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SELF-MONITORING OF EXPRESSIVE BEHAVIOR[1]

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A social psychological construct of self-monitoring (self-observation and self-control guided by situational cues to social appropriateness) of expressive behavior and self-presentation was proposed. An internally consistent, temporally stable self-report measure of individual differences in self-monitoring was constructed. Four converging laboratory and field studies of peer perception ratings, criterion group membership, self-control of facial and vocal emotional expressive behavior, and attention to normative social comparison information were conducted to demonstrate the convergent and discriminant validity of the Self-Monitoring Scale (SM). The use of SM to investigate hypotheses concerning consistency in expression across situations and between channels of expressive behavior was discussed.

A common observation in literature and cultural folklore has been that certain nonlanguage behaviors, such as voice quality, body motion, touch, and the use of personal space appear to play a prominent role in communication. Furthermore, laboratory and field research clearly indicates that much information about a person's affective states, status and attitude, cooperative and competitive nature of social interaction, and interpersonal intimacy is expressed and accurately communicated to others in nonverbal expressive behavior (e.g., Ekman, 1971; Hall, 1966; Mehrabian, 1969; Sommer, 1969).

Much interest in nonverbal expressive behavior stems from a belief that it may not be under voluntary control and might function as a pipeline or radarscope to one's true inner "self" (e.g., Freud, 1959). Although nonverbal behavior may often escape voluntary attempts at censorship (Ekman & Friesen, 1969), there have been numerous demonstrations that individuals can voluntarily express various emotions with their vocal and/or facial expressive behavior in such a way that their expressive behavior can be accurately interpreted by observers (e.g., Davitz, 1964). In fact, some social observers have proposed that the ability to manage and control expressive presentation is a prerequisite to effective social and interpersonal functioning. Thus Goffman (1955) has likened social interaction to a theatrical performance or "line" of verbal and nonverbal self-expressive acts which are managed to keep one's line appropriate to the current situation. Such self-management requires a repertoire of face-saving devices, an awareness of the interpretations which others place on one's acts, a desire to maintain social approval, and the willingness to use this repertoire of impression management tactics. Within the more restricted domain of facial expressions of emotional affect, Ekman (1971) has suggested that individuals typically exercise control over their facial expressions to intensify, deintensify, neutralize, or mask the expression of a felt affect, according to various norms of social performance.

There are, however, striking and important individual differences in the extent to which individuals can and do monitor their self-presentation, expressive behavior, and non-

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verbal affective display. Clearly, professional stage actors can do what I cannot. Politicians have long known how important it is to wear the right face for the right constituency. LaGuardia learned the expressive repertoires of several different cultures in New York and became "chameleon-like" the son of whatever people he was facing. Yet little research has directly concerned such individual differences in the self-control of expressive behavior. At best, some dispositional correlates of spontaneous and natural expression of emotion have been reported (e.g., Buck, Savin, Miller, & Caul, 1972; Davitz, 1964).

A Concept of Self-Monitoring of Expressive Behavior

How might individual differences in the self-control of expressive behavior arise? What might be the developmental, historical, and current motivational origins of self-control ability and performance? Perhaps some individuals have learned that their affective experience and expression are either socially inappropriate or lacking. Such people may *monitor* (observe and control) their self-presentation and expressive behavior. The goals of self-monitoring may be (*a*) to communicate accurately one's true emotional state by means of an intensified expressive presentation; (*b*) to communicate accurately an arbitrary emotional state which need not be congruent with actual emotional experience; (*c*) to conceal adaptively an inappropriate emotional state and appear unresponsive and unexpressive; (*d*) to conceal adaptively an inappropriate emotional state and appear to be experiencing an appropriate one; (*e*) to appear to be experiencing some emotion when one experiences nothing and a nonresponse is inappropriate.

An acute sensitivity to the cues in a situation which indicate what expression or self-presentation is appropriate and what is not is a corollary ability to self-monitoring. One such set of cues for guiding self-monitoring is the emotional expressive behavior of other similar comparison persons in the same situation.

