I blamed her for ‘smothering’ me and not letting me do anything that I want to do. We eventually resolved the situation with us both apologizing.

**Actions while intoxicated/alcohol.** Conflict descriptions revolved around alcohol consumption were labeled *actions while intoxicated/alcohol*. For example, “My boyfriend and I were in an argument about him attempting to strip while drunk. It occurred at his house last month with all our friends there. He apologized the next day.” Below is an example from the expressed scenario of an alcohol related conflict:

It happened about 5 months ago, in downtown Athens. This was right around when my girlfriend and I were going to stop just dating and actually be boyfriend and girlfriend. We were out with a bunch of my friends. She ended up getting really drunk and making out with a guy who was buying her drinks. We eventually resolved the conflict by her basically sharing her deepest feelings about how much she cared about me.

**Long distance.** When relational partners do not live in the same city conflicts can stem from the distance (e.g., visiting one another or finding time to talk). The following example from the expressed scenario revolves around the issue of spending time with one another:

We were arguing about when I would come home from college to visit him. He was upset I would not come home sooner, but I could not make it. It eventually started getting annoying because he kept asking me to come home. I was frustrated, but acted more mad than I really was, because he was acting really mad.

**Children.** Conflicts revolved around children were coded as *children*. The following example is a conflict about the participant and her partner’s children where the participant managed her felt and expressed emotions (i.e., she felt emotions she did not express):

I was really mad one time at him but I knew that if I expressed my anger, he wouldn’t be willing to talk with me. We were fighting about the kids and I had to control my anger so I could listen to him. If I didn’t control it, he wouldn’t have told me. Well it didn’t get resolved but he did acknowledge that I had a good point.

**Sex.** For this study participants did not report many sex related conflicts. However, the conflicts that did revolve around sex were labeled as *sex*. One participant in the expressed scenario reflected on an ongoing conflict about the lack of sex in his relationship:

We've been without physical contact in the bedroom for 4 years. The issue is from my wife's perspective and I do not know exactly what the problem is. We've argued about it, and now it is like a huge elephant in the room -- there, but never addressed. Just the two of us are involved.

Another participant for the felt scenario reflected on a dispute where she and her partner had different expectations:

One night my boyfriend and I went out downtown and had a few drinks with some friends. After the bar we went home and became intimate with each other. My boyfriend knows my religious beliefs and other preferences. He asked if I would do something, which I have told him I would never do. I stopped kissing him and told him to not touch me. I became silent and didn't speak for the rest of the night. He took a pillow and slept on the couch. The conflict was later dissolved in the morning. After sobering up we talked about what he was thinking about and why he asked such a question. He apologized and the conflict was pretty much over.

**Not specific/other.** Some conflicts did not fit in to any of the previous labels (e.g., the conflict topic was not identified by the participant) – these conflicts were labeled as *not specific/other*. Below is an example coded as not specific/other from the expressed scenario:

I expressed feeling calm and happy when I was really upset. I did so he would not know how upset I was with him. It felt like he was attacking my personality and who I was as a person. The attack was so harsh that I was having a hard time holding it together. It was just him and me. It didn't get resolved then because all I wanted was for him to stop talking so I could go away and cry on my own. We talked about it again later a couple of times but I don't think we have ever really resolved it cause I don't know what we could do to resolve it.

The conflict topics most reported were (un)desired behavior ( $n = 33$ ; 14.9% for the expressed emotion scenario and  $n = 48$ ; 25.3% for the felt emotion scenario), jealousy/jalousy inducing behavior ( $n = 28$ ; 12.6% for the expressed emotion scenario and  $n = 30$ ; 15.8% for the felt emotion scenario), communication issues ( $n = 26$ ; 11.7% for the expressed emotion scenario

and  $n = 11$ ; 5.8% for the felt emotion scenario), long distance issues ( $n = 22$ ; 9.9% for the expressed emotion scenario and  $n = 10$ ; 5.3% for the felt emotion scenario) and spending time with others versus partner ( $n = 11$ ; 5.0% for the expressed emotion scenario and  $n = 22$ ; 11.6% for the felt emotion scenario). Additional information about the different conflict categories may be found in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2

*Conflict Categories*

Category	Expressed Scenario		Felt Scenario	
	n	%	n	%
(Un)desired Behavior	33	14.9%	48	25.3%
Jealousy/Jealousy Inducing Behavior	28	12.6%	30	15.8%
Communication Issues	26	11.7%	11	5.8%
Long Distance	22	9.9%	10	5.3%
State of the Relationship	19	8.6%	14	7.4%
Time Management	19	8.6%	6	3.2%
What to Do/Where to Go	12	5.4%	18	9.5%
Spending Time with Others Versus Partner	11	5.0%	22	11.6%
Actions While Intoxicated/Alcohol	10	4.5%	5	2.6%
Money	9	4.1%	0	0.0%
Past Relationships	8	3.6%	7	3.7%
Deceit	6	2.7%	3	1.6%
Infidelity/(Mis)trust	6	2.7%	5	2.6%
Difference of Beliefs/Opinions/ Positions/Values	6	2.7%	6	3.2%
Not Specific/Other	4	1.8%	2	1.1%
Children	2	0.9%	1	0.5%
Sex	1	0.5%	2	1.1%

Note: Expressed emotion scenario  $n = 222$ ; felt emotion  $n = 190$ .

### Expressed Emotion Scenario

Two hundred twenty-two participants reported on a relational conflict when they expressed an emotion they did not feel. The mean number of days since the conflict occurred was 59.53 ( $SD = 162.38$ ), and ranged from 0 to 1460 days (4 years). One hundred and thirty participants (58.6%) indicated their partner as the instigator of the conflict while 92 (41.4%) reported they instigated the conflict. One hundred and forty-one participants (63.1%) reported the topic or issue of the conflict had been discussed before whereas 82 (36.9%) reported the topic or issue had never been previously discussed. With regard to conflict resolution 174 participants (78.4%) believed the issue was resolved, 47 (21.2%) did not believe the issue was resolved, and one participant did not answer the question. When asked if they believe the conflict would come up again 135 (60.8%) indicated the conflict would arise again in the future, 86 (38.7%) did not believe the conflict would reappear, and 1 participant did not answer the question. Participants were asked to classify the conflict in comparison with their usual disputes on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = not at all serious; 5 = very serious),  $M = 3.14$ ,  $SD = 1.16$ . A one-sample t-test with the scale midpoint (= 3) indicated the conflicts were of average seriousness,  $M = 3.14$ ,  $SD = 1.16$ ,  $t(221) = 1.86$ , *ns*. In other words, most of the conflicts reported with regard to expressed, but not felt, emotions were not particularly benign, nor particularly spectacular in severity. As seen in Table 2.2, the majority of conflicts revolved around a desired or undesired behavior.

**Mood and satisfaction.** Participants were also asked to rate their mood state before the conflict started on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = bad; 5 = good). The mean response regarding participants' mood before the conflict was 3.92 ( $SD = 1.22$ ). A one-sample t-test revealed participants' moods were significantly above the scale midpoint (= 3),  $t(221) = 11.26$ ,  $p < .01$ . Meaning, participants were more likely to be more positive moods than negative moods

before the conflict. Lastly, participants were asked how satisfied they were with the outcome of the conflict on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = not at all satisfied; 5 = very satisfied). Results revealed the mean responses for satisfaction level ( $M = 3.30$ ,  $SD = 1.34$ ) were significantly higher than the scale midpoint (= 3),  $t(221) = 3.36$ ,  $p = .001$ . These results indicated participants' satisfaction levels with the conflict outcome were more positive than negative.

### **Felt Emotion Scenario**

One hundred and ninety participants offered responses to the felt emotion scenario. In this scenario participants were asked to reflect upon a conflict when they felt an emotion they did not express. The mean number of days since the conflict occurred was 97.56 ( $SD = 177.27$ ), and ranged from zero to 1095 months (3 years). When asked who instigated the conflict 98 participants (51.58%) reported their partner instigated the conflict, 91 participants (47.89%) instigated the conflict themselves, and 1 participant did not respond. One hundred and twenty-three participants (64.74%) indicated the conflict issue had been discussed before whereas 67 (35.26%) had not discussed the topic or issue before. When asked whether the issue was resolved or not, 139 participants (76.16%) answered the issue was resolved, 50 (26.32%) responded the issue was not resolved, and 1 individual failed to answer the question. Ninety-nine participants (52.11%) believed the conflict issue would come up again in the future, 87 (45.79%) indicated the issue would not reappear as a conflict topic, and 4 participants (2.11%) did not answer the question. Participants were also asked to classify the conflict in comparison to their usual disputes using a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = not at all serious; 5 = very serious). A one-sample t-test revealed mean scores for this question ( $M = 2.96$ ,  $SD = 1.33$ ) were not significantly different from the scale midpoint (= 3,  $t(189) = -0.38$ ,  $ns$ ). These results

indicated the conflicts reported in the felt emotion scenario were predominately moderately serious.

**Mood and satisfaction.** When asked to rate their mood before the conflict on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = bad; 5 = good) a one-sample t-test revealed the mean scores ( $M = 3.69, SD = 1.33$ ) were significantly higher than the scale midpoint ( $= 3, t(189) = 7.12, p < .001$ ), showing participants were in positive moods. Finally, participants were asked to rank their satisfaction with the outcome of the conflict on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = not at all satisfied; 5 = very satisfied). A one-sample t-test revealed the mean scores for satisfaction ( $M = 3.05, SD = 1.36$ ) were not significantly different from the scale midpoint ( $= 3, t(189) = 0.48, ns$ ). These results differed from the expressed scenario were results indicate participants were more positively satisfied with the conflict outcome, but in this scenario, participants were only moderately satisfied.

### **Comparison of Emotion Scenarios**

A series of analyses were conducted to compare the expressed emotion and felt emotion scenarios. Repeated measure ANOVAs comparing the two emotion scenarios observed significant differences regarding (a) the mean number of days since the conflict occurred ( $\Lambda = .96, F(1,153) = 7.06, p < .01$ ), (b) if the conflict issue had or had not been previously discussed ( $\Lambda = .86, F(1,189) = 32.12, p < .001$ ), and (c) how satisfied participants were with the outcome of the conflict ( $\Lambda = .98, F(1,189) = 4.87, p < .05$ ). Such that, the mean number of days since the conflict for the felt emotion scenario ( $M = 97.56$ ) was significantly higher than the mean number of days for the expressed emotion scenario ( $M = 59.53$ ). With regard to past conflict topicality, the mean response for the expressed emotion scenario ( $M = 1.63$ ) was significantly higher than the mean response for the felt emotion scenario ( $M = 1.35$ ). Lastly, participants' mean

satisfaction levels were significantly higher for the expressed scenario ( $M = 3.30$ ) than for the felt emotion scenario ( $M = 3.05$ ). Significant differences were not observed regarding (a) who instigated the conflict (i.e., the participant or the partner;  $\Lambda = .99, F(1,188) = 1.61, ns$ ), (b) whether the conflict issue was or was not resolved ( $\Lambda = .98, F(1,188) = 3.65, ns$ ), (c) whether the conflict would or would not come up again in the future ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,185) = 2.30, ns$ ), (d) conflict seriousness typicality ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,189) = 1.68, ns$ ), or (e) the mean scores for mood state before the conflict ( $\Lambda = .98, F(1,189) = 3.53, ns$ ).

In summary, the expressed emotion scenario and felt emotion scenario significantly differed regarding the mean number of days since the conflict occurred, if the conflict was a serial argument, and how satisfied participants were with the outcome of the conflict. There was not a significant difference between the emotion scenarios regarding the conflict instigator, whether the conflict issue was resolved, whether the conflict would come up again in the future, conflict serious typicality, or participants mean score for mood before the conflict started.

## CHAPTER 3: RESULTS

### Preliminary Analysis

**Emotion displays measure factor analysis.** A factor analysis was conducted of the nine emotions in the Emotion Displays measure using Principal Components Analysis with a Varimax rotation. The output obtained two factors for the Expressed-Felt measure (see Table 3.1), Expressed-Expressed measure (see Table 3.2), and Felt-Felt measure (see Table 3.3) with eigenvalues greater than one. The Felt-Expressed measure obtained three factors (see Table 3.4) with eigenvalues greater than one. It is important to note the *Expressed-Felt* measure refers the portion of the study where participants were asked to rate the extent to which they felt each emotion in the expressed emotion scenario. The *Expressed-Expressed* measure refers the portion of the expressed emotion scenario where participants rated the extent to which they expressed each emotion. The *Felt-Felt* measure derives from the segment of the felt emotion measure where participants rated the extent to which they felt each emotion. The *Felt-Expressed* measure indicates the portion of the study where participants were asked to rate the extent to which expressed each emotion in the felt emotion scenario.

The results consistently reported high correlations between (a) frustration, annoyance, and anger and (b) anxiety and fear. These correlation results for these five emotions may be found in Table 3.5. In addition, I will note guilt loaded at .61 and surprise at .68 with anxiety and fear on the Felt-Expressed measure. However, since guilt and surprise did not load above .60 for any other measure they were not combined with the anxiety and fear index. Due to the consistent trend grouping of (a) frustration, annoyance, and anger and (b) anxiety and fear these emotions were collapsed.

**Implications of emotion displays factor analysis.** While there are conceptual distinctions between anxiety and fear (see Averill, 1988) it is not always useful to dichotomize the two emotions. As Dillard and Peck (2001) report, it is at times prudent to minimize distinctions among emotion and categorize emotions on a single continuum with antonymic pairs (e.g., positive and negative). Similarly, while conceptually distinct from one another frustration and annoyance are commonly associated with anger. Specifically, annoyance is often referenced as a subtype of anger (Russell, 1991; Scherer & Wallbott, 1994). Frustration is also related to anger. At times, frustration and anger are studied together as related negative emotions (e.g., Deater-Deckard, Petrill, & Thompson, 2007). Other works conceptualize frustration as a central component of anger (e.g., Averill, 1982; Fehr, Baldwin, Collins, Patterson, & Benditt, 1999; Kuppens, Van Mechelen, Smits, & De Boeck, 2003; Kuppens & Van Mechelen, 2007). Therefore, given the results of the factor analysis and other research on these emotions this study grouped frustration, annoyance, and anger and labeled this grouping as anger combined whereas anxiety and fear were grouped and labeled as fear combined. Happiness, guilt, sadness, and surprise remained independent distinct emotions throughout the study's analysis.

Table 3.1

*Factor Analysis with Varimax Rotation of Expressed Emotion Scenario-Felt Emotions*

Emotion	1	2
Happiness	-.43	.20
Anxiety	.09	<b>.74</b>
Fear	-.01	<b>.82</b>
Frustration	<b>.83</b>	.13
Guilt	-.14	.50
Annoyance	<b>.85</b>	.02
Anger	<b>.78</b>	.33
Sadness	.35	.56
Surprise	.10	.57

Note: Factor loadings  $> .60$  are in boldface.

Table 3.2

*Factor Analysis with Varimax Rotation of Expressed Emotion Scenario-Expressed Emotions*

Emotion	1	2
Happiness	-.54	.29
Anxiety	.16	<b>.74</b>
Fear	.11	<b>.80</b>
Frustration	<b>.86</b>	.17
Guilt	.08	.38
Annoyance	<b>.80</b>	.17
Anger	<b>.82</b>	.29
Sadness	.34	.58
Surprise	-.19	.59

Note: Factor loadings  $> .60$  are in boldface.

Table 3.3

*Factor Analysis with Varimax Rotation of Felt Emotion Scenario-Felt Emotions*

Emotion	1	2	3
Happiness	-.55	-.14	.23
Anxiety	.05	<b>.84</b>	.09
Fear	.01	<b>.85</b>	.17
Frustration	<b>.85</b>	.01	.08
Guilt	.00	.54	-.42
Annoyance	<b>.88</b>	-.10	-.06
Anger	<b>.83</b>	.16	.18
Sadness	.27	.55	.40
Surprise	-.06	.21	<b>.84</b>

Note: Factor loadings  $> .60$  are in boldface.

Table 3.4

*Factor Analysis with Varimax Rotation of Felt Emotion Scenario-Expressed Emotions*

Emotion	1	2
Happiness	.10	-.64*
Anxiety	<b>.82</b>	.21
Fear	<b>.84</b>	.15
Frustration	.27	<b>.83</b>
Guilt	.61*	-.07
Annoyance	.13	<b>.90</b>
Anger	.28	<b>.79</b>
Sadness	.68*	.27
Surprise	.56	.06

Note: \* denotes factor loadings  $> .60$ . Boldface variables were subjected to a more stringent standard because comparisons with the similar measures showed trends with anxiety and fear highly correlating as well as frustration, annoyance, and anger.