There is some evidence of an acute version of this process. When persons are made uncertain of their emotional reactions, they look to the behavior of others for cues to define their emotional states and model the emotional expressive behavior of others in the same situation who appear to be behaving appropriately (Schachter & Singer, 1962).

On the other hand, persons who have not learned a concern for appropriateness of their self-presentation would not have such well-developed self-monitoring skills and would not be so vigilant to social comparison information about appropriate patterns of expression and experience. This is not to say that they are not emotionally expressive or even that they are less so than those who monitor their presentation. Rather, their self-presentation and expressive behavior seem, in a functional sense, to be controlled from within by their affective states (they express it as they feel it) rather than monitored, controlled, and molded to fit the situation.

Self-Monitoring and Consistency in Expression: Between Modalities and across Situations

Do people, as Freud (1959) believed, say one thing with their lips and another with their fingertips? More specifically, what governs the consistency between expression in different channels of expression, such as vocal and facial, and the consistency between nonverbal and verbal expression? The self-monitoring approach provides one perspective on differences and consistencies across channels of expression, including verbal self-presentation.

It is likely that when one is monitoring, various channels are monitored differentially, and perhaps some forgotten. Thus, what may be communicated by one channel may differ from what is communicated by another. For example, I may cover my sadness by putting on a happy face but forget to use a happy voice.

Ekman and Friesen (1969, 1972) have demonstrated with psychiatric patients and student nurses that in deception situations people are more likely to monitor their facial than body presentation, with the result that the deception is more likely to be detected from an examination of body cues than fa-

cial cues. Thus, the information encoded in monitored channels should differ from that encoded in nonmonitored channels. However, it is likely that great consistency characterizes that set of channels of expressive (verbal or nonverbal) behaviors which are simultaneously monitored according to the same criteria. Furthermore, self-monitored expressive behavior should vary more from situation to situation than nonmonitored expressive behavior. Self-monitoring individuals should be most likely to monitor and control their expression in situations which contain reliable cues to social appropriateness. Thus, such a person would be more likely to laugh at a comedy when watching it with amused peers than when watching it alone. The laughing behavior of the non-self-monitoring person should be more invariant across those two situations and more related to how affectively amused he himself actually is. The expressive behavior of self-monitoring individuals should be more reflective of an internal affect state when it is generated in a situation with minimal incentives for, and cues to, self-monitoring.

The cross-situational variability of the self-monitoring versus the consistency of the non-self-monitoring individuals is similar to the "traits versus situations" issue: Is behavior controlled by situational factors and hence predictable from characteristics of the surrounding situation, or is it controlled by internal states and dispositions which produce cross-situational consistency and facilitate prediction from characteristics of the person, measures of internal states, or dispositions (Mischel, 1968; Moos, 1968, 1969)? Bem (1972) has proposed that the issue be redirected from an "either traits or situations for all behavior of all people" debate to a search for moderating variables which would allow the specification for an individual of equivalence classes of situations and responses across which he monitors his behavior with respect to a particularly central self-concept. In these areas he would show trait-like cross-situational and interresponse mode consistency; in others he would not. In the domain of expressive behavior, individual differences in self-monitoring are a moderating variable which identifies individuals who demonstrate or fail to demonstrate consistency across channels of expression and between situations differing in monitoring properties.

In Search of a Measure of Individual Differences in Self-Monitoring

How can we capture individual differences in self-monitoring? A review of the literature suggests at least one currently available measure which might serve to identify individuals who differ in self-monitoring.

The self-monitoring individual is one who, out of a concern for social appropriateness, is particularly sensitive to the expression and self-presentation of others in social situations and uses these cues as guidelines for monitoring his own self-presentation. Is there then any difference between this person and the individual with a high "need for approval" as measured by the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1964)? In a wide variety of situations, individuals who have a high need for approval give socially desirable responses. They conform more than low-need-for-approval individuals in an Asch situation; they verbally condition better; they do not show overt hostility toward one who has insulted and double-crossed them; and they are less likely to report dirty words in a perceptual defense task (Crowne & Marlowe, 1964). All of this would suggest that the high-need-for-approval person is one who modifies his behavior from situation to situation. However, other evidence suggests that this ability to alter behavior may be severely limited to contingencies of social approval (Bem, 1972).

In addition, it may be only the social approval of adult experimenters which is reinforcing and sought after. In a sociometric study, fraternity members with a high need for approval were described by their peers as individuals who spend most of their time alone rather than with other people, do not go out of their way to make friends, are not very conversational, and do not act friendly toward other fraternity members (study by Stephen C. Bank, reported in Crowne & Marlowe, 1964, pp. 162–163).

In another study on verbal conditioning, high- and low-need-for-approval subjects did not differ in the extent to which they mod-

eled the behavior of a peer (actually a confederate) they had previously observed perform the experimental task appropriately (Crowne & Marlowe, 1964, pp. 61–72). Furthermore, and particularly relevant to the self-monitoring of expressive behavior, this self-control ability may not extend into the domain of expressive behavior. Zaidel and Mehrabian (1969) reported that individuals who scored high on the Need for Approval Scale were actually less able to communicate either positive or negative affect facially or vocally than were low-need-for-approval subjects. In this experimental situation, the socially desirable response and the one which would gain the approval of the experimenter would clearly be the accurate expression and communication of affect. Thus, although high-need-for-approval individuals may be motivated to modify their expressive self-presentation in order to gain approval, they may lack the necessary self-control abilities and skills.

Self-monitoring would probably best be measured by an instrument specifically designed to discriminate individual differences in concern for social appropriateness, sensitivity to the expression and self-presentation of others in social situations as cues to social appropriateness of self-expression, and use of these cues as guidelines for monitoring and managing self-presentation and expressive behavior. Accordingly, an attempt was made to transpose the self-monitoring concept into a self-report scale which reliably and validly measures it.

The convergence between diverse methods of measuring self-monitoring was examined according to the strategy of construct validation (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955). To demonstrate discriminant validity (Campbell & Fiske, 1959), comparisons were made between self-monitoring and need for approval in the prediction of each external criterion in the validation strategy. Need for approval was chosen for these critical comparisons for two reasons. Its conceptual relationship to self-monitoring has already been discussed. Naturally, this procedure also further individuates the type of person identified by the Need for Approval Scale. In addition, Campbell (1960) has recommended that in view of the general response tendency of some individuals to describe themselves in a favorable manner, and the close relationship between probability of endorsement of personality statements and their social desirability, all tests of the voluntary self-descriptive sort should be demonstrated to predict their criterion measures better than a measure of the general social desirability factor.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE SELF-MONITORING SCALE

Forty-one true–false self-descriptive statements were administered to 192 Stanford University undergraduates. The set included items which describe (*a*) concern with the social appropriateness of one's self-presentation (e.g., "At parties and social gatherings, I do not attempt to do or say things that others will like"); (*b*) attention to social comparison information as cues to appropriate self-expression (e.g., "When I am uncertain how to act in social situations, I look to the behavior of others for cues"); (*c*) the ability to control and modify one's self-presentation and expressive behavior (e.g., "I can look anyone in the eye and tell a lie with a straight face [if for a right end]"); (*d*) the use of this ability in particular situations (e.g., "I may deceive people by being friendly when I really dislike them"); and (*e*) the extent to which the respondent's expressive behavior and self-presentation is cross-situationally consistent or variable (e.g., "In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons").

The individual items were scored in the direction of high self-monitoring. For approximately half the items, agreement was keyed as high SM; for the remainder, disagreement was keyed as high SM.

An item analysis was performed to select items to maximize internal consistency. In this procedure, the top and bottom thirds in total test scores of persons were found. Then the percentages of persons in each group who responded in the manner keyed as high SM were determined. Finally, the percentage in the bottom group was subtracted from the percentage in the top group. This difference (*D*) served as an index of item validity to discriminate total test scores (Anastasi, 1968). *D* is directly proportional to the difference

between the number of "correct" and "incorrect" total score discriminations made by an item. D values are not independent of item difficulty and are biased in favor of items of intermediate difficulty level. D is, then, an appropriate criterion for selecting items according to both discriminative power and intermediate difficulty level (Nunnally, 1967).