Table 3.5

*Emotion and Emotion Scenario Correlation Matrix for Composite Emotions*

Emotion	Expressed-Felt	Expressed-Expressed	Felt-Expressed	Felt-Felt
Anger Combined				
Frustration	.83	.86	.85	.83
Annoyance	.85	.80	.88	.90
Anger	.78	.82	.83	.79
Fear Combined				
Anxiety	.74	.74	.86	.82
Fear	.82	.80	.85	.84

Note: *df* ranged from 186-220.

## Test of Research Questions

I posited research questions attempting to describe *if* and *how* emotion management occurs in relational conflict in addition to *what* nonverbal behaviors do people report strategically managing the most when attempting to manage their emotions. The first research question asked if individuals distinguish between felt emotions and expressed emotions during relational conflict. The second research question queried how individuals distinguish between felt emotions and expressed emotions during relational conflict. The third and last research question concerned what nonverbal behaviors do people report strategically managing the most when attempting to manage their emotions.

**Test of the first research question: If.** The first research question considered *if* individuals engage in emotion management during relation conflict – specifically, if individuals distinguish between felt and expressed emotions during conflict. In order to analyze this research question I examine the questions pertaining to different emotion management strategies for both felt and expressed emotion scenarios.

**Emotion management strategies.** Participants were asked to identify whether they felt and/or expressed each emotion during the conflict by providing a response to one of six options: (1) not felt and not expressed, (2) felt but not expressed, (3) expressed to a lesser extent than felt, (4) expressed to the extent that felt, (5) expressed to a greater extent than felt, (6) expressed but not felt. Each category represented a different emotion management strategy involving the extent to which an individual felt and/or expressed each emotion (i.e., maximize, miniaturize, simulate, inhibit, mask). Tables 3.6 and 3.7 summarize the emotion management strategies participants reported for the expressed and felt emotion scenarios respectively.

Table 3.6

*Emotion Management Strategies for the Expressed Emotion Scenario*

Emotion	Not Felt and Not Expressed	Felt But Not Expressed	Expressed to a Lesser Extent than Felt	Expressed to the Extent that Felt	Expressed to a Greater Extent than Felt	Expressed But Not Felt
Happiness	128	12	15	28	23	15
Anxiety	50	65	58	39	6	2
Fear	105	54	32	22	4	3
Frustration	7	36	38	99	38	3
Guilt	104	45	30	26	10	4
Annoyance	16	46	37	83	29	8
Anger	31	45	45	58	30	10
Sadness	66	48	37	45	15	8
Surprise	115	27	22	34	12	6

Note:  $n = 222$ . Cell entries reflect  $n$  of individuals reporting a given emotion within a particular felt/expressed scenario. Analyses between emotion management strategy and within emotion could not be run due to low power.

Table 3.7

*Emotion Management Strategies for the Felt Emotion Scenario*

Emotion	n	n	n	n	n	n
Happiness	129	11	14	13	12	7
Anxiety	67	46	34	33	5	0
Fear	92	41	31	16	5	0
Frustration	20	48	42	57	13	2
Guilt	118	30	17	14	6	1
Annoyance	32	46	44	48	15	2
Anger	41	52	40	32	19	1
Sadness	54	60	36	25	10	1
Surprise	105	27	26	20	3	3

Note: n = 190. Cell entries reflect n of individuals reporting a given emotion within a particular felt/expressed scenario. Analyses between emotion management strategy and within emotion could not be run due to low power.

***Analysis of emotion management strategies.*** To examine if individuals distinguish between felt and expressed emotions during conflict Chi-square analyses examined the frequency of reported emotion management strategies (felt but not expressed, expressed to a lesser extent than felt, expressed to the extent that felt, expressed to a greater extent than felt, expressed but not felt) in both the expressed emotion and felt emotion scenarios. The sixth option in the scale (not felt and not expressed) was not included in analysis since the response indicated the emotion was not experienced by any participant.

Happiness reports varied between the expressed and felt scenarios,  $\chi^2(25) = 38.49, p = < .05$ . An examination of cells indicated participants often (a) expressed happiness to a lesser extent than felt and/or (b) expressed happiness to the extent felt in both emotion scenarios. Frequencies may be found in Table 3.8.

With regard to anxiety, participants' reports about if and how they experienced the anxiety did differ between expressed and felt scenarios  $\chi^2(20) = 54.80, p = < .001$ . As seen in Table 3.9, the most consistent trend between the two emotion scenarios was to feel anxiety but not express it. In addition, participants consistently reported expressing happiness to a lesser extent than felt in both emotion scenarios. Participants' responses differed between scenarios as several participants indicated they (a) felt but did not express anxiety in the expressed emotion scenario but then expressed anxiety to a lesser extent than felt in the felt emotion scenario and/or (b) expressed anxiety to a lesser extent than felt in the expressed emotion scenario but then expressed to the extent felt in the felt emotion scenario.

In addition, there was a significant difference between expressed frustration and felt frustration  $\chi^2(25) = 73.95, p = < .001$ . As seen in Table 3.10, participants commonly expressed frustration to the extent felt in both emotion scenarios. However, another common trend was

that participants commonly reported expressing frustration to the extent felt in the expressed emotion scenario but then reported they felt but did not express frustration in the felt emotion scenario.

Expressed guilt and felt guilt significantly differed from one another  $\chi^2(25) = 83.31, p = < .001$ . An examination of cells suggested participants often felt but did not express guilt in both emotion scenarios. Table 3.11 reports the frequencies of emotion management strategies between the two scenarios.

There was not a significant difference between expressed fear and felt fear  $\chi^2(20) = 28.93, ns$ . Expressed annoyance and felt annoyance did not significantly differ from one another  $\chi^2(25) = 37.79, ns$ . Anger did not significantly differ between expressed and felt situations  $\chi^2(25) = 27.01, ns$ . There was not a significant difference between expressed sadness and felt sadness  $\chi^2(25) = 35.68, ns$ . Last, surprise did not differ between expressed and felt scenarios  $\chi^2(25) = 29.90, ns$ . Table 3.12 summarizes the emotion management strategies reported for each emotion scenario.

In sum, the results for this research question concerning *if* emotion management processes are occurring during relational conflict indicate individuals are strategically managing their emotions. Specifically, happiness, anxiety, frustration, and guilt all significantly differed between the two scenarios while fear, annoyance, anger, sadness, and surprise did not significantly differ from one another. These results suggest that while there are some similar patterns that occur between the two emotion scenarios individuals do engage in emotion management processes and that there are distinctions between felt and expressed experiences. Moreover, the results of this study suggest that individuals distinguish between felt and expressed emotions and that they consciously elect to express emotions depending on the extent

to which their emotions are genuinely felt (e.g., inhibit, miniaturize, maximize, simulate).

Further analyses suggest individuals are more likely to suppress felt emotions in some way (e.g., miniaturize or inhibit) rather than amplify felt emotions (e.g., maximize or simulate). This trend is consistent with all nine emotions examined in this study with the exception of happiness. The implications of these results are further discussed in Chapter 4.

Table 3.8

*Crosstabulation of Emotion Management Strategies of Happiness between Emotion Scenarios*

Happiness	Felt Emotion Scenario				
	Felt But Not Expressed	Expressed to a Lesser Extent than Felt	Expressed to the Extent Felt	Expressed to a Greater Extent than Felt	Expressed But Not Felt
Expressed Emotion Scenario					
Felt But Not Expressed	0	0	1	1	0
Expressed to a Lesser Extent than Felt	0	5	1	1	0
Expressed to the Extent Felt	1	3	4	0	0
Expressed to a Greater Extent than Felt	1	1	2	3	2
Expressed But Not Felt	1	0	2	1	0

Note: Cells are frequency counts of emotion management strategy comparisons for happiness.  $n = 30$ .

Table 3.9

*Crosstabulation of Emotion Management Strategies of Anxiety between Emotion Scenarios*

Anxiety	Felt Emotion Scenario				
	Felt But NotExpressed	Expressed to a Lesser Extent than Felt	Expressed to the Extent Felt	Expressed to a Greater Extent than Felt	Expressed But Not Felt
Expressed Emotion Scenario					
Felt But Not Expressed	20	13	7	0	0
Expressed to a Lesser Extent than Felt	7	14	12	0	0
Expressed to the Extent Felt	9	3	11	3	0
Expressed to a Greater Extent than Felt	0	0	1	1	0
Expressed But Not Felt	1	0	1	0	0

Note: Cells are frequency counts of emotion management strategy comparisons for anxiety.  $n = 103$ .

Table 3.10

*Crosstabulation of Emotion Management Strategies of Frustration between Emotion Scenarios*

Frustration	Felt Emotion Scenario				
	Felt But NotExpressed	Expressed to a Lesser Extent than Felt	Expressed to the Extent Felt	Expressed to a Greater Extent than Felt	Expressed But Not Felt
Expressed Emotion Scenario					
Felt But Not Expressed	8	7	9	1	0
Expressed to a Lesser Extent than Felt	7	10	4	4	0
Expressed to the Extent Felt	21	15	36	3	1
Expressed to a Greater Extent than Felt	12	6	7	5	0
Expressed But Not Felt	0	1	0	0	1

Note: Cells are frequency counts of emotion management strategy comparisons for frustration.  $n = 158$ .

Table 3.11

*Crosstabulation of Emotion Management Strategies of Guilt between Emotion Scenarios*

Guilt	Felt Emotion Scenario				
	Felt But Not Expressed	Expressed to a Lesser Extent than Felt	Expressed to the Extent Felt	Expressed to a Greater Extent than Felt	Expressed But Not Felt
Expressed Emotion Scenario					
Felt But Not Expressed	10	2	5	1	0
Expressed to a Lesser Extent than Felt	6	4	3	2	1
Expressed to the Extent Felt	4	2	2	1	0
Expressed to a Greater Extent than Felt	1	2	0	1	0
Expressed But Not Felt	0	0	0	1	1

Note: Cells are frequency counts of emotion management strategy comparisons for guilt.  $n = 49$ .

Table 3.12

*Emotion Management Strategies: Emotion Scenario Comparison*

Emotion	Expressed Scenario						Felt Scenario					
	Not Felt Or Exp	Inhibit	Min.	Real/ True	Max.	Simulate	Not Felt Or Exp	Inhibit	Min.	Real/ True	Max.	Simulate
Anxiety	50	<u>65</u>	<u>58</u>	39	6	2	67	<u>46</u>	34	33	5	0
Fear	105	<u>54</u>	32	22	4	3	92	<u>41</u>	31	16	5	0
Frustration	7	36	38	<u>99</u>	38	3	20	48	42	<u>57</u>	13	2
Annoyance	16	46	37	<u>83</u>	29	8	32	<u>46</u>	44	<u>48</u>	15	2
Anger	31	45	45	<u>58</u>	30	10	41	<u>52</u>	40	32	19	1
Sadness	66	<u>48</u>	37	<u>45</u>	15	8	54	<u>60</u>	36	25	10	1
Guilt	104	<u>45</u>	30	26	10	4	118	<u>30</u>	17	14	6	1
Surprise	115	27	22	<u>34</u>	12	6	105	<u>27</u>	<u>26</u>	20	3	3
Happiness	128	12	15	<u>28</u>	<u>23</u>	15	129	<u>11</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>12</u>	7

Note: Cell entries indicate frequency counts of emotion management strategy per emotion and emotion scenario. Cell entries underlined with a solid line indicate commonly reported strategies. Cell entries underlined with a dashed line indicate instances when the real/true strategy was most commonly reported.  $n = 222$ .

**Test of the second research question: How.** The second research question asked how individuals distinguish between felt emotions and expressed emotions during relational conflict. In order to test this research question I will analyze the intensities with which participants experienced emotions in both felt and expressed emotion scenarios.

**Felt intensity of emotions.** Participants were asked to rate the extent to which they felt each emotion on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = did not feel; 5 = felt to a great extent) for both the expressed emotion and felt emotion scenarios. A series of one-sample t-tests were conducted for each emotion. With regard to the intensity to which emotions were felt in the *expressed emotion scenario*, results revealed mean scores of happiness, guilt, surprise, fear combined (comprised of fear and anxiety) were all below the scale midpoint (=3). Anger combined, comprised of anger, frustration, and annoyance, was significantly above the scale midpoint (=3). Sadness was not significantly different from the scale midpoint (=3). These results may be found in Table 3.13. These results indicate happiness, guilt, surprise, and fear combined were not felt to great extents while anger combined was felt to greater extents. Sadness did not differ from the scale midpoint, suggesting sadness was not felt to less or great extent.

The same series of one-sample t-tests were conducted for the intensity to which emotions were felt in the *felt emotion scenario*. Results mean scores for happiness, guilt, surprise, and fear combined were significantly below the scale midpoint (=3), anger combined was significantly above the scale midpoint (=3), and sadness was not significantly different from the scale midpoint (=3). These results mimic the patterns observed in the expressed scenario reported above and may also be found in Table 3.13.

Table 3.13

*Felt Intensity of Emotions One-Sample t-tests*

Scenario		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i> -value
Expressed Scenario				
Anger Combined		3.65	1.04	9.25*
Fear Combined		2.46	1.15	-6.93*
Sadness		2.81	1.48	-1.92
Guilt		2.06	1.24	-11.14*
Surprise		2.07	1.32	-10.46*
Happiness		1.50	0.87	-25.54*
Felt Scenario				
Anger Combined		3.41	1.17	4.83*
Fear Combined		2.43	1.32	-5.95*
Sadness		2.84	1.46	-1.55
Guilt		1.88	1.22	-12.53*
Surprise		2.09	1.39	-9.06*
Happiness		1.45	0.93	-22.91*

Note: \* $p < .001$ . Anger Combined includes anger, frustration, and annoyance. Fear Combined includes fear and anxiety. The scale midpoint for all emotions = 3.  $df$  ranged from 187-220.

Repeated measure ANOVAs were conducted to compare the effects of felt intensities of emotions between the two emotion scenarios. There was a significant difference between the emotion scenarios for anger combined ( $\Lambda = .98, F(1,185) = 4.57, p < .05$ ). Thus, anger combined was more intensely felt in the expressed emotion scenario compared to the felt emotion scenario. The results show that there was no significant difference between emotion scenarios for fear combined ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,185) = .00, ns$ ), sadness ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,187) = .09, ns$ ), guilt ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,186) = 1.17, ns$ ), surprise ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,186) = .02, ns$ ), or happiness ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,188) = .54, ns$ ). These results suggest that there is some difference in the intensity with which individuals feel emotions between expressed and felt emotion scenarios.

***Expressed intensity of emotions.*** Participants were asked to rate the extent to which they expressed each emotion on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = did not express; 5 = expressed to a great extent) for both the expressed emotion and felt emotion scenarios. A series of one-sample t-tests were conducted for each emotion. With regard to the intensity to which emotions were felt in the *expressed emotion scenario*, results revealed mean scores of happiness, guilt, sadness, surprise, and fear combined were significantly below the scale midpoint (=3) while anger combined was not significantly different from the scale midpoint (=3). Results of these one-sample t-tests may be found in Table 3.14. These results suggest happiness, guilt, sadness, surprise, and fear combined were not expressed to great extents. The results also suggest anger was expressed a moderate amount.

The same series of one-sample t-tests were conducted for the *felt emotion scenario*. Results revealed mean scores of happiness, guilt, sadness, surprise, anger combined, and fear combined were all significantly below the scale midpoint (=3). These results may also be found

in Table 3.14. These results indicated all emotions significantly differed from the scale midpoint, so each emotion was more likely not expressed.

A series of one-way repeated measures ANOVAs were conducted to compare the effects of expressed intensities of emotions between the two emotion scenarios. As seen in Table 3.15, there were significant differences between emotion scenarios for anger combined ( $\Lambda = .85$ ,  $F(1,184) = 31.74, p < .001$ ), sadness ( $\Lambda = .90, F(1,187) = 21.82, p < .001$ ), guilt ( $\Lambda = .98, F(1,181) = 4.51, p < .05$ ), and surprise ( $\Lambda = .97, F(1,186) = 5.35, p < .05$ ). In particular, anger combined, sadness, guilt, and surprise were more intensely expressed in the felt emotion scenario compared to the expressed emotion scenario. Furthermore, the results show that there was no significant difference between emotion scenarios for fear combined ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,187) = 2.04, ns$ ) or happiness ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,187) = .18, ns$ ). These results suggest that the intensity with which individuals express emotions differ between expressed and felt emotion scenarios.