Items were discarded on the basis of low D scores until a set of 25 items remained which maximized the internal consistency of the scale (Nunnally, 1967, pp. 263–265). The Self-Monitoring Scale has a Kuder-Richardson 20 reliability of .70, and a test–retest reliability of .83 ($df = 51$, $p < .001$, one-month time interval). Cross-validation on an independent sample of 146 University of Minnesota undergraduates yielded a Kuder-Richardson 20 reliability coefficient of .63.

The 25 items of the SM, proportions of respondents answering the item in the low-SM-scored direction, their D values, and item-total point-biserial correlations calculated for the University of Minnesota sample are presented in Table 1.

Correlations with Other Scales

Correlations between the SM and related but conceptually distinct individual differences measures provide some evidence for its discriminant validity. There is a slight negative relationship ($r = -.1874$, $df = 190$, $p < .01$) between the SM and the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (M-C SDS, Crowne & Marlowe, 1964). Individuals who report that they observe, monitor, and manage their self-presentation are unlikely to report that they engage in rare but socially desirable behaviors.

There is a similarly low negative relationship ($r = -.2002$, $df = 190$, $p < .01$) between the SM and the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory Psychopathic Deviate scale. High-SM subjects are unlikely to report deviant psychopathological behaviors or histories of maladjustment.

There is a small and nonsignificant negative relationship ($r = -.25$, $df = 24$, ns) between the SM and the c scale of the Performance Style Test, (e.g., Ring & Wallston, 1968). The c scale was designed to identify a person who is knowledgeable about the kind of social performance required in a wide range of situations and who seeks social approval by becoming whatever kind of person the situation requires. He is literally a chameleon. Clearly the SM and c do not identify the same individuals.

The SM was also found to be unrelated to Christie and Geis's (1970) Machiavellianism ($r = -.0931$, $df = 51$, ns), Alpert-Haber (1960) Achievement Anxiety Test ($r = +.1437$, $df = 51$, ns), and Kassarjian's (1962) inner-other directedness ($r = -.1944$, $df = 54$, ns).

It thus appears that SM is relatively independent of the other variables measured.

VALIDATION: SELF-MONITORING AND PEER RATINGS

As a first source of validity evidence for the SM, a sociometric study of peer ratings was conducted. In choosing this method, it was assumed that a person who has good control of his self-presentation and expressive behavior and who is sensitive to social appropriateness cues should be seen as such a person by others who have had the opportunity for repeated observation of his self-presentation in a wide variety of social situations.

Method

Subjects

The subjects in this study were 16 members of a male fraternity living group at Stanford University who agreed to participate in an investigation of person perception.

Procedure

Each subject completed the SM and the M-C SDS and then participated in a sociometric person perception task.

Each subject indicated for each of six other members of the fraternity specified for him by the experimenter whether the following self-monitoring attributes were very true, mostly true, somewhat true, or not at all true:

(1) Concerned about acting appropriately in social situations;

(2) Openly expresses his true inner feelings, attitudes, and beliefs;

(3) Has good self-control of his behavior. Can play many roles;

(4) Is good at learning what is socially appropriate in new situations;

(5) Often appears to lack deep emotions; and

TABLE 1

INSTRUCTIONS, ITEMS, SCORING KEY, DIFFICULTY, AND DISCRIMINATION INDEXES FOR THE SELF-MONITORING SCALE[a]

Item and scoring key[b]	Discrimination				
	Difficulty[c]	D[d]	χ^2[e]	p	r_{pb}[f]
1. I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people. (F)	.63	.50	32.07	.0005	.33
2. My behavior is usually an expression of my true inner feelings, attitudes, and beliefs. (F)	.67	.23	7.26	.01	.13
3. At parties and social gatherings, I do not attempt to do or say things that others will like. (F)	.17	.21	8.29	.005	.34
4. I can only argue for ideas which I already believe. (F)	.43	.29	8.91	.005	.22
5. I can make impromptu speeches even on topics about which I have almost no information. (T)	.69	.21	6.41	.025	.32
6. I guess I put on a show to impress or entertain people. (T)	.65	.44	26.5	.0005	.45
7. When I am uncertain how to act in a social situation, I look to the behavior of others for cues. (T)	.20	.19	6.55	.025	.24
8. I would probably make a good actor. (T)	.69	.36	17.8	.0005	.43
9. I rarely need the advice of my friends to choose movies, books, or music. (F)	.64	.24	6.78	.01	.15
10. I sometimes appear to others to be experiencing deeper emotions than I actually am. (T)	.57	.20	4.78	.05	.39
11. I laugh more when I watch a comedy with others than when alone. (T)	.33	.23	6.51	.025	.29
12. In a group of people I am rarely the center of attention. (F)	.64	.32	13.09	.0005	.40
13. In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons. (T)	.40	.22	5.54	.025	.40
14. I am not particularly good at making other people like me. (F)	.30	.27	10.12	.005	.22
15. Even if I am not enjoying myself, I often pretend to be having a good time. (T)	.61	.21	5.67	.025	.24
16. I'm not always the person I appear to be. (T)	.26	.23	7.17	.01	.33
17. I would not change my opinions (or the way I do things) in order to please someone else or win their favor. (F)	.61	.34	15.5	.0005	.34
18. I have considered being an entertainer. (T)	.79	.28	12.64	.0005	.46
19. In order to get along and be liked, I tend to be what people expect me to be rather than anything else. (T)	.79	.25	9.96	.005	.29
20. I have never been good at games like charades or improvisational acting. (F)	.52	.45	25.96	.0005	.31
21. I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations. (F)	.36	.38	19.35	.0005	.45
22. At a party I let others keep the jokes and stories going. (F)	.65	.24	6.80	.01	.36
23. I feel a bit awkward in company and do not show up quite so well as I should. (F)	.54	.21	11.05	.001	.32
24. I can look anyone in the eye and tell a lie with a straight face (if for a right end). (T)	.58	.38	19.25	.0005	.33
25. I may deceive people by being friendly when I really dislike them. (T)	.46	.35	15.07	.0005	.32

Note. T = true; F = false; SM = Self-Monitoring Scale.

[a] Directions for Personal Reaction Inventory were: The statements on the following pages concern your personal reactions to a number of different situations. No two statements are exactly alike, so consider each statement carefully before answering. If a statement is *TRUE* or *MOSTLY TRUE* as applied to you, blacken the space marked *T* on the answer sheet. If a statement is *FALSE* or *NOT USUALLY TRUE* as applied to you, blacken the space marked *F*. Do not put your answers on this test booklet itself.

It is important that you answer as frankly and as honestly as you can. Your answers will be kept in the strictest confidence.

[b] Items keyed in the direction of high SM.

[c] Difficulty = proportion of individuals not responding in SM-keyed direction.

[d] Discrimination = difference between proportions of individuals in upper and lower thirds of total scores responding in high-SM direction.

[e] χ^2 calculated from the contingency table relating frequencies of T, F for each item and upper third, lower third for *total* SM score (including that item).

[f] Point-biserial correlations between individual items and total scores with that item excluded.

(6) Has good self-control of his emotional expression. Can use it to create the impression he wants.

In addition, two other judgments were required: "Is ingratiating. Attempts to do or say things designed to make others like him more" (same 4-point scale as above) and "How much do you like this person?" (very much, moderately, somewhat, not at all).

Results and Discussion

Each subject in the experiment served as a judge of six others and was in turn judged

by six other members of his living group. For each person as a stimulus, ratings of him were summed across his six judges to form a single score on each dimension which could range from 0 (six ratings of not at all true) to 18 (six ratings of very true). For each person, a single "peer rating of self-monitoring" score was computed by summing across the six self-monitoring dimensions.

The group of 16 subjects was then dichotomized at the median to form a high-SM group ($n = 8$) and a low-SM group ($n = 8$).

Self-monitoring characteristics were seen as more true of high-SM ($M = 50.5$) than of low-SM ($M = 40.2$) individuals ($t = 2.69$, $df = 14$, $p < .02$, two-tailed test). No differences were observed between high-SM and low-SM individuals on ingratiation or liking ($t = .49$ and .20, respectively, $df = 14$, *ns*).