***Most thought about expressed and felt emotions.*** Participants were asked to rank the top three emotions they spent thinking about during the conflict for both the expressed emotion and felt emotion scenarios. As seen in Table 3.16 when asked which emotion participants thought the most about during the conflict the most common response was one of the anger related emotions (anger, frustration, and annoyance). Other highly thought about emotions included fear related emotions (fear and anxiety) and sadness. Happiness was consistently the least thought of emotion. Tables 3.17 and 3.18 report the second and third most thought about emotions during the conflict. There were not large differences between participants' reports of the top thought about emotion between the expressed emotion and felt emotion scenarios.

In total, analyses associated with this research question produced patterns that echo the results from the first research question, such that individuals were more likely to report feeling

emotions to greater intensities than were reported to be expressed. This is consistent with the previous observation that individuals are more likely to suppress their felt emotions by engaging in inhibiting or miniaturizing emotion management strategies than they are to intensify felt emotions through maximizing or simulating emotion management strategies. Furthermore, for all examined emotions, with the exception of happiness, expressed intensities were consistently higher than the felt intensities. While emotions were not experienced very intensely overall, patterns did emerge that were consistent with existing conflict research. In particular, negative emotions commonly associated with conflict (i.e., anger/anger related emotions, sadness, fear/fear related emotions) were experienced most intensely. Further implications of these results and observations are discussed in Chapter 4.

Table 3.14

*Expressed Intensity of Emotions One-Sample t-tests*

Scenario	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i> -value
Expressed Scenario			
Anger Combined	3.20	1.24	2.39
Fear Combined	1.87	0.99	-16.92*
Sadness	2.50	1.39	-5.37*
Guilt	1.80	1.14	-15.49*
Surprise	1.93	1.25	-12.66*
Happiness	1.67	1.67	-18.37*
Felt Scenario			
Anger Combined	2.53	1.28	-5.06*
Fear Combined	1.75	1.02	-16.82*
Sadness	2.02	1.31	-10.30*
Guilt	1.55	1.01	-19.59*
Surprise	1.69	1.12	-16.09*
Happiness	1.69	1.18	-15.26*

Note: \* $p < .001$ . Anger Combined includes anger, frustration, and annoyance. Fear Combined includes fear and anxiety. The scale midpoint for all emotions = 3.  $df$  ranged from 186-220. There were no consistent demographic variables that significantly differed (e.g., gender, relationship status, race, cohabitation status, exclusivity status).

Table 3.15

*Felt and Expressed Intensities of Emotions: Emotion Scenario Comparison*

Emotion	Expressed Scenario		Felt Scenario	
	Felt	Expressed	Felt	Expressed
Anger Combined	<u>3.65</u>	<u>3.20</u>	<u>3.41</u>	2.53
Fear Combined	2.46	1.87	2.43	1.75
Sadness	<u>2.81</u>	2.50	<u>2.84</u>	2.02
Guilt	2.06	1.80	1.88	1.55
Surprise	2.07	1.93	2.09	1.69
Happiness	1.50	1.67	1.45	1.69

Note: Scale midpoint = 3. Significantly above the scale midpoint. Not significantly different from the scale midpoint. All values not underlined are significantly below the scale midpoint.

Table 3.16

*Most Thought about Emotions during Relational Conflict*

Emotion	Expressed Scenario		Felt Scenario	
	n	%	n	%
Anger Combined	149	67.1%	101	53.2%
Fear Combined	28	12.6%	21	11.1%
Sadness	20	9.0%	29	15.3%
Guilt	6	2.7%	11	5.8%
Surprise	6	2.7%	14	7.4%
Happiness	2	0.9%	6	3.2%
Other	9	4.1%	6	3.2%
Missing	2	0.9%	2	1.1%

Note: Anger Combined includes anger, frustration, and annoyance. Fear Combined includes fear and anxiety. Expressed emotion scenario % calculated from 222 participants ( $n = 222$ ). Felt emotion scenario % calculated with 190 participants ( $n = 190$ ).

Table 3.17

*Second Most Thought about Emotions during Relational Conflict*

Emotion	Expressed Scenario		Felt Scenario	
	n	%	n	%
Anger Combined	141	63.5%	113	59.5%
Fear Combined	28	12.6%	30	15.8%
Sadness	16	7.2%	19	10.0%
Guilt	13	5.9%	9	4.7%
Surprise	8	3.6%	8	4.2%
Happiness	4	1.8%	4	2.1%
Other	8	3.6%	4	2.1%
Missing	4	1.8%	3	1.6%

Note: Anger Combined includes anger, frustration, and annoyance. Fear Combined includes fear and anxiety. Expressed emotion scenario % calculated from 222 participants ( $n = 222$ ). Felt emotion scenario % calculated with 190 participants ( $n = 190$ ).

Table 3.18

*Third Most Thought about Emotions during Relational Conflict*

Emotion	Expressed Scenario		Felt Scenario	
	n	%	n	%
Anger Combined	115	51.8%	88	46.3%
Fear Combined	30	13.5%	24	12.6%
Sadness	34	15.3%	30	15.8%
Guilt	15	6.8%	15	7.9%
Surprise	13	5.9%	15	7.9%
Happiness	5	2.3%	7	3.7%
Other	4	1.8%	4	2.1%
Missing	6	2.7%	7	3.7%

Note: Anger Combined includes anger, frustration, and annoyance. Fear Combined includes fear and anxiety. Expressed emotion scenario % calculated from 222 participants ( $n = 222$ ). Felt emotion scenario % calculated with 190 participants ( $n = 190$ ).

**Test of the third research question: What.** The third research question concerns what nonverbal behaviors do people report strategically managing the most when attempting to manage their emotions. In order to test this research question I will examine the nonverbal behaviors (i.e., changes in the face, eyes, voice, and body) participants reported attempting to strategically manage during the conflict.

***Conscious attempts to control nonverbal expressions of emotion.*** Participants were asked to evaluate the extent to which they consciously attempted to control the expression of their top three most thought about emotions during the conflict with their eyes, facial expressions, body, and voice using a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = Not at all; 5 = Very much).<sup>xii</sup> The following paragraph reports the results for each of the nonverbal behaviors with regard to the expressed emotion scenario and the paragraph preceding it reports the results pertaining to the felt emotion scenario.

***Most thought of emotion for the expressed emotion scenario.*** When asked the extent to which a participant attempted to control the expression of his or her most thought of emotion with his or her eyes (e.g., where he or she looked, how wide his or her eyes were, how narrow his or her eyes were) the mean response was 2.63 ( $SD = 1.38$ ) for the expressed emotion scenario. A one-sample t-test revealed the mean scores from control of the eyes were significantly below the scale midpoint ( $=3$ ,  $t(218) = -3.97$ ,  $p < .001$ ), suggesting participants did not attempt to control the expression of emotions through their eyes. The mean response when asked to reflect on the extent to which participants attempted to control their facial expressions was 2.73 ( $SD = 1.44$ ) for the expressed emotion scenario. The mean scores from control of facial expressions were significantly below the scale midpoint ( $=3$ ,  $t(217) = -2.78$ ,  $p < .01$ ). These results suggest participants did not strongly attempt to control the expression of emotions

through their facial expressions. The mean response about participants' focus on their body (e.g., body movement, hand movement, body position) was 2.79 ( $SD = 1.35$ ) for the expressed emotion scenario. The mean scores from control of the body were significantly below the scale midpoint ( $=3$ ,  $t(218) = -2.35, p < .05$ ), indicating participants did not attempt to control the expression of emotions through their body. Finally, when participants were asked to reflect of the extent to which they attempted to control their emotional expression through their voice (e.g., volume, pitch, rate) the mean response was 3.33 ( $SD = 1.41$ ) for the expressed emotion scenario. Results revealed the mean scores from control of the voice were significantly above the scale midpoint ( $=3$ ,  $t(217) = 3.47, p < .001$ ), suggesting participants did attempt the expression of emotions through their voice.

*Most thought of emotion for the felt emotion scenario.* In the felt emotion scenario, when participants were asked the extent to they attempted to control the expression of his or her most thought of emotion with his or her eyes (e.g., where he or she looked, how wide his or her eyes were, how narrow his or her eyes were) the mean response was 2.87 ( $SD = 1.57$ ). The mean scores from control of the eyes were not significantly different from the scale midpoint ( $=3$ ,  $t(186) = -1.17, ns$ ). These results signify participants exerted a moderate amount of effort to control their emotion through their eyes. The mean response when asked to reflect on the extent to which participants attempted to control their facial expressions was 2.99 ( $SD = 1.55$ ) for the expressed emotion scenario. The mean scores from control of facial expressions were not significantly different from the scale midpoint ( $=3$ ,  $t(186) = -0.09, ns$ ). These results suggested participants exerted moderate amounts of control over the expression of emotions through their facial expressions. The mean response about participants' focus on their body (e.g., body movement, hand movement, body position) was 2.88 ( $SD = 1.54$ ) for the expressed emotion

scenario. The mean scores from control of the body were not significantly different from the scale midpoint ( $=3$ ,  $t(186) = -1.09$ ,  $ns$ ), indicating participants exerted moderate amount of control over the expression of emotions through their body. Finally, when participants were asked to reflect of the extent to which they attempted to control their emotional expression through their voice (e.g., volume, pitch, rate) the mean response was  $3.30$  ( $SD = 1.56$ ) for the expressed emotion scenario. A one-sample t-test revealed the mean scores from control of the voice were significantly above from the scale midpoint ( $=3$ ,  $t(187) = 2.67$ ,  $p < .01$ ), suggesting participants did attempt to control the expression of emotions through their voice.

*Second most thought of emotion.* When asked to respond to the same questions regarding behavioral control for the second most thought about emotion, the responses closely mirrored those of the most thought about emotion. The mean response for control of emotional expression with one's eyes was  $2.48$  ( $SD = 1.38$ ) for the expressed emotion scenario and  $2.91$  ( $SD = 1.49$ ) for the felt emotion scenario. The mean scores for the expressed emotion scenario were significantly below the scale midpoint ( $=3$ ,  $t(213) = -5.51$ ,  $p < .001$ ), signifying participants did not attempt to control their emotions through their eyes. However, the means scores for the felt emotion scenario were not significantly different from the scale midpoint ( $=3$ ,  $t(186) = -.78$ ,  $ns$ ), suggesting participants exerted a moderate amount of effort to control the expression of emotions through their eyes.

The mean report regarding conscious attempts to control *facial expressions* was  $2.61$  ( $SD = 1.39$ ) for the expressed scenario and  $3.01$  ( $SD = 1.45$ ) for the felt scenario. The mean scores for the expressed emotion scenario were significantly below the scale midpoint ( $=3$ ,  $t(213) = -4.10$ ,  $p < .001$ ). These results indicate participants did not attempt to control the emotions through their facial expressions. The mean scores for the felt emotion scenario were not

significantly different from the scale midpoint ( $=3$ ,  $t(186) = .10$ , *ns*). These results suggest participants moderately attempted to control the expression of their emotions through their facial expressions.

With regard to nonverbal behaviors related to the *body*, the mean response regarding conscious attempts to control bodily movements and behaviors was  $2.70$  ( $SD = 1.41$ ) for the expressed scenario and  $3.08$  ( $SD = 1.48$ ) for the felt scenario. The means scores for the expressed emotion scenario were significantly below the scale midpoint ( $=3$ ,  $t(213) = 3.15$ ,  $p < .01$ ). These results signify that participants did not exert much effort to control the expression of their emotions through their body. For the felt emotion scenario, the mean scores were not significantly different from the scale midpoint ( $=3$ ,  $t(185) = .69$ , *ns*). These results suggest participants exerted a moderate amount of effort to control their emotions through their body.

The mean response for attempts to control the *voice* was  $3.10$  ( $SD = 1.45$ ) for the expressed scenario and  $3.30$  ( $SD = 1.44$ ) felt emotion scenario. The mean scores for the expressed emotion scenario were not significantly different from the scale midpoint ( $=3$ ,  $t(212) = .10$ , *ns*). These results indicated participants exerted a moderate amount of effort to control their emotions through their voice. With regard to the felt emotion scenario, the mean scores were significantly above the scale midpoint ( $=3$ ,  $t(187) = 2.83$ ,  $p < .01$ ), suggesting participants did attempt the expression of emotions through their voice.

*Third most thought of emotion.* Results for the third most thought about emotion paralleled those of the first and second most thought of emotions. The mean response regarding attempt to control emotional expression with one's *eyes* was  $2.57$  ( $SD = 1.45$ ) for the expressed scenario and  $2.85$  ( $SD = 1.49$ ) for the felt scenario for the third most thought about emotion. The mean scores for the expressed emotion scenario were significantly below the scale midpoint ( $=3$ ,

$t(212) = -4.29, p < .001$ ), indicating participants did not attempt to control their emotions through their eyes. The mean scores for the felt emotion scenario were not significantly different from the scale midpoint ( $=3, t(181) = -1.40, ns$ ). These results suggest participants exerted a moderate amount of effort to control the expression of their emotions through their eyes.

The mean report regarding conscious attempts to control *facial expressions* was 2.64 ( $SD = 1.44$ ) for the expressed scenario and 2.85 ( $SD = 1.46$ ) felt scenario. The mean scores for the felt scenario were significantly below the scale midpoint ( $=3, t(212) = -3.61, p < .001$ ), suggesting participants did not evoke much effort to control the expression of their emotions through their facial features. Whereas the mean scores for the felt emotion scenario were not significantly different from the scale midpoint ( $=3, t(181) = -1.37, ns$ ), indicating participants evoked moderate effort to control the expression of emotions through their facial expressions.

The mean response regarding conscious attempts to control *bodily movements* and behaviors was 2.63 ( $SD = 1.44$ ) for the expressed scenario and 2.83 ( $SD = 1.47$ ) for the felt scenario. The mean scores for the felt scenario were significantly below the scale midpoint ( $=3, t(211) = -3.72, p < .001$ ). These results signify participants did not evoke much effort to control the expression of their emotions through their body. For the felt emotion scenario, the mean scores were not significantly different from the scale midpoint ( $=3, t(180) = -1.57, ns$ ), suggesting participants evoked moderate effort to control the expression of emotions through their body.

Lastly, the mean responses involving attempts to control one's voice was 3.04 ( $SD = 1.46$ ) for the expressed scenario and 3.13 ( $SD = 1.41$ ) for the felt emotion scenario. The mean scores for both emotion scenarios were not significantly different from the scale midpoint ( $=3, t(212) = .42, ns$  for the expressed emotion scenario,  $=3, t(182) = 1.21, ns$  for the felt emotion

scenario). These results suggest participants exerted a moderate amount of effort to control the expression of emotions through their voice.

In sum, the nonverbal behavior participants consciously attempted to control the most was the voice. The mean scores for the voice were consistently above or not different from the scale midpoint (=3) in all situations (i.e., for each emotion ranking and both emotion scenarios). The voice was the only nonverbal behavior that scored significantly above the scale midpoint (=3). Facial expressions, body, and eyes were moderately controlled for the felt emotion expression whereas these nonverbal behaviors were all significantly below the scale midpoint (=3) for the expressed emotion scenario.

*Conscious attempts to control nonverbal expressions of anger/anger related emotions.*

One hundred and forty-eight participants of the 222 responded one of the three emotions comprised the anger combined category (anger, frustration, or annoyance) as the emotion they spent the most time thinking about during the conflict for the expressed emotion scenario. Between those 148 participants the mean responses regarding attempts to control the expression of anger/anger related emotions were 2.57 ( $SD = 1.37$ ) for eyes, 2.64 ( $SD = 1.44$ ) for facial expressions, 2.72 ( $SD = 1.38$ ) for body, and 3.24 ( $SD = 1.47$ ) for voice. Out of the 190 respondents to the felt emotion scenario 101 participants reported spending the most time thinking about anger/anger related emotions. The mean responses regarding attempts to control the expression of anger/anger related emotions were 2.71 ( $SD = 1.51$ ) for eyes, 2.89 ( $SD = 1.53$ ) for facial expressions, 2.78 ( $SD = 1.49$ ) for body, and 3.18 ( $SD = 1.57$ ) for voice. Table 3.19 shows results for the expressed emotion and felt emotion scenarios when anger/anger related emotions were ranked second or third.