Mean peer rating of self-monitoring, ingratiation, and liking for high M-C SDS (above the median, $n = 8$) and low M-C SDS (below the median, $n = 8$) were also calculated. In contrast to SM scores, M-C SDS scores were unrelated to peer rating of self-monitoring (high M-C SDS $M = 54.0$, low M-C SDS $M = 56.7$, $t = .59$, $df = 14$, *ns*).

The relationship between the SM, M-C SDS, and peer rating of self-monitoring may be examined in terms of product-moment correlations. There is a significant relationship between the SM and peer rating of self-monitoring ($r = .45$, $df = 14$, $p < .05$). The higher an individual's score on the SM, the more frequently self-monitoring characteristics were attributed to him. The M-C SDS and peer rating of self-monitoring are not related ($r = -.14$, $df = 14$, *ns*).

An image emerges of the high-SM individual as perceived by his peers. He is a person who, out of a concern for acting appropriately in social situations, has become particularly skilled at controlling and modifying his social behavior and emotional expression to suit his surroundings on the basis of cues in the situation which indicate what attitudes and emotions are appropriate. The low-SM individual, as perceived by his peers, is less able and/or less likely to control and modify his self-presentation and expressive behavior to keep it in line with situational specifications of appropriateness. He is also less vigilant to such cues.

High and low scorers on the M-C SDS, by contrast, do not differ in these characteristics. In fact, the evidence suggests that if in fact the M-C SDS is a measure of need for approval, this need is not related to the ability (as perceived by one's peers) to control and monitor one's self-presentation and emotional expressive behavior on the basis of situation-to-situation variation in contingencies of social appropriateness.

VALIDATION: SELF-MONITORING, STAGE ACTORS, AND PSYCHIATRIC WARD PATIENTS

Another means of establishing the validity of an instrument is by predicting how predetermined groups of individuals would score when the instrument is administered to them. According to this strategy, SM scores of criterion groups chosen to represent extremes in self-monitoring were compared with the unselected sample of Stanford University undergraduates.

Professional Stage Actors

Groups of individuals known to be particularly skilled at controlling their expressive behavior (e.g., actors, mime artists, and politicians) should score higher on the SM than an unselected sample. The SM was administered to a group of 24 male and female dramatic actors who were appearing in professional productions at Stanford and in San Francisco.

Their average score on the SM was 18.41 with a standard deviation of 3.38. This is significantly higher than the mean SM score for the Stanford sample ($t = 8.27$, $df = 555$, $p < .001$).

Thus, stage actors do score higher than nonactors on the SM. Actors probably do have particularly good self-control of their expressive behavior and self-presentation while on stage. It is not clear that actors are any more concerned about monitoring their expressive presentation in other situations.

Hospitalized Psychiatric Ward Patients

The behavior of hospitalized psychiatric patients is less variable across situations than

that of "normals." Moos (1968) investigated the reactions of patients and staff in a representative sample of daily settings in a psychiatric inpatient ward in order to assess the relative amount of variance accounted for by settings and individual differences. The results indicated that for patients, individual differences accounted for more variance than setting differences; whereas for staff, individual differences generally accounted for less variance than setting differences. One interpretation of this finding is that psychiatric ward patients are unable or unwilling to monitor their social behavior and self-presentation to conform to variations in contingencies of social appropriateness between situations. In fact, diagnoses of "normal" and "psychopathological" may be closely related to cross-situational plasticity or rigidity (Cameron, 1950). Moos (1969) has reported that situational factors play an increasingly potent role in the behavior of institutionalized individuals as therapy progresses.

Accordingly, it was expected that a sample of hospitalized psychiatric ward patients should score lower on the SM than nonhospitalized normals.

The SM was administered to 31 male hospitalized psychiatric patients at the Menlo Park Veterans Administration Hospital. Their psychiatric diagnoses varied, and most had been previously institutionalized. Each patient's cumulative length of hospitalization varied from several months to several years.

The average SM score for this group was 10.19 with a standard deviation of 3.63. This is significantly lower than the mean SM score for the Stanford sample ($t = 3.44$, $df = 562$, $p < .001$).