*Conscious attempts to control nonverbal expressions of fear/fear related emotions.*

Twenty-eight participants of the 222 reported fear/fear related emotions (anxiety) as one of the emotions they spent the most time thinking about during the conflict for the expressed emotion scenario. Between those 28 participants the mean responses regarding attempts to control the expression of fear/fear related emotions were 2.75 ( $SD = 1.32$ ) for eyes, 3.07 ( $SD = 1.36$ ) for facial expressions, 3.00 ( $SD = 1.16$ ) for body, and 3.39 ( $SD = 1.33$ ) for voice. Out of the 190 respondents to the felt emotion scenario 20 reported spending the most time thinking about fear/fear related emotions. The mean responses regarding attempts to control the expression of fear/fear related emotions were 3.60 ( $SD = 1.64$ ) for eyes, 3.75 ( $SD = 1.52$ ) for facial expressions, 3.65 ( $SD = 1.50$ ) for body, and 3.90 ( $SD = 1.38$ ) for voice. Table 3.20 shows results for the expressed emotion and felt emotion scenarios when fear/fear related emotions were ranked second or third.

*Conscious attempts to control nonverbal expressions of sadness.* Twenty participants of the 222 identified sadness as the emotion they spent the most time thinking about during the conflict for the expressed emotion scenario. Between those 20 participants the mean responses regarding attempts to control the expression of sadness were 3.25 ( $SD = 0.93$ ) for eyes, 3.35 ( $SD = 1.42$ ) for facial expressions, 3.35 ( $SD = 1.27$ ) for body, and 3.68 ( $SD = 1.34$ ) for voice. Out of the 190 respondents to the felt emotion scenario 29 reported spending the most time thinking about sadness. The mean responses regarding attempts to control the expression of sadness were 2.97 ( $SD = 1.68$ ) for eyes, 2.97 ( $SD = 1.70$ ) for facial expressions, 2.90 ( $SD = 1.66$ ) for body, and 3.28 ( $SD = 1.71$ ) for voice. Table 3.21 shows results for the expressed emotion and felt emotion scenarios when sadness was ranked second or third.

*Conscious attempts to control nonverbal expressions of guilt.* Six participants of the 222 responded guilt as the emotion they spent the most time thinking about during the conflict for the expressed emotion scenario. Between those six participants the mean responses regarding attempts to control the expression of guilt were 3.00 ( $SD = 1.67$ ) for eyes, 2.50 ( $SD = 1.76$ ) for facial expressions, 3.00 ( $SD = 1.67$ ) for body, and 4.00 ( $SD = 1.55$ ) for voice. Out of the 190 respondents to the felt emotion scenario eleven reported spending the most time thinking about guilt. The mean responses regarding attempts to control the expression of guilt were 3.64 ( $SD = 1.57$ ) for eyes, 3.55 ( $SD = 1.21$ ) for facial expressions, 3.09 ( $SD = 1.64$ ) for body, and 3.82 ( $SD = 1.33$ ) for voice. Table 3.22 shows results for the expressed emotion and felt emotion scenarios when guilt was ranked second or third.

*Conscious attempts to control nonverbal expressions of surprise.* Six participants of the 222 identified surprise as the emotion they spent the most time thinking about during the conflict for the expressed emotion scenario. Between those six participants the mean responses regarding attempts to control the expression of surprise were 2.50 ( $SD = 1.76$ ) for eyes, 2.00 ( $SD = 1.10$ ) for facial expressions, 2.50 ( $SD = 1.64$ ) for body, and 3.00 ( $SD = 1.41$ ) for voice. Out of the 190 respondents to the felt emotion scenario 14 reported spending the most time thinking about surprise. The mean responses regarding attempts to control the expression of surprise were 2.50 ( $SD = 1.23$ ) for eyes, 2.43 ( $SD = 1.28$ ) for facial expressions, 2.50 ( $SD = 1.35$ ) for body, and 3.07 ( $SD = 1.33$ ) for voice. Table 3.23 shows results for the expressed emotion and felt emotion scenarios when surprise was ranked second or third.

*Conscious attempts to control nonverbal expressions of happiness.* Only two participants of the 222 reported happiness as the emotion they spent the most time thinking about during the conflict for the expressed emotion scenario. Between those two participants the mean responses

regarding attempts to control the expression of happiness were 2.00 ( $SD = 0.0$ ) for eyes, 3.00 ( $SD = 1.41$ ) for facial expressions, 2.00 ( $SD = 0.0$ ) for body, and 3.00 ( $SD = 1.41$ ) for voice. Out of the 190 respondents to the felt emotion scenario six reported spending the most time thinking about happiness. The mean responses regarding attempts to control the expression of happiness were 2.83 ( $SD = 1.84$ ) for eyes, 3.67 ( $SD = 1.21$ ) for facial expressions, 3.17 ( $SD = 1.60$ ) for body, and 3.83 ( $SD = 1.47$ ) for voice. Table 3.24 shows results for the expressed emotion and felt emotion scenarios when happiness was ranked second or third.

**Comparison of emotion scenarios.** A series of one-way repeated measures ANOVAs were conducted to compare reports between the two emotion scenarios. Analyses were conducted per emotion, ranking (i.e., most thought of, second most thought of, and third most thought of), and nonverbal behavior (i.e., eyes, face, body, and voice). The proceeding paragraphs report results. The consistent pattern observed in the results is, for the most part, significant differences between the emotion scenarios were not present. Exceptions occurred in the anger combined and fear combined emotion groupings. A summary of these results may be found on Table 3.25.

*Scenario comparisons of nonverbal attempts to control the eyes per emotion.* There were significant differences between the emotion scenarios for *anger combined* when it was ranked second ( $\Lambda = .94, F(1,150) = 10.39, p < .01$ ) and *fear combined* when it was ranked second ( $\Lambda = .92, F(1,48) = 4.46, p < .05$ ). The results show there were no significant differences between emotion scenarios for *anger combined* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,155) = 2.16, ns$ ) or third ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,129) = .39, ns$ ), *fear combined* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = .95, F(1,41) = 2.32, ns$ ) or third ( $\Lambda = .95, F(1,40) = 2.11, ns$ ), *guilt* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = .86, F(1,12) = 2.03, ns$ ), second ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,18) = .11, ns$ ), or third ( $\Lambda = .96, F(1,24) = 1.00, ns$ ), *sadness*

when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,40) = .01, ns$ ), second ( $\Lambda = .98, F(1,29) = .66, ns$ ), or third ( $\Lambda = .98, F(1,48) = .98, ns$ ), *surprise* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,16) = .11, ns$ ), second ( $\Lambda = .89, F(1,13) = 1.68, ns$ ), or third ( $\Lambda = .93, F(1,25) = 1.88, ns$ ), *happiness* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = .96, F(1,6) = .24, ns$ ), second ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,6) = .06, ns$ ), or third ( $\Lambda = .91, F(1,8) = .80, ns$ ).

*Scenario comparisons of nonverbal attempts to control the face per emotion.* The results show there were significant differences between the emotion scenarios for *anger combined* when it was ranked second ( $\Lambda = .96, F(1,150) = 6.36, p < .05$ ) and *fear combined* when it was ranked second ( $\Lambda = .91, F(1,48) = 4.91, p < .05$ ). *Anger combined approached significance* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = .98, F(1,154) = 3.89, p = .051$ ). There were no significant differences between emotion scenarios for *anger combined* when it was ranked third ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,129) = .08, ns$ ), *fear combined* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = .94, F(1,41) = 2.50, ns$ ) or third ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,40) = .24, ns$ ), *guilt* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = .86, F(1,11) = 1.74, ns$ ), second ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,18) = .05, ns$ ), or third ( $\Lambda = .98, F(1,24) = .57, ns$ ), *sadness* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,40) = .23, ns$ ), second ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,29) = .39, ns$ ), or third ( $\Lambda = .97, F(1,48) = 1.30, ns$ ), *surprise* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = .91, F(1,16) = 1.52, ns$ ), second ( $\Lambda = .79, F(1,13) = 3.47, ns$ ), or third ( $\Lambda = .91, F(1,25) = 2.45, ns$ ), *happiness* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = .86, F(1,6) = 1.00, ns$ ), second ( $\Lambda = .89, F(1,6) = .77, ns$ ), or third ( $\Lambda = .85, F(1,8) = 1.46, ns$ ).

*Scenario comparisons of nonverbal attempts to control the body per emotion.* There were significant differences between the emotion scenarios for *anger combined* when it was ranked second ( $\Lambda = .96, F(1,150) = 6.45, p < .05$ ) and *fear combined* when it was ranked second ( $\Lambda = .92, F(1,48) = 4.25, p < .05$ ). There were no significant differences between emotion scenarios for *anger combined* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,155) = .26, ns$ ) or third ( $\Lambda$

$= 1.00, F(1,128) = .14, ns$ ), *fear combined* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,41) = .56, ns$ ) or third ( $\Lambda = .98, F(1,40) = .68, ns$ ), *guilt* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = .97, F(1,12) = .40, ns$ ), second ( $\Lambda = .96, F(1,17) = .72, ns$ ), or third ( $\Lambda = .91, F(1,24) = 2.30, ns$ ), *sadness* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,40) = .09, ns$ ), second ( $\Lambda = .96, F(1,29) = 1.20, ns$ ), or third ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,47) = .69, ns$ ), *surprise* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = .96, F(1,16) = .61, ns$ ), second ( $\Lambda = .96, F(1,13) = .59, ns$ ), or third ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,24) = .35, ns$ ), *happiness* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,6) = .00, ns$ ), second ( $\Lambda = .83, F(1,5) = 1.00, ns$ ), or third ( $\Lambda = .96, F(1,8) = .31, ns$ ).

*Scenario comparisons of nonverbal attempts to control the voice per emotion.* Results indicate the difference between emotion scenarios for *fear combined* approached significance when it was ranked second ( $\Lambda = .92, F(1,48) = 4.46, p = .053$ ). There were no significant differences between emotion scenarios for *anger combined* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,155) = .01, ns$ ), second ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,150) = .49, ns$ ), or third ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,129) = .74, ns$ ), *fear combined* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,42) = .00, ns$ ) or third ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,40) = .50, ns$ ), *guilt* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,12) = 1.88, ns$ ), second ( $\Lambda = .98, F(1,17) = .35, ns$ ), or third ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,23) = .01, ns$ ), *sadness* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,39) = .00, ns$ ), second ( $\Lambda = .98, F(1,29) = .57, ns$ ), or third ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,48) = .57, ns$ ), *surprise* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,16) = .18, ns$ ), second ( $\Lambda = .98, F(1,13) = .22, ns$ ), or third ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,25) = .20, ns$ ), *happiness* when it was ranked first ( $\Lambda = .86, F(1,6) = 1.00, ns$ ), second ( $\Lambda = .86, F(1,6) = 1.00, ns$ ), or third ( $\Lambda = .96, F(1,8) = .31, ns$ ).

**Comparison of nonverbal behaviors.** A series of one-way repeated measures ANOVAs were conducted to compare reports between the four nonverbal behaviors. Analyses were conducted per first ranking emotion (i.e., most thought of) within a particular emotion scenario

(i.e., expressed or felt emotion scenario) and nonverbal behavior (i.e., eyes, face, body, and voice). The proceeding paragraphs report results. A summary of results may be found in Table 3.26.

*Comparison of nonverbal behaviors for anger combined.* In the *expressed emotion scenario*, there were significant differences between participants' attempts to control their anger/anger related emotions through their eyes and voice ( $\Lambda = .83, F(1,147) = 29.97, p < .001$ ) face and voice ( $\Lambda = .85, F(1,146) = 26.65, p < .001$ ), and body and voice ( $\Lambda = .88, F(1,147) = 20.52, ns$ ). There were no significant differences between participants' attempts to control their anger/anger related emotions through their eyes and face ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,146) = .99, ns$ ), eyes and body ( $\Lambda = .98, F(1,147) = 2.37, ns$ ), or face and body ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,146) = .51, ns$ ). In the *felt emotion scenario*, there were significant differences between participants' attempts to control their anger/anger related emotions through their eyes and face ( $\Lambda = .95, F(1,100) = 5.65, p < .05$ ), eyes and voice ( $\Lambda = .90, F(1,100) = 11.69, p = .001$ ), face and voice ( $\Lambda = .95, F(1,100) = 5.68, p < .05$ ), and body and voice ( $\Lambda = .90, F(1,100) = 10.69, p = .001$ ). There were no significant differences between participants' attempts to control their anger/anger related emotions through their eyes and body ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,100) = .47, ns$ ) or face and body ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,100) = 1.20, ns$ ).

*Comparison of nonverbal behaviors for fear combined.* In the *expressed emotion scenario*, there were no significant differences between participants' attempts to control their fear/fear related emotions through their eyes and face ( $\Lambda = .94, F(1,27) = 1.77, ns$ ), eyes and body ( $\Lambda = .96, F(1,27) = 1.09, ns$ ), eyes and voice ( $\Lambda = .88, F(1,27) = 3.70, ns$ ), face and body ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,27) = .18, ns$ ), face and voice ( $\Lambda = .96, F(1,27) = 1.05, ns$ ), or body and voice ( $\Lambda = .92, F(1,27) = .92, ns$ ). Similarly, in the *felt emotion scenario*, there were no significant

differences between participants' attempts to control their fear/fear related emotions through their eyes and face ( $\Lambda = .91, F(1,19) = 1.88, ns$ ), eyes and body ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,19) = .19, ns$ ), eyes and voice ( $\Lambda = .93, F(1,19) = 1.54, ns$ ), face and body ( $\Lambda = .95, F(1,19) = 1.00, ns$ ), face and voice ( $\Lambda = .98, F(1,19) = .46, ns$ ), or body and voice ( $\Lambda = .93, F(1,19) = 1.34, ns$ ).

*Comparison of nonverbal behaviors for sadness.* In the *expressed emotion scenario*, there were no significant differences between participants' attempts to control their sadness through their eyes and face ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,19) = .19, ns$ ), eyes and body ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,19) = .13, ns$ ), eyes and voice ( $\Lambda = .89, F(1,18) = 2.27, ns$ ), face and body ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,19) = .00, ns$ ), face and voice ( $\Lambda = .87, F(1,18) = 2.82, ns$ ), or body and voice ( $\Lambda = .94, F(1,18) = 1.21, ns$ ). Similarly, in the *felt emotion scenario*, there were no significant differences between participants' attempts to control their sadness through their eyes and face ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,28) = .00, ns$ ), eyes and body ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,28) = .22, ns$ ), eyes and voice ( $\Lambda = .94, F(1,28) = 1.69, ns$ ), face and body ( $\Lambda = .97, F(1,28) = 1.00, ns$ ), face and voice ( $\Lambda = .95, F(1,28) = 1.39, ns$ ), or body and voice ( $\Lambda = .93, F(1,28) = 2.13, ns$ ).

*Comparison of nonverbal behaviors for guilt.* In the *expressed emotion scenario*, there were no significant differences between participants' attempts to control their guilt through their eyes and face ( $\Lambda = .83, F(1,5) = 1.00, ns$ ), eyes and voice ( $\Lambda = .70, F(1,5) = 2.14, ns$ ), face and body ( $\Lambda = .83, F(1,5) = 1.00, ns$ ), face and voice ( $\Lambda = .53, F(1,5) = 4.36, ns$ ), or body and voice ( $\Lambda = .70, F(1,5) = 2.14, ns$ ). Analyses were not conducted regarding attempts to control the expression of guilt through the (a) eyes and body and (b) face and voice due to low *n*. In the *felt emotion scenario*, there was a significant difference between participants' attempts to control their guilt through their eyes and body ( $\Lambda = .59, F(1,10) = 6.92, p < .05$ ). The results show there were no significant differences between participants' attempts to control their guilt through their

eyes and face ( $\Lambda = .99, F(1,10) = .13, ns$ ), eyes and voice ( $\Lambda = .97, F(1,10) = .31, ns$ ), face and body ( $\Lambda = .75, F(1,10) = 3.38, ns$ ), face and voice ( $\Lambda = .96, F(1,10) = .45, ns$ ), or body and voice ( $\Lambda = .71, F(1,10) = 4.10, ns$ ).

*Comparison of nonverbal behaviors for surprise.* In the *expressed emotion scenario*, there were no significant differences between participants' attempts to control their surprise through their eyes and face ( $\Lambda = .70, F(1,5) = 2.14, ns$ ), eyes and body ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,5) = .00, ns$ ), eyes and voice ( $\Lambda = .96, F(1,5) = .20, ns$ ), face and body ( $\Lambda = .50, F(1,5) = 5.00, ns$ ), face and voice ( $\Lambda = .77, F(1,5) = 1.50, ns$ ), or body and voice ( $\Lambda = .95, F(1,5) = .25, ns$ ). In the *felt emotion scenario*, the difference between participants' attempts to control their surprise through their face and voice approached significance ( $\Lambda = .75, F(1,13) = 4.37, p < .057$ ). There were no significant differences between participants' attempts to control their surprise through their eyes and face ( $\Lambda = .98, F(1,13) = .32, ns$ ), eyes and body ( $\Lambda = 1.00, F(1,13) = .00, ns$ ), eyes and voice ( $\Lambda = .81, F(1,13) = 3.06, ns$ ), face and body ( $\Lambda = .98, F(1,13) = .32, ns$ ), or body and voice ( $\Lambda = .77, F(1,13) = 3.85, ns$ ).

*Comparison of nonverbal behaviors for happiness.* In the *expressed emotion scenario*, there were no significant differences between participants' attempts to control their happiness through their eyes and face ( $\Lambda = .50, F(1,1) = 1.00, ns$ ), eyes and voice ( $\Lambda = .50, F(1,1) = 1.00, ns$ ), face and body ( $\Lambda = .50, F(1,1) = 1.00, ns$ ), or body and voice ( $\Lambda = .50, F(1,1) = 1.00, ns$ ). Analyses were not conducted regarding attempts to control the expression of happiness through the (a) eyes and body and (b) face and voice due to low  $n$ . In the *felt emotion scenario*, there were no significant differences between participants' attempts to control their happiness through their eyes and face ( $\Lambda = .62, F(1,5) = 3.05, ns$ ), eyes and body ( $\Lambda = .89, F(1,5) = .63, ns$ ), eyes

and voice ( $\Lambda = .57$ ,  $F(1,5) = 3.75$ , ns), face and body ( $\Lambda = .70$ ,  $F(1,5) = 2.14$ , ns), face and voice ( $\Lambda = .97$ ,  $F(1,5) = .17$ , ns), or body and voice ( $\Lambda = .56$ ,  $F(1,5) = 4.00$ , ns).

In sum, the results of this research question concerning what nonverbal behaviors individuals attempt to strategically control the most when attempting to manage their emotions reveal several patterns. For instance, emotions commonly associated with conflict experiences (i.e., anger/anger related emotions, sadness, fear/fear related emotions) were reported as the most thought of emotions during the relational conflict. These observations are consistent with results from research questions one and two. Analyses conducted to compare the two emotion scenarios indicated participants consistently reported greater intensities in the felt scenario compared to the expressed scenario, suggesting, once again, that individuals place more effort on concealing or suppressing their genuinely felt emotions than they do intensifying them. In addition, while anger/anger related emotions were the most commonly identified emotions experienced during the conflict participant reports indicate more effort was concentrated on fear/fear related emotions than anger/anger related emotions. Furthermore, a consistent pattern prevalent throughout the analyses is that individuals attempt to control their vocalic behaviors more so than any other nonverbal behavior examined in this study (i.e., eyes, face, and body). Some unique differences were observed for specific emotions. For example, while the voice was a highly concentrated nonverbal behavior, the other nonverbal behaviors rankings were also high. To that end, the nonverbal behaviors associated with fear/fear related emotions had more spread than other emotions nonverbal reports did. However, the overall finding of this research questions is that the voice the nonverbal behavior individuals attempt to strategically control the most when attempting to manage their emotions. Further observations are discussed in Chapter 4 in addition to the implications and speculations of these results.

Table 3.19

*Conscious Attempts to Control Nonverbal Expressions of Anger/Anger Related Emotions*

	Eyes	Facial Expression		Bodily Behaviors		Vocal Behavior		
Anger Combined	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.
Expressed Emotion Scenario								
1	2.57	1.37	2.64	1.44	2.72	1.38	3.24	1.47
2	2.40	1.34	2.58	1.35	2.74	1.40	3.16	1.44
3	2.69	1.45	2.77	1.43	2.80	1.45	3.35	1.41
Felt Emotion Scenario								
1	2.71	1.51	2.89	1.53	2.78	1.49	3.18	1.57
2	2.72	1.47	2.82	1.40	2.96	1.45	3.16	1.46
3	2.92	1.43	2.84	1.41	2.97	1.44	3.10	1.37

Note: Anger Combined includes anger, frustration, and annoyance. 1 = most thought of emotion, 2 = second most thought of emotion, 3 = third most thought of emotion as ranked by participants.

Table 3.20

*Conscious Attempts to Control Nonverbal Expressions of Fear/Fear Related Emotions*

Fear Combined	Eyes $\bar{x}$	S.D.	Facial Expression $\bar{x}$	S.D.	Bodily Behaviors $\bar{x}$	S.D.	Vocal Behavior $\bar{x}$	S.D.
Expressed Emotion Scenario								
1	2.75	1.32	3.07	1.36	3.00	1.16	3.39	1.33
2	2.56	1.53	2.67	1.52	2.59	1.45	2.58	1.42
3	2.47	1.55	2.63	1.47	2.57	1.48	2.83	1.51
Felt Emotion Scenario								
1	3.60	1.64	3.75	1.52	3.65	1.50	3.90	1.38
2	3.97	1.22	3.93	1.29	3.90	1.40	3.77	1.33
3	2.48	1.47	2.52	1.31	2.52	1.41	3.00	1.38

Note: Fear Combined includes fear and anxiety. 1 = most thought of emotion, 2 = second most thought of emotion, 3 = third most thought of emotion as ranked by participants.

Table 3.21

*Conscious Attempts to Control Nonverbal Expressions of Sadness*

Sadness	Eyes		Facial Expression		Bodily Behaviors		Vocal Behavior	
	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.
Expressed Emotion Scenario								
1	3.25	0.93	3.35	1.42	3.35	1.27	3.68	1.34
2	3.19	1.28	2.94	1.39	2.94	1.39	3.44	1.46
3	2.42	1.32	2.45	1.28	2.56	1.24	2.88	1.22
Felt Emotion Scenario								
1	2.97	1.68	2.97	1.70	2.90	1.66	3.28	1.71
2	2.44	1.72	2.50	1.72	2.39	1.61	3.42	1.64
3	3.07	1.58	3.21	1.54	3.17	1.49	3.45	1.45

Note: 1 = most thought of emotion, 2 = second most thought of emotion, 3 = third most thought of emotion as ranked by participants.

Table 3.22

*Conscious Attempts to Control Nonverbal Expressions of Guilt*

Guilt	Eyes		Facial Expression		Bodily Behaviors		Vocal Behavior	
	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.
Expressed Emotion Scenario								
1	3.00	1.67	2.50	1.76	3.00	1.67	4.00	1.55
2	2.46	1.45	2.31	1.49	2.31	1.49	2.92	1.62
3	2.27	1.53	2.33	1.68	2.47	1.73	2.60	1.72
Felt Emotion Scenario								
1	3.64	1.57	3.55	1.21	3.09	1.64	3.82	1.33
2	1.89	0.93	2.22	1.20	2.75	1.39	2.67	1.32
3	3.00	1.60	2.93	1.71	2.80	1.61	3.20	1.52

Note: 1 = most thought of emotion, 2 = second most thought of emotion, 3 = third most thought of emotion as ranked by participants.

Table 3.23

*Conscious Attempts to Control Nonverbal Expressions of Surprise*

Surprise	Eyes		Facial Expression		Bodily Behaviors		Vocal Behavior	
	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.
Expressed Emotion Scenario								
1	2.50	1.76	2.00	1.10	2.50	1.64	3.00	1.41
2	2.75	1.49	2.75	1.49	2.63	1.60	2.75	1.58
3	2.54	1.56	2.38	1.61	2.15	1.35	2.31	1.44
Felt Emotion Scenario								
1	2.50	1.23	2.43	1.28	2.50	1.35	3.07	1.33
2	3.25	0.89	3.38	0.74	3.13	0.84	3.50	1.07
3	2.93	1.67	2.80	1.47	2.53	1.60	2.93	1.62

Note: 1 = most thought of emotion, 2 = second most thought of emotion, 3 = third most thought of emotion as ranked by participants.

Table 3.24

*Conscious Attempts to Control Nonverbal Expressions of Happiness*

Happiness	Eyes		Facial Expression		Bodily Behaviors		Vocal Behavior	
	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.
Expressed Emotion Scenario								
1	2.00	0.00	3.00	1.41	2.00	0.00	3.00	1.41
2	3.50	1.29	3.25	1.50	3.00	1.41	3.50	1.00
3	3.20	1.79	3.60	1.52	2.00	1.73	3.00	2.00
Felt Emotion Scenario								
1	2.83	1.84	3.67	1.21	3.17	1.60	3.83	1.47
2	4.50	0.58	4.75	0.50	4.00	1.16	4.50	1.00
3	2.29	1.50	2.86	1.86	1.86	1.22	3.00	1.53

Note: 1 = most thought of emotion, 2 = second most thought of emotion, 3 = third most thought of emotion as ranked by participants.

Table 3.25

*Conscious Attempts to Control Nonverbal Expressions of Emotion: Emotion Scenario Comparison*

Emotion	Expressed Scenario					Felt Scenario				
	Eyes	Face	Body	Voice	n	Eyes	Face	Body	Voice	n
<b>Anger Combined</b>										
1	2.57	2.64	2.72	3.24	149	2.71	2.89	2.78	3.18	101
2	2.40*	2.58*	2.74*	3.16	141	2.72*	2.82*	2.96*	3.16	113
3	2.69	2.77	2.80	3.35	115	2.92	2.84	2.97	3.10	88
<b>Fear Combined</b>										
1	2.75	3.07	3.00	3.39	28	3.60	3.75	3.65	3.90	21
2	2.56*	2.67*	2.59*	2.58	28	3.97*	3.93*	3.90*	3.77	30
3	2.47	2.63	2.57	2.83	30	2.48	2.52	2.52	3.00	24
<b>Sadness</b>										
1	3.25	3.35	3.35	3.68	20	2.97	2.97	2.90	3.28	29
2	3.19	2.94	2.94	3.44	16	2.44	2.50	2.39	3.42	19
3	2.42	2.45	2.56	2.88	34	3.07	3.21	3.17	3.45	30
<b>Guilt</b>										
1	3.00	2.50	3.00	4.00	6	3.64	3.55	3.09	3.82	11
2	2.46	2.31	2.31	2.92	13	1.89	2.22	2.75	2.67	9
3	2.27	2.33	2.47	2.60	15	3.00	2.93	2.80	3.20	15
<b>Surprise</b>										
1	2.50	2.00	2.50	3.00	6	2.50	2.43	2.50	3.07	14
2	2.75	2.75	2.63	2.75	8	3.25	3.38	3.13	3.50	8
3	2.54	2.38	2.15	2.31	13	2.93	2.80	2.53	2.93	15
<b>Happiness</b>										
1	2.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	2	2.83	3.67	3.17	3.83	6
2	3.50	3.25	3.00	3.50	4	4.50	4.75	4.00	4.50	4
3	3.20	3.60	2.00	3.00	5	2.29	2.86	1.86	3.00	7

Note: Scale midpoint = 3. \* indicates a significant difference between the two emotion scenarios.

Table 3.26

*Comparison of Nonverbal Behaviors*

Emotion	Expressed Scenario					Felt Scenario				
	Eyes	Face	Body	Voice	n	Eyes	Face	Body	Voice	n
Anger Combined	2.57 <sup>a</sup>	2.64 <sup>b</sup>	2.72 <sup>c</sup>	3.24 <sup>abc</sup>	149	2.71 <sup>de</sup>	2.89 <sup>df</sup>	2.78 <sup>g</sup>	3.18 <sup>efg</sup>	101
Fear Combined	2.75	3.07	3.00	3.39	28	3.60	3.75	3.65	3.90	21
Sadness	3.25	3.35	3.35	3.68	20	2.97	2.97	2.90	3.28	29
Guilt	3.00	2.50	3.00	4.00	6	3.64 <sup>a</sup>	3.55	3.09 <sup>a</sup>	3.82	11
Surprise	2.50	2.00	2.50	3.00	6	2.50	2.43	2.50	3.07	14
Happiness	2.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	2	2.83	3.67	3.17	3.83	6

Note: Analyses were conducted across rows. Shared superscripts denote significant differences.

## CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between emotion and conflict, specifically I argue the difference between emotions individuals *feel* and emotions they *express* should have implications on how conflicts are managed in close relationships. As such, this study addressed research questions attempting to describe if, how, and what emotion management processes occur in relational conflict. Results indicated: (a) emotion management does occur in relational conflict, (b) individuals distinguish between felt and expressed emotions during relational conflict and that one way this occurs is through the intensity to which emotions are experienced, and (c) individuals focus on different nonverbal cues when attempting to control emotional expression in different emotions (e.g., nonverbal behaviors used to manage anger are different than the nonverbal behaviors used to manage happiness, sadness, or fear). Thus, although there are some similarities that exist between emotion management in conflict situations regardless of emotion scenario, there are distinct and notable differences; these are addressed below. Further, the implications for understanding the role of emotions in conflict situations are considered, as well as directions for future research.

### **Emotions and Interpersonal Conflict**

This study examined nine emotions previous research (e.g., Lazarus, 1991; Lewis, 2008; Lindner, 2009; Nair, 2008; Plutchik, 2003) has found to be relevant to interpersonal conflict: anger, annoyance, anxiety, fear, frustration, guilt, happiness, sadness, and surprise. As discussed in the results section of this paper, five emotions closely correlated with one another, so closely that these emotions were collapsed into two composite emotion categories. As such, frustration, annoyance, and anger were grouped and labeled as *anger combined*; while anxiety and fear

were grouped and labeled as *fear combined*. The higher correlations and resulting composite groupings were not surprising given (a) frustration, annoyance, and anger and (b) anxiety and fear are often studied together and commonly associated with one another (e.g. Averill, 1982; Deater-Deckard, Petrill, & Thompson, 2007; Fehr, Baldwin, Collins, Patterson, & Benditt, 1999; Kuppens, Van Mechelen, Smits, & De Boeck, 2003; Kuppens & Van Mechelen, 2007; Russell, 1991; Scherer & Wallbott, 1994). The results of the factor analysis and subsequent groupings revealed in this study speak to the consideration of minimizing the distinctions among emotions – commonly referred to as a dimensional approach (Dillard & Peck, 2001). The remaining emotions (happiness, guilt, sadness, and surprise) remained independent distinct emotions throughout the study's analysis, as they did not highly correlate with other emotions. As such, supporting the discrete approach, which expands the distinctions between emotions and categorizes each individual as having a distinct state (Ekman, 1992; Nabi, 2010)?

Another conclusion drawn from an assessment of the emotions in this study relates to relevant emotions that are commonly experienced during conflict. Unsurprisingly given the context of this study (i.e., conflict), participants reported feeling and expressing negative emotions to a greater extent than positive emotions. The most commonly reported emotion was anger, as in both reported conflict scenarios the composite anger variable was reportedly *felt* and *expressed* to a greater intensity than all other emotions. Interestingly, even though anger/anger related emotions were commonly reported as the most thought of emotions during the conflict, the intensity level to which anger/anger related emotions were expressed was less intense compared to the intensity level participants reported *feeling* for anger, frustration, and/or annoyance. These results suggest individuals feel anger/anger related emotions more intensely

than they express them during conflict, a pattern that was present in other negative emotions also.

Furthermore, when asked to report the three emotions participants spent the most time thinking about during the conflict, anger and/or anger related emotions were the most common responses. It is important to note the composite anger variable is comprised of three emotions (i.e., anger, frustration, and annoyance) and, as such, nuances in some commonly experienced negative emotions may have not been captured by this sample. However, it is likely that the conflict context encouraged thoughts or the expression of negative emotion. As indicated in the preliminary analyses, anger and anger related emotions were highly reported emotions before the composite variable was computed. Fear combined (i.e., fear and/or anxiety) and sadness were commonly reported as well. Conversely, happiness was consistently not reported and was thus identified as the least thought of emotion. Again, the pattern these results indicated in which participants reported experiencing negative emotions are unsurprising given the context of this study. In fact, these results are consistent with Guerrero and LaValley's (2006) previous research which indicates negative emotions are more likely to be felt and expressed during perceived negative events (i.e., conflict) compared to perceived positive events. In sum, the results of this study confirm previous research that suggests individuals experience negative emotions during conflict. In addition, the results speak to the advantages of both discrete and dimensional approaches to emotion. As such, combining the anger related and fear related emotions was appropriate given the context whereas it was appropriate to assess the remaining emotions discretely.