VALIDATION: SELF-MONITORING AND THE EXPRESSION OF EMOTION

If the SM discriminates individual differences in the self-control of expressive behavior, this should be reflected behaviorally. In a situation in which individuals are given the opportunity to communicate an arbitrary affective state by means of nonverbal expressive behavior, a high-SM individual should be able to perform this task more accurately, easily, and fluently than a low SM.

Method

Subjects: Expression of Emotion

Male and female students whose SM scores were above the 75th percentile (SM > 15) or below the 25th percentile (SM < 9) were recruited by telephone from the pool of pretested introductory psychology students. In all, 30 high-SM and 23 low-SM subjects participated in the study and received either course credit or $1.50.

Procedure: Expression of Emotion

Each subject was instructed to read aloud an emotionally neutral three-sentence paragraph (e.g., "I am going out now. I won't be back all afternoon. If anyone calls, just tell him I'm not here.") in such a way as to express each of the seven emotions anger, happiness, sadness, surprise, disgust, fear, and guilt or remorse using their vocal and facial expressive behavior. The order of expression was determined randomly for each subject. The subject's facial and upper-body expressive behavior was filmed and his voice tape-recorded. It was suggested that he imagine he was trying out for a part in a play and wanted to give an accurate, convincing, natural, and sincere expression of each emotion—one that someone listening to the tape or watching the film would be able to understand as the emotion the subject had been instructed to express. The procedure is similar to one used by Levitt (1964).

These filmed and taped samples of expressive behavior were scored by judges who indicated which of the seven emotions the stimulus person was expressing. Accuracy of the judges was used as a measure of the expressive self-control ability of the stimulus subjects.

Judgments of Expressive Behavior: Subjects

The films and tapes of expressive behavior were scored by a group of 20 high-SM (SM > 15, or top 25%) and 13 low-SM (SM < 9, or bottom 25%) naive judges who were paid $2.00 an hour.

Judgments of Emotional Expressive Behavior: Procedure

Judges participated in small groups of both high- and low-SM judges who watched films for approximately one fourth of the subjects in the expression experiment and listened to the tapes of approximately another one fourth of the subjects. For each stimulus segment, judges indicated which of the seven emotions had been expressed.

Results and Discussion

Accuracy of Expression and SM Scores

Accuracy of the judges in decoding the filmed and taped expressive behavior for each stimulus person was used as a measure of his

self-control of expressive behavior ability. For each of the 53 subjects in the expression task, the average accuracy of his judges was computed separately for films and tapes and high- and low-SM judges. Table 2 represents these accuracy scores as a function of stimulus (expresser) SM scores, facial or vocal channel of expression, and judge SM score for naive judges. Each stimulus person expressed seven emotions. Therefore, mean accuracy scores can range from 0 to 7.

The average accuracy scores for each stimulus person's facial and vocal expressive behavior, as judged by high-SM and low-SM judges, were entered into an analysis of variance. Expresser SM score (high SM or low SM) was a between-stimulus-persons factor; channel of expression (face or voice) and judge SM score (high SM or low SM) were within-stimulus-persons factors.

The following pattern of results emerges. Individuals who scored high on the SM were better able to communicate accurately an arbitrarily chosen emotion to naive judges than were individuals who scored low on the SM. That is, judges were more often accurate in judging both the facial and vocal expressive behavior generated in this emotion communication task by high-SM stimuli than by low-SM stimuli ($F = 11.72$, $df = 1/51$, $p < .01$). For both high- and low-SM stimuli, accuracy was greater in the vocal than the facial channel ($F = 19.12$, $df = 1/153$, $p < .001$). Finally, there was a tendency for high-SM judges to be better judges of emotion than low-SM judges ($F = 1.69$, $df = 1/153$, $p < .25$). In addition, high-SM judges may have been more differentially sensitive to the expressive behavior of high- and low-SM stimuli. That is, the difference in accuracy for judging high-SM and low-SM stimuli for high-SM judges was greater than the corresponding difference for low-SM judges. However, once again the differences are not significant ($F = 2.41$, $df = 1/153$, $p < .25$).

TABLE 2

SM AND ACCURACY OF EXPRESSION