### The First Research Question: If Emotion Management Occurs During Relational Conflict

One of the fundamental questions of this project concerned if emotion management occurs during relational conflict to the extent that individuals are able to distinguish between felt and expressed emotions. An examination of the different emotion management strategies utilized during participants' reported conflicts support the conclusion that (a) emotion management does occur during relational conflict and (b) individuals do distinguish between felt and expressed emotions. Participants commonly expressed emotions that deviated from their genuinely felt emotions. Moreover, responses indicated participants *consciously* and *strategically* engaged in emotion management strategies. While this particular observation may seem commonsensical, it is an important empirical conclusion and one that was necessary to establish due to the lack of research explicitly investigating the relationships between emotion, emotion management, and conflict.

Another interesting pattern I observed was that when participants strategically altered the expression of their emotions from what was genuinely felt, the tendency was to conceal or suppress the extent to which they truly experienced the emotion. In particular, aside from expressing an emotion to the real and full extent to which one feels that emotion, the most common emotion management strategies reported were inhibiting and miniaturizing. This pattern was consistent for most emotions. This interesting observation is one that future research should further explore. It seems prudent that future research should inquire as to why individuals engage in specific emotion management strategies over others. As for this study, there are many speculations as to why individuals are more likely to suppress their emotions. I now turn to explore several potential motivating factors for the suppression of felt emotion. Of note, all speculations are related to the realization of a goal in some way.

As previously discussed, the suppression of emotion is often a product of socialization (Anderse et al., 1985). As individuals mature and age they learn what is and is not socially appropriate, including acceptable emotion expressions. I believe this reason may be a primary factor influencing the results observed in this study. Moreover, the pattern observed may be due, in part, to cultural expectations. As such cultural expectations are encompassed in the process of socialization.

Another reason individuals may have suppressed emotions more often than intensified emotions may be attributed to goals related to a specific conflict issue, topic, or episode. For instance, an individual may hope to avoid conflict or conflict escalation by suppressing the expression of felt emotions. Similarly, as exemplified by participant reports, another goal of suppressing emotion may be to encourage a calm and productive discussion environment. Conversely, an individual may not want his or her partner to be aware of how he or she is affected by the conflict issue and therefore may suppress his or her genuine emotions. This may be because an individual feels he or she will gain the upper hand by not revealing his or her true feelings. Similarly, individuals may not want to seem vulnerable in any way and they achieve this through minimizing or inhibiting their emotions.

Furthermore, while the overall tendency with the emotions examined in this study was to suppress felt emotions through miniaturizing or inhibiting, distinct trends did emerge between emotions. For instance, as seen in Table 3.12, responses were more dispersed between emotion management strategies for frustration, annoyance, and anger compared to anxiety and fear. Such that, while the majority of individuals were more likely to express their frustration, annoyance, and anger (i.e., anger/anger related emotions) to the genuine extent to which they felt the emotion(s) (i.e., real/true emotion management strategy) followed by inhibiting and

miniaturizing strategies, there were fairly substantial reports of maximizing or simulating as well. Conversely, reports for anxiety and fear were more heavily weighted toward the inhibiting end of the spectrum. One reason for this trend may derive from previous conflict research which posits that certain emotions are more acceptable in conflict than others. For instance, anger can be identified as the prototypical emotion associated with conflict (Guerrero & La Valley, 2006) and, as such, may be deemed a more acceptable if not expected emotion during conflict. Conversely, fear is an emotion that is generally avoided during conflict and at times deemed as an unacceptable emotion to display (e.g., Christensen & Jacobson, 2000). Given this lens, the observation that individuals may suppress certain emotions (i.e., anxiety and fear) more often or to greater intensities than other emotions (e.g., anger) is logical and expected. In sum, it is logical that several of these goals may be the motivating factors as to why individuals commonly suppress felt emotions to some degree. And, as previously noted, future research should further investigate the motivation factors of emotion management strategies.

Interestingly, the pattern of minimizing or inhibiting emotions was consistent for all emotions except happiness. Results for the expressed emotion scenario indicated participants who strategically altered their emotional expressions of happiness were more likely to intensify felt emotions than engage in other emotion management strategies. However, for the felt emotion scenario, participants reported minimizing the expression of happiness most, closely succeeded by maximizing. One speculation for these results is happiness is a positive emotion and, as such, individuals may want to resolve or end the conflict in a swift manner and believe that expressing happiness is a way to achieve their goal.

Lastly, as mentioned, the most consistent emotion management strategies were minimizing and inhibiting *when* participants chose to alter their emotional expressions from

genuine felt emotions. As such, expressing emotion to the real and full extent to which one feels emotion was most common for two emotions: frustration and annoyance. For these emotions, it seems possible individuals attempted to express true emotions in an attempt to achieve some goal. It is possible participants wanted the conflict to escalate and aimed to achieve this goal by expressing what they felt. However, it also seems probable that the conflict may be terminated by displaying frustration or annoyance. Again, future research should further explore the motivating factors concerning emotion management strategies with regard to relational conflict – specifically, what motivates individuals to alter the expression of emotions versus expressing emotions to the true extent felt.

Another area future research should explore is the process of simultaneous emotion management. Just as individuals may experience a host of emotions at any given time these emotions may also be managed concurrently. This study asked individuals to recall a time when they (a) felt an emotion they did not express and (b) expressed an emotion they did not feel. As results indicate, individuals are consciously and strategically altering the expression of their emotions – the next step is to examine the potentially complex intersections of emotion management strategies in order to examine not only what is happening, but how (e.g., how do individuals prioritize which emotion management strategies acquire the most conscious attention) and why (e.g., why are certain emotions/emotion management strategies prioritized over others). As this foundational research is expanded we will gain greater insight into the processes related to emotion, emotion management, and conflict in addition to attaining a better understanding of the underlying goals that influence these processes. To that end, regardless of the underlying goals the results of this study conclude that emotion management does occur

during relational conflict and interesting patterns exist between emotions and the emotion management strategies utilized in certain circumstances.

### **The Second Research Question: How Do Individuals Distinguish Between Felt and Expressed Emotions**

The second research question concerned how individuals distinguish between felt emotions and expressed emotions during relational conflict. An examination of the results indicated that the anger/anger related emotions (i.e., anger combined) were the most intensely experienced emotions. The term *experienced* here refers to both feeling and expressing emotion. Sadness was the second most intensely experienced emotion and fear/fear related emotions (i.e., fear combined) were the third most intensely experienced emotion.

Interestingly, most emotions were not felt or expressed very intensely. In fact, most means tested significantly below the scale midpoint (=3; see the results sections for means). Exceptions to this observation were anger combined and sadness. As such, the means of anger combined were significantly above the scale midpoint whereas the means of sadness did not significantly differ from the scale midpoint for both emotion scenarios. Regardless of overall low intensity experiences, notable differences between anger combined, sadness, and fear combined in comparison to surprise, guilt, and happiness existed. Specifically, the mean scores for anger combined, sadness, and fear combined were experienced more intensely than surprise, guilt, and happiness. In fact, happiness was the least intensely experienced emotion; however, these results are not surprising given previous research and the context of conflict. In turn, guilt and surprise were the second and third least experienced emotions (felt or expressed). What these results, implications, and observations offer is further support for the conclusion that negative emotions are more commonly experienced than positive emotions during perceived

negative events (i.e., relational conflict). Moreover, negative emotions such as anger, annoyance, frustration, anxiety, fear, and sadness are experienced to greater intensities in conflict experiences than are other negative emotions such as guilt and surprise. This observation may, in part, be informed by the limited research on conflict-related emotions (e.g., Guerrero & La Valley, 2006) which posits certain emotions are more relevant to conflict than are others (e.g. anger/anger related emotions).

Furthermore, additional analysis of intensity reports and the emotion management strategies lead to a few interesting observations. For instance, when analyzing the expressed and felt emotion intensities, the results were consistent with the strategies individuals experienced between both emotion scenarios. For example, the majority of participants who indicated they experienced fear or anxiety in some way in the felt emotion scenario indicated they inhibited or suppressed their fear or anxiety, similarly, the felt intensity mean (2.43) was higher than the expressed intensity mean (1.75) in the felt emotion scenario analyses. These similar results support the conclusion that individuals are managing their emotion and they are doing so majorly by suppressing their felt emotions (see discussion for research question one).

Analyses were conducted to compare the felt and expressed intensities between the two emotion scenarios. Analyses indicated happiness, anxiety, frustration, and guilt significantly differed between the two scenarios, suggesting that individuals experienced these emotions differently depending on whether the conflict they recalled revolved around an expressed or felt experience. While results of these analyses suggest that differences occur between the two scenarios, it is important to note several expressed and felt intensities of emotions between the scenarios were very similar. These unexpected patterns may be attributed, in part, to the study's design. Specifically, the analyses conducted for RQ2 did not specify what emotions participants

thought of in response to the prompt and therefore may result in the similar pattern observed in this study. For instance, for the felt scenario prompt (i.e., remember a conflict when you felt an emotion you did not express) one participant may have recalled a conflict in which she felt sadness but did not express it; however, when asked about the intensity to which she experienced the nine emotions featured in this study she responds that she expressed her anger to a greater degree than she felt it – hence created perceived similarities between the two emotion scenarios. This is a constraint future research should explore to better examine the differences between felt and expressed emotion scenarios. However, while I could not deduce which emotions were specifically felt or expressed within each scenario, the significant differences that did arise in analyses support the conclusion that felt and expressed emotions are distinguished from one another; a conceptual nuance important to recognize in future research.

When assessing *how* individuals distinguished between felt and expressed emotions, most emotions were more strongly felt than they were expressed. This observation was consistent throughout the study. In particular, in both emotion scenarios anger combined, sadness, fear combined, surprise, and guilt were all felt to greater degrees than they were expressed. These results further support the observation that individuals commonly feel emotions to greater extremes than they express them. And, as mentioned, future research should investigate the reason for this pattern (e.g., socialization and cultural norms). The only anomaly was happiness, also the only positive emotion assessed in this study. Happiness was expressed to greater degrees than it was felt, suggesting that happiness is treated uniquely in conflict. One reason for this pattern may be because individuals believed that expressing happiness to a greater extent than they genuinely felt happiness would achieve a particular goal (e.g. conflict de-escalation or termination). Regardless of the logic behind these patterns of felt and expressed intensities of

emotions, the consistent tendency is for individuals to express negative emotions to a lesser degree than they feel these emotions. Moreover, as previously noted, conflict-related emotions (i.e., anger/anger related emotions) were consistently experienced more intensely than other emotions (i.e., guilt and surprise).

In sum, the results of this study suggest two overarching observations. First, negative emotions are more intensely experienced than positive emotions. Moreover, conflict-related emotions are experienced more intensely than non-conflict-related emotion. Second, individuals consistently reported feeling emotions more intensely than expressing them (with the exception of happiness). Therefore, I speculate it is more difficult to suppress genuine emotions (with the exception of happiness) than it is to manufacture an emotion not genuinely felt.

### **The Third Research Question: What Nonverbal Behaviors Do Individuals Manage When Attempting to Control Emotional Expression**

An examination of what nonverbal behaviors (eyes, face, body, and voice) individuals report strategically managing most when attempting to manage their emotions revealed a few interesting patterns. These patterns are broadly stated here and then discussed in the proceeding paragraphs. First, the voice was the nonverbal behavior participants consciously attempted to control to the greatest intensity. Second, more conscious effort was put forth in controlling nonverbal behaviors in the felt emotion scenario than the expressed emotion scenario. This observation further supports previous findings that indicate individuals experience felt emotions to greater intensities than expressed emotions. Third, the most common emotion participants reported spending the most time thinking about during the conflict was anger/anger related emotions, which consisted of frustration, annoyance, and anger. These results are also consistent with previous findings throughout this study and are logical given individuals are more likely to

experience negative events in perceived negative events (i.e., conflict). Broadly, these results indicate individuals do consciously attempt to control the expression of emotions through their nonverbal behaviors. Moreover, these results and observations draw attention to the unique differences present between different emotions and the two emotion scenarios. As such, the consistent pattern evident throughout the study suggests it may take greater effort to conceal felt emotions an individual does not express than it does to express emotions he or she does not genuinely feel.

*Conscious attempts to control nonverbal expressions of anger/anger related emotions.*

As previously mentioned, anger/anger related emotions were the most commonly experienced and most intensely reported emotions in other assessments. It is important to recognize that the composite anger variable was comprised of three emotions (i.e., anger, frustration, and annoyance) and, as such, some results may be exaggerated; however, anger/anger related emotions were highly reported emotions before the composite variable was computed. In addition, while anger/anger related emotions were highly reported thought of emotions during conflict, results deriving from the nonverbal assessment indicate that little to moderate attention was given to controlling the voice, eyes, body, or voice. Regardless of the results indicating low intensity, individuals placed the most emphasis on attempts to control the voice, followed by attempts to control one's body, facial expressions, and eyes respectively. Given that anger is commonly expressed through attack behaviors such as yelling (Sugarman & Hotaling, 1989), controlling the voice most intensely makes sense. With regard to controlling one's body, Sugarman and Hotaling observed that anger was associated with physically aggressive behavior. Such behaviors may have been elements participants focused on within the larger body context. Other common behaviors and expressions associated with anger participants may have attempted

to control include frowning, tensed mouth, furrowed eyebrows, narrowed eyes, and riveted eye gaze (Holodynski & Friedlmeier, 2006; Planalp, 1999). These behaviors do not comprise an exhaustive consideration of behaviors, but rather offer a sample of the actions participants may have focused on given the larger domains of the eyes, face, body, and voice. Furthermore, individuals reported consciously focusing more on their nonverbal behaviors in relation to expressing anger/anger related emotions in the felt emotion scenario compared to the expressed emotion scenario. Supporting the conclusion that individuals place more effort into concealing emotions they genuinely feel than manufacturing false emotions.

*Conscious attempts to control nonverbal expressions of fear/fear related emotions.*

Fear/fear related emotions were commonly ranked as frequently experienced emotion(s). The mean responses regarding conscious attempts to control nonverbal behaviors were reportedly higher for fear/fear related emotions compared to other emotions, indicating individuals commonly exerted more effort in attempting to control their voice, body, facial expressions, and eyes when attempting to manage fear/fear related emotions. Succinctly, intensity reports were higher for fear combined than other emotion reports and there was a more even distribution across nonverbal behaviors. I speculate that since fear is an undesirable or unacceptable conflict-related emotion (e.g., Christensen & Jacobson, 2000) individuals may place greater conscious and strategic effort on attempts to manage their expression(s) of fear than they do with other emotions that are not as problematic. Interestingly, the mean responses for the composite fear grouping were higher with regard to attempts to control emotion expressions through the eyes compared to other emotions, including anger/anger related emotions. However, given that common expressions of fear are associated with wide open eyes, open mouth, retracted lips, raised eyebrows, crouching, paleness, perspiration, and trembling (Matsumoto et al., 2008) these

results make sense. Once again, individuals exerted more effort in controlling their nonverbal behaviors in the felt emotion scenario than the expressed emotion scenario. These results suggest it may take more effort to conceal emotions one does not express than to express emotions one does not genuinely feel.

*Conscious attempts to control nonverbal expressions of sadness.* With regard to managing the expression of sadness, results indicated that participants used all four examined nonverbal behaviors (i.e., eyes, facial expressions, body, and voice) to control the emotional expression for the expressed behavior; however, the most emphasize was on the voice. This pattern was not observed for either of the composite emotion variables. In fact, participants reported consciously attempting to control their nonverbal behaviors more so in the expressed emotion scenario than in the felt emotion scenario, deviating from the commonly observed pattern. This may be because expressing emotion that is not genuinely felt may take more effort given the common behaviors associated with the emotion (i.e., tears and/or crying). One conclusion that may be drawn from these results is that when an individual attempts to express sadness not truly felt they draw on an “entire body” experience whereas with anger the voice is the main focus. For example individuals may have focused on “looking sad” through raised inner corner eyebrows, tears/crying, depressed corners of the mouth, and/or a pouting mouth.

*Conscious attempts to control nonverbal expressions of guilt.* Results indicate participants exerted a great amount of effort in consciously controlling their voices when attempting to manage guilt. These results echo previous observations that the voice receives the most conscious effort when attempting to control emotional expression through nonverbal behaviors. In fact, little to moderate effort was placed on the eyes, face, or body while greater effort was placed on the voice in both emotion scenarios. Given that many common reactions

associated with guilt include physiological reactions such as increase in heart rate, irregular breathing, and muscle tensing (Barrett, 1995; Wallbott & Scherer, 1989), it is logical that not much effort was placed on the eyes, face, or body when attempting to control nonverbal behaviors for this emotion. Once again, the felt scenario received higher responses than the expressed scenario, further supporting the claim that individuals are placing more focus overall on felt emotions.

*Conscious attempts to control nonverbal expressions of surprise.* Participants reported only exerting moderate amounts of effort to control their nonverbal behaviors when attempting to manage surprise. Slightly more effort was exerted when participants attempted to conceal the amount of surprise they felt compared to when they attempted to manufacture surprise to a greater extent than they genuinely felt it. The nonverbal behaviors individuals consciously attempted to control the most were the voice and eyes followed by the face and body. These results are logical given common behaviors associated with surprise include open mouth, wide and open eyes, protruding lips, and expiration (Holodynski & Friedlmeier, 2006; Matsumoto et al., 2008; Planalp, 1999). Once again, individuals reported focusing more intensely on nonverbal behaviors in the felt emotion scenario than the expressed emotion scenario, further supporting the claim individuals feel emotions to greater intensities than they express them and that attempts to control those emotions involve greater concentration.

*Conscious attempts to control nonverbal expressions of happiness.* Lastly, while happiness was not commonly reported as a top experienced emotion during conflict, results echo previous emotions in that more effort was placed on attempts to control one's voice proceeded by the face, body, and eyes. This makes sense given that a smile is a common indicator of happiness. The observation that there were a small amount of individuals who reported

happiness as one of the top three emotions they thought most about during the conflict further supports previous research and the results of this study that in negative events, such as conflict, negative emotions are more commonly experienced than positive emotions.

In sum, while some deviations and unique patterns exist with particular emotions, the common pattern indicates individuals place the most emphasis on controlling their voice when attempting to manage emotional expression. One explanation for this persistent trend is vocalics. As vocalics are primarily behavior functions related to the communication of emotion(s) (Scherer, 1986) and emotion management processes (Bachorowski & Owren, 2006). Furthermore, research on self-monitoring processes related to expressive behavior posits the voice as a prominent role in the communication of affective states (Snyder, 1974). As such, it makes sense the voice would consistently receive the most conscious effort when individuals are attempting to control their emotional expression(s). Another speculation for this observation is that the voice is the only nonverbal behavior tested in this study that the participant can consciously recall. Meaning, one may attempt to control his or her eyes, face, or body but may not know whether he or she succeeded in managing his or her emotional expression(s) whereas one can hear one's voice continuously and, as such, may be more aware of his or her successfulness in managing emotional expression(s). In addition, since an individual may remember not only what he or she said but how he or she said it it seems plausible the voice is the nonverbal behavior best remembered. Given the retrospective nature of this study, participants' may best be recalling the extent to which they controlled their voice as they may have a "record" of what was said and how. Future research should further explore this result and examine why individuals prioritize certain nonverbal behaviors over others.

Additionally, results suggest some emotions inspire more intense efforts to control nonverbal behaviors than others (e.g. fear/fear related emotions). Again, I speculate this finding may derive, in part, from the extent to which fear is an undesirable emotion during conflict, especially conflict with a relational partner. Future research should further build upon these observations to examine more closely what specific nonverbal behaviors individuals are controlling as well as investigate the motivating factors behind attempts to control these behaviors. It would also be productive to examine whether or not individuals are successfully managing the nonverbal behaviors they are attempting to control. Given the nature of this project, testing accuracy was not feasible. In addition, negative emotions (e.g. anger/anger related and fear/fear related emotions) were reported more frequently as top thought of emotions, supporting previous research associating negative emotions and negative events. Lastly, the overall trend was that participants reported greater intensities for the felt emotion scenario than the expressed emotion scenario. These results are consistent with this project's overall observations and have interesting implications regarding how individuals experience emotions during relational conflict.

### **Relationship and Conflict Reports**

Analyses revealed several notable observations regarding participants' relationships and more general conflicts. First, analyses were conducted to see if any covariates were present; however, no consistent differences were found, suggesting that regardless of age, race, relationship type, relationship status or other identifying factor individuals experience emotion management in relational conflict similarly. Of course, despite efforts, the sample obtained was not particularly ethnically diverse or generally older beyond college-aged. However, that relationship type and status did not significantly demonstrate associations with the dependent

variables is interesting, such that, regardless of relationship status individuals experience relational conflict about twice a week. This pattern is consistent with previous research (Canary et al., 2001) and speaks to the fact individuals tend to experience conflict events similarly regardless of relationship type or stage.

Another interesting pattern that emerged from analysis of relationship and conflict reports was the tendency for individuals to report that their conflicts issues were resolved but then report they believed the conflict topic was likely to come up again in the future. This inconsistency is interesting and may be a type of coping with the potential serial argument. Indeed, since serial arguments are conceptualized as ongoing conflict events that reemerge without resolution (Johnson and Roloff, 1998), participants' expectations of future conflict events are indicative of serial arguments. Furthermore, Johnson and Roloff contend that given the continuous nature of serial arguments individuals must find some way to coping. While this study did not assess coping strategies, it seems like individuals may state the conflict issue was resolved as a mean by which to temporarily deal with the situation. Moreover, a particular conflict issue or episode may be resolved while the larger conflict topic is not. For instance, a serial argument topic may revolve around a partner spending too much time with others and not enough with his or her partner while the conflict issue or episodes deals with a specific Friday night festivities. The couple may resolve the issue (e.g., spend time together Friday evening) while the larger problem remains.

In addition, given the conflict context of this study occurred within romantic relationships the suggested prevalence of serial arguments is consistent with previous research. Such that, Bevan, Finan, and Kaminsky (2008) reported the nature of romantic relationships makes partners particularly susceptible to serial arguments given the frequent interaction, interdependence, and

high levels of self-disclosure romantic partners tend to have with one another. Given these observations and implications on serial arguments, coping strategies, and relational conflict, future research should further explore this inconsistency of reported resolution and expected future conflict events.

### **Limitations**

Although this study makes unique contributions to communication scholarship, there are limitations to this study. First, this study depended on self-report and, as such, was subject to self-report and measurement bias. For example, participants may have been more likely to report conflicts that were not very serious and/or present the conflict in a way that portrayed them in a positive light. In addition, participants were asked to recall emotions and the nonverbal behaviors from past conflicts. As such, it may have been difficult for participants to recall some emotions or nonverbal behaviors with great accuracy or detail. This limitation is specifically relevant to the recall of nonverbal behavior. Specifically, some nonverbal behaviors may be produced but not strategically manipulated. Leathers (1997) contended that some nonverbal behaviors are unconsciously produced or leaked and are therefore difficult to regulate or manage (e.g., vocal characteristics). However, given the nature of this study, self-report retrospective data was appropriate. This method allowed participants to assess their own authentic perceptions and reactions to the conflict scenario and accompanying emotion experiences. In addition, this study was able to assess conflict situations that occurred in natural and spontaneous conditions and were not manipulated through method. Nevertheless, future research may benefit from expanding this study to include conversational interaction analysis.

Second, while this study's sample included individuals outside of the University of Georgia's undergraduate student population as well undergraduate students, the sample was not

very diverse. The mean age for this study was 21.34 years old ( $SD = 6.15$ ) and ranged from 18-60 years old. Most participants identified as White (Non-Hispanic;  $n = 174$ ; 78.4%). Of the 222 participants, 144 (64.9%) were female. A sample of participants with broader demographic variance would provide a useful comparison for the results in this study to substantiate the claims made here.

Future research may also investigate how culture affects emotion management processes and conflict. Cultural research on emotion has observed that cultures have different ways of expressing emotion (e.g., Beaupré & Hess, 2006; Marsh, Elfenbein, & Ambady, 2003; Planalp, 1999). One reason for this difference in emotional expressions across cultures may stem from display rules. As previously discussed, display rules guide individuals how they should present their emotions in ways that are socially acceptable in a particular culture (Lazarus, 1991). Importantly, display rules may differ from group to group. For example, Gross et al. (2006) observed that Asian Americans regulated positive emotions to a greater degree than European Americans (i.e., hiding positive emotion-expressive behavior). In addition to observing cultural differences, other research examines the accuracy of emotion recognition between in-groups and out-groups. As such, the accuracy with which emotions are recognized are higher when the perceiver and expresser are from the same cultural in-group (e.g., Elfenbein & Ambady, 2002, 2003; Young & Hugenberg, 2010). In sum, replicating this study's results with different samples would provide a useful contrast to these results.

In addition, this study examined anger, annoyance, anxiety, fear, frustration, guilt, happiness, sadness, and surprise. Due to high correlations anger, frustration, and annoyance were collapsed into a single variable (i.e., anger combined). In addition, fear and anxiety were collapsed into a single variable (i.e., fear combined). While this categorization of related

emotions into a single grouping is justified by the dimensional approach to emotion (e.g., Dillard and Peck, 2001) future research may benefit from further exploring each emotion discretely.

Herein, investigating the different action tendencies associated with specific emotions (e.g., Lazarus, 2001). Future research may also explore other emotions not explored in this study to provide a useful contrast to these results.

Next, as there was no known existing measure of emotion management strategies the Emotion Display Scale was created for this study. A portion of the measure was modeled after Ekman and Friesen's (1975) five ways in which individuals alter their emotions expressions (intensification, deintensification, inhibition, simulation, and masking), with the addition that an individual may express an emotion to the real and full extent to which that emotion is felt. Future research should future explore and test this measure.

As mentioned in the discussion of the second research question, unexpected similarities were observed between expressed and felt intensities of emotions between the two emotion scenarios. Moreover, as previously discussed, these observations may be attributed, in part, to the study's design. Future research should consider what emotions participants think of in response to the prompt and use only these emotions during analyses. Approaching analyses in this way will address this limitation and allow research to better examine the differences between felt and expressed intensities between felt and expressed emotion scenarios.

Finally, one aim of communication scholarship is to identify what motivates individuals to behave in particular ways. One way to understand motivation is to explore emotion and how emotions motivate people. The current study addresses the issue of motivation by focusing on emotion; however future research should further explore the motivating factors related to emotion and conflict.

## Conclusions

In sum, the overarching goal of this thesis was to bring the extensive research areas of emotion and conflict into conversation with one another. As such, this study offers substantial support for the relationships between emotion, emotion management, and conflict which until this study were merely suggested and/or assumed. Specifically, this project aimed to support the logical notion that emotion management processes occur in relational conflict and did so by exploring research questions related to if, how, and what. Results suggest that emotion management processes do occur during relational conflict and that individuals experience and respond differently to felt and expressed emotions. As such, results consistently conveyed that individuals experience and respond to felt emotions more intensely than to expressed emotions. Other results were congruous with existing conflict research and reinforce previous findings that contend individuals experience conflict twice a week (Canary et al, 2001) and negative emotions are likely to be experienced during perceived negative events, such as conflict (Guerrero & La Valley, 2006). These conclusions speak to the reliability of this study's results which also offer an extension to existing conflict research by introducing the previously assumed relationship with emotion and emotion management processes. Thus, this thesis provides a foundation for the basic associations between emotion and conflict with the hopes that future research will continue to examine these relationships.

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## APPENDIX A: EMOTION DISPLAYS SCALE

### *Emotion Displays Scale*

Please read and reference the following definitions and utilize them for this study:

- *Felt Emotions* – Emotions that you experience internally are *felt emotions*. Thus, feelings you experience during conflict are *felt emotions*. (Note: you **do not** have to express your feelings for them to be *felt emotions*).
- *Expressed Emotions* – Expressed emotions are the outward behavioral actions associated with an emotion. For example, *expressed* happiness may be a smile or *expressed* sadness may be crying. (Note: you **do not** have to *feel* an emotion to *express* it. For example, a person may not feel angry but appear angry due to his/her behaviors. Likewise, a person may not feel happy but smile anyway).

#### **Scenario One:**

Think of a time when you have *expressed* an emotion that you **did not feel** during a conflict or argument with your partner. Take a moment to think about the situation (when it occurred, where it occurred, what happened, etc).

Now, think about the emotions that you experienced (both *felt* and *expressed*) during the conflict situation. When you are ready please answer the following questions:

(Lead to Conflict Description and other Emotion Display Scale questions)

#### **Scenario Two:**

Think of a time when you have *felt* an emotion that you **did not express** during a conflict or argument with your partner. Take a moment to think about the situation (when it occurred, where it occurred, what happened, etc).

Now, think about the emotions that you experienced (both *felt* and *expressed*) during the conflict situation. When you are ready please answer the following questions:

(Lead to Conflict Description and other Emotion Display Scale questions)

**Note:** after the participant reads the prompt (either Scenario One or Scenario Two) he or she will then answer the questions for that scenario. Then, the participant will repeat the process for the other scenario.

Please rate the following emotions you *felt* and/or *expressed* during the conflict using the following 6-point scale.

- 1 – Not felt and not expressed
- 2 – Felt but not expressed
- 3 – Expressed to a lesser extent than felt
- 4 – Expressed to the extent that felt
- 5 – Expressed to a greater extent than felt
- 6 – Expressed but not felt

	NOT Felt And NOT Expressed	Felt But NOT Expressed	Expressed to a LESSER Extent than Felt	Expressed to the Extent than Felt	Expressed to a GREATER Extent than Felt	Expressed But NOT Felt
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Happiness	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Anxiety	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Fear	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Frustration	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Guilt	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Annoyance	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Anger	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. Sadness	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. Surprise	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. If there are any emotions not listed that you felt OR expressed please list and rank the emotion(s) on the same 1-6 scale.	<hr/>					
	<hr/>					

Please rate the extent to which you *felt* and *expressed* each emotion using the following scale.

	Did NOT Feel (or Express)				Felt (or Expressed) a Great Extent
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Happiness					
Felt	1	2	3	4	5
Expressed	1	2	3	4	5
2. Anxiety					
Felt	1	2	3	4	5
Expressed	1	2	3	4	5
3. Fear					
Felt	1	2	3	4	5
Expressed	1	2	3	4	5
4. Frustration					
Felt	1	2	3	4	5
Expressed	1	2	3	4	5
5. Guilt					
Felt	1	2	3	4	5
Expressed	1	2	3	4	5
6. Annoyance					
Felt	1	2	3	4	5
Expressed	1	2	3	4	5
7. Anger					
Felt	1	2	3	4	5
Expressed	1	2	3	4	5
8. Sadness					
Felt	1	2	3	4	5
Expressed	1	2	3	4	5
9. Surprise					
Felt	1	2	3	4	5
Expressed	1	2	3	4	5
10. If there are any emotions not listed that you felt OR expressed please list and rank them					

10. If there are any emotions not listed that you felt OR expressed please list and rank the emotion(s) on the same 1-5 scale.

Take a moment to remember the emotions that you spent the most time *thinking about* during the conflict. Reference the previous scale and write down the 3 emotions that you thought about most during the conflict:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

For the emotion you ranked as **1** (write emotion here: \_\_\_\_\_) please answer the following questions:

1. Identify the emotion: \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. Did you **try to control** the expression of \_\_\_\_\_ emotion with your **eyes** (e.g., where you looked, how wide your eyes were, how narrow your eyes were, etc)?

NOT AT ALL			VERY MUCH	
1	2	3	4	5

- b. Did you **try to control** the expression of \_\_\_\_\_ emotion with your **facial expressions**?

NOT AT ALL			VERY MUCH	
1	2	3	4	5

- c. Did you **try to control** the expression of \_\_\_\_\_ emotion with your **body** (e.g., move your body, move your hands, turn away, lean forwards, etc)?

NOT AT ALL			VERY MUCH	
1	2	3	4	5

- d. Did you **try to control** the expression of \_\_\_\_\_ emotion with your **voice** (e.g., volume, rate, pitch, etc)?

NOT AT ALL			VERY MUCH	
1	2	3	4	5

- e. Reflect on **why** you controlled the behaviors you did (what were your intentions, goals, etc)? \_\_\_\_\_

For the emotion you ranked as **2** (write emotion here: \_\_\_\_\_) please answer the following questions:

2. Identify the emotion: \_\_\_\_\_

- a. Did you **try to control** the expression of \_\_\_\_\_ emotion with your **eyes** (e.g., where you looked, how wide your eyes were, how narrow your eyes were, etc)?

NOT AT ALL			VERY MUCH	
1	2	3	4	5

- b. Did you **try to control** the expression of \_\_\_\_\_ emotion with your **facial expressions**?

NOT AT ALL			VERY MUCH	
1	2	3	4	5

- c. Did you **try to control** the expression of \_\_\_\_ emotion with your **body** (e.g., move your body, move your hands, turn away, lean forwards, etc)?

NOT AT ALL

1

2

3

4

5

VERY MUCH

- d. Did you **try to control** the expression of \_\_\_\_ emotion with your **voice** (e.g., volume, rate, pitch, etc)?

NOT AT ALL

1

2

3

4

5

VERY MUCH

- e. Reflect on **why** you controlled the behaviors you did (what were your intentions, goals, etc)? \_\_\_\_\_

For the emotion you ranked as **3** (write emotion here: \_\_\_\_\_) please answer the following questions:

3. Identify the emotion: \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. Did you **try to control** the expression of \_\_\_\_ emotion with your **eyes** (e.g., where you looked, how wide your eyes were, how narrow your eyes were, etc)?

NOT AT ALL

1

2

3

4

5

VERY MUCH

- b. Did you **try to control** the expression of \_\_\_\_ emotion with your **facial expressions**?

NOT AT ALL

1

2

3

4

5

VERY MUCH

- c. Did you **try to control** the expression of \_\_\_\_ emotion with your **body** (e.g., move your body, move your hands, turn away, lean forwards, etc)?

NOT AT ALL

1

2

3

4

5

VERY MUCH

- d. Did you **try to control** the expression of \_\_\_\_ emotion with your **voice** (e.g., volume, rate, pitch, etc)?

NOT AT ALL

1

2

3

4

5

VERY MUCH

- e. Reflect on **why** you controlled the behaviors you did (what were your intentions, goals, etc)? \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B: CONSENT SCREEN

### Consent Screen: Emotion and Conflict (Data collected via Survey Monkey)

I agree to take part in a research study titled “Emotion and Conflict,” which is being conducted by Jennifer Samp and Valerie Coles, of the Department of Speech Communication<sup>xiii</sup>. The researchers can be reached at 706-542-4893. My participation is voluntary; I can refuse to participate or stop taking part at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. If there is a specific question I don’t want to answer, I can always skip that question.

The purpose of this study is to understand how emotions affect conflict.

If I am a student participating in this study for research credit, I may expect that I will receive research participation credit for my Speech Communication class for participating. My grade in this class will not be affected whether I decide to participate or not, or if I decide to stop taking part after giving my consent. If I do not want to participate in this study, I can elect to participate in a different study or I can elect to take the option of reviewing a research project or attending a colloquium as stated on my syllabus for SPCM 1100/1500.

The procedures are as follows: I will fill out some measures about my own conflict management behaviors and perceptions. I will also answer questions reflecting on conflicts that occur with my relational partner. This study session should take approximately 45-60 minutes to complete.

While the researchers do not anticipate any risks from this study, it is possible that reflecting upon my relationship may cause me some limited discomfort or distress; however, I recognize that I do have a choice regarding what conflict I write about. Many people who have done studies like this one find that despite some initial discomforts, the opportunity to think about conflicts allows you to learn about him or herself and relationship dynamics. Therefore, the benefits I may expect from this study are that I may have the opportunity to reflect upon my communication behaviors and improve my relationships because of this study’s focus on emotion and conflict communication behaviors. The results of my participation will be confidential. The only people who will know that I am a research subject are members of the research team.

Internet communications are insecure and there is a limit to the confidentiality that can be guaranteed due to the technology itself. However, once the materials are received by the researchers, standard confidentiality procedures will be employed. The program being used to host this study automatically collects IP address. The IP address will be deleted from the data file upon downloading the data from this site. Only the researchers will have access to the individually-identifiable information. Once data collection is complete, that information will be removed from the data file. Any individually-identifiable information I give will not be released to anyone, unless required by law.

The researcher will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project, and can be reached by telephone at: 706-542-4893. I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I will print out a copy of this form to keep for my own records.

Jennifer Samp  
706 542-4893  
[jasamp@uga.edu](mailto:jasamp@uga.edu)

Valerie Coles  
706 542-4893  
[vcoles@uga.edu](mailto:vcoles@uga.edu)

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 629 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu

By checking this box, I consent to participate here for participation in this study.  
[Textbox] I consent to the terms presented above.

**Please print out a copy of this form for your records.**

## APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORM

### Consent Form: Emotion and Conflict (Data collected via Paper and Pencil from Undergraduate Participants)

I agree (\_\_\_\_\_) to take part in a research study titled “Emotion and Conflict,” which is being conducted by Jennifer Samp and Valerie Coles, of the Department of Speech Communication. The researchers can be reached at 706-542-4893. My participation is voluntary; I can refuse to participate or stop taking part at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. If there is a specific question I don’t want to answer, I can always skip that question.

The purpose of this study is to understand how emotions affect conflict.

If I am a student participating in this study for research credit I may expect that I will receive research participation credit for my Speech Communication class for participating. My grade in this class will not be affected whether I decide to participate or not, or if I decide to stop taking part after giving my consent. If I do not want to participate in this study, I can elect to participate in a different study or I can elect to take the option of reviewing a research project or attending a colloquium as stated on my syllabus for SPCM 1100/1500.

The procedures are as follows: I will fill out some measures about my own conflict management behaviors and perceptions. I will also answer questions reflecting on conflicts that occur with my relational partner. This study session should take approximately 45-60 minutes to complete.

While the researchers do not anticipate any risks from this study, it is possible that reflecting upon my relationship may cause me some limited discomfort or distress; however, I recognize that I do have a choice regarding what conflict I write about. Many people who have done studies like this one find that despite some initial discomforts, the opportunity to think about conflicts allows you to learn about him or herself and relationship dynamics. Therefore, the benefits I may expect from this study are that I may have the opportunity to reflect upon my communication behaviors and improve my relationships because of this study’s focus on emotion and conflict communication behaviors. The results of my participation will be confidential. The only people who will know that I am a research subject are members of the research team. No individually-identifiable information about me, or provided by me during the research, will be shared with others, unless required by law.

The researcher will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project, and can be reached by telephone at: 706-542-4893. I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Jennifer Samp  
706 542-4893  
[jasamp@uga.edu](mailto:jasamp@uga.edu)

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Valerie Coles  
706 542-4893  
[vcoles@uga.edu](mailto:vcoles@uga.edu)

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**Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.**

*Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 629 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address [IRB@uga.edu](mailto:IRB@uga.edu)*

## APPENDIX D: DEMOGRAPHICS

### *Demographics*

**Please respond to the following questions about yourself.**

1. **Gender** (Circle one):    Female              Male

2. **Age** \_\_\_\_\_

3. **Ethnicity** (Check all that apply to you)

African American/Black \_\_\_\_\_      Asian American \_\_\_\_\_  
 Native American/Alaska Native \_\_\_\_\_      Hispanic/Latino \_\_\_\_\_  
 Pacific Islander \_\_\_\_\_      White (*Non-Hispanic*) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (Please indicate): \_\_\_\_\_

**Please respond to the following questions about your romantic partner.**

4. **Gender** (Circle one):    Female              Male

5. **Age** \_\_\_\_\_

6. **Ethnicity** (Check all that apply to your partner)

African American/Black \_\_\_\_\_      Asian American \_\_\_\_\_  
 Native American/Alaska Native \_\_\_\_\_      Hispanic/Latino \_\_\_\_\_  
 Pacific Islander \_\_\_\_\_      White (*Non-Hispanic*) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (Please indicate): \_\_\_\_\_

**Please answer the following questions about your relationship.**

7. How would you classify your relationship with your romantic partner?

Talking \_\_\_\_\_      Casual Dating \_\_\_\_\_  
 Serious Dating \_\_\_\_\_      Engaged \_\_\_\_\_  
 Married \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (Please indicate): \_\_\_\_\_

8. Are you and your partner exclusive? (Circle one)      NO              YES

9. How long have you been in your current relationship (including marriage—include all time that you have been “together”)? (Describe in months) \_\_\_\_\_

10. Do you and your partner live together? (Circle one)    NO              YES

11. How many days a week do you and your partner experience conflict? (Circle one)    0      1      2      3      4      5      6      7

12. Typically, are the conflicts that you have with your partner resolved? NO YES

13. Do your conflicts usually revolve around the same topic or a similar set of topics? NO YES

14. Who generally initiates conflict? (Check one) I do My partner does

15. How would you classify your mood BEFORE the conflict started?

Bad 1 2 3 4 Good 5

16. Were you satisfied with the outcome of the conflict?

Please briefly explain your response: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX E: CONFLICT DESCRIPTION

### *Conflict Description*

1. Please briefly describe the nature of the conflict (*include what the conflict was about, what happened, where is occurred, when it occurred, who was present, how or if the conflict was resolved, etc.*):
- 
- 

2. When did the conflict occur? (e.g., 2 weeks ago) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Who instigated the conflict? (Circle one)      I instigated      My partner instigated

Please briefly explain your response: \_\_\_\_\_

---

4. Has the issue of this conflict been discussed before? (Circle one)      YES      NO

If YES how many times? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Where did the conflict take place? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Was the conflict episode resolved? (Circle one)      YES      NO

Please briefly explain your response: \_\_\_\_\_

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7. Do you believe this issue will come up in the future? (Circle one)      YES      NO

8. How would you classify this conflict in comparison to your usual disputes?

Not at all Serious				Very Serious
1	2	3	4	5

9. How would you classify your mood BEFORE the conflict started?

Bad				Good
1	2	3	4	5

10. Where you satisfied with the outcome of the conflict?

Not at all Satisfied				Very Satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

Please briefly explain your response: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX F: DEFRIEFING FORM

### Debriefing Form for Emotion and Conflict

Thank you for your help in our research!

You have just completed a study that asked you to answer questions regarding your conflict behaviors and emotion displays. We will use your responses to investigate how emotions affect conflict communication. We hope to discover the degree to emotion management determines which conflict behaviors and style(s) individuals use most often.

This study tries to investigate the relationships between emotion and conflict, a subject that has not been sufficiently explored in conflict communication research. This is an important subject matter because emotions play such a critical role in an individuals' personality, attitudinal, and behavioral development. The influence that emotions have on individuals is important, especially when they are in conflict because the effects of conflict impact the individual, the relationship, and others. By studying how emotion and conflict skills are related we hope to contribute to this important field of research.

We appreciate your help with this project. We should have our final results within the next few weeks and would be happy to share these results with you. If you are interested, please email Dr. Samp ([jasamp@uga.edu](mailto:jasamp@uga.edu)) or Valerie Coles ([vcoles@uga.edu](mailto:vcoles@uga.edu)) and we will share more of the findings as they become available.

If you wish to further discuss any issues you may have please contact Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS) at 706-542-2273.

Thanks again for your help.

Jennifer Samp, Ph. D.  
Researcher

Valerie Coles  
Researcher

## FOOTNOTES

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<sup>i</sup> Moods are relevant to conflict because they may affect the way an individual engages in and/or perceives conflict. While they are distinct mental states, emotions can lead to certain moods and moods can affect how one evaluates a situation which then affects the emotions elicited. For example, if an individual is in a bad mood coming into a conflict situation then he or she may be less likely to miniaturize or repress his or her emotions during the conflict. Furthermore, individuals in bad moods may be more likely to experience and express more negative emotions during conflict than individuals who are in good moods. Hence, the outcome of a conflict may depend greatly on the degree to which an individual's mood is positive or negative. To summarize, "emotions bias action, while moods bias cognition" (Davidson, 1994, p.54).

<sup>ii</sup> The emotions chosen for this study do not comprise an exhaustive list of the types of emotion, but serve as a representative list of the basic<sup>iii</sup> and commonly studied emotions.

<sup>iii</sup> In the 1970s psychologists identified six universal emotions that are expressed and perceived similarity across cultures: anger, disgust, fear, happiness, sadness, and surprise (Ekman, 1972; Ekman, Sorenson, & Friesen, 1969). Some research suggests that emotional expressions are not universal because individuals report higher accuracy assessing emotion within cultures and groups (Dovidio, Hebl, Richeson, & Shelton, 2006; Elfenbein & Ambady, 2002). However, other research identifies methodological and conceptual problems with these studies and suggests that emotional expressions are universal (Beaupre & Hess, 2005; Matsumoto, 2002, 2006).

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<sup>iv</sup> For instance, Hochschild (1979) differentiated emotion control and emotion suppression from emotion work, advocating that emotion control and emotion suppression are efforts to “stifle” or “prevent” emotions, whereas emotion work refers to a broader framework. Emotion work includes the act of “evoking or shaping” as well as suppressing one’s emotions. Furthermore, emotion work has two broad categories: evocation and suppression. Evocation entails expressing an emotion that is not felt. Suppression entails the reduction or elimination of an emotion that is felt.

<sup>v</sup> Blake and Mouton (1964) in one of the first efforts in identifying a variety of conflict styles, the authors advanced five distinct conflict styles: forcing, confronting, smoothing, avoiding, and compromising. Since then, researchers and scholars have aspired to identify the recognizable styles or strategies that individuals use in conflict and to identify which styles are effective in different situations. Some have accepted the five labels identified by Blake and Mouton, testing them to identify which styles are most effective for managing conflict (e.g., Fitzpatrick & Winke, 1979; Shockley-Zalabak & Morley, 1984). Others have reduced Blake and Mouton’s original five styles down to three (e.g., Fry, Kidron, Osborn & Trafton, 1980; Kimsey & Fuller, 2003). Gottman (1993) proposed that there are four conflict styles that couples use: avoidant, validating, volatile, and hostile. Continuing the tradition that some styles are healthier, more efficient, or more productive than others, Gottman argued that the avoidant, validating, and volatile styles were superior to the hostile style (c.f. Busby & Holman, 2009). Still others employ five styles in their work, using different labels (e.g., Ruble & Thomas, 1976). However, regardless of the number of styles identified or the labels used there are several themes relevant to conflict

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management styles that are independent of any particular label. For instance, the extent to which an individual seeks to satisfy his or her own needs and interests and/or gratify his or her partner's needs and interests is a consistent theme present in all conflict management styles. These two themes are reflected in the two-dimensional approach utilized by many conflict theorists (Ma, Lee, & Yu, 2008).

<sup>vi</sup> This is not to imply all emotions are managed. In fact, emotions that are elicited on "instinct" or "impulse" are referred to as organismic emotions, whereas emotions that are adaptive are referred to as interactive emotions (Hochschild, 1979). In addition, emotions can occur subconsciously; however, such emotions are difficult to identify and assess since individual perceptions may not include these emotions.

<sup>vii</sup> What is socially acceptable is often determined at a cultural level and may vary between groups (Lazarus, 1991).

<sup>viii</sup> Display rules are also referred to as feeling rules (Hochschild, 1979). Like display rules, feeling rules refer to the social guidelines that influence which emotions we express and the manner in which we express these emotions. For example, cultural expectations dictate that one express gratefulness and appreciation toward a benefactor. An individual who has been caught violating a societal rule or a cultural rule should express remorse, sadness, guilt, or shame.

<sup>ix</sup> Some emotional expressions and behaviors are difficult to consciously control and are therefore difficult to manage (Planalp, 1999). For instance, individuals who feel genuine positive emotions, such as happiness, produce a Duchenne smile which cannot be replicated by individuals who are not experiencing this emotion (Ekman, Friesen, & O'Sullivan, 1988; Keltner

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& Bonanno, 1997). Another unconscious physiological emotion cue is blushing. Blushing often stems from embarrassment and, much to the disdain of many embarrassed individuals, is not a reaction that is easily managed (Planalp, 1999). Other uncontrollable responses include heart rates and pupil dilation (Fridja, 1986). However, even though there are a host of cues that are difficult to control (Ekman, Friesen, & O'Sullivan, 1988; Fridja, 1986; Keltner & Bonanno, 1997) and that due to their “uncontrollability” these cues are often identified as good indicators for identifying genuine emotions, these cues are not always “infallible guides” to emotion (Planalp, 1999). Regardless of the fact that difficult to control expressions are not always indicators of particular emotions such cues are not expressed at the discretion of the individual. Therefore, these cues will not be assessed as behaviors that individuals attempt to control during emotion management.

<sup>x</sup> These large categories of nonverbal behaviors are the scope of this study, because as an initial study I cannot adequately focus on minute adjustments to behaviors. Rather, this study aims to first understand what the larger nonverbal behaviors related to emotion management are before further research can focus on more specific and minute changes.

<sup>x<sup>i</sup></sup> All ten participants deleted for only completing informed consent derived from the online population, I believe that that several of the participants deleted for not continuing past the informed consent page may be researchers who accessed the survey periodically to confirm that the survey was working properly.

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<sup>xii</sup> Some participants reported emotions other than the nine assessed in this study. These emotions were coded as “other” and were not included in this analysis. I will note that jealousy was commonly reported as a most thought about emotion.

<sup>xiii</sup> The Department of Speech Communication changed its name to Communication Studies during the course of this thesis. The Department of Speech Communication was still active during data collection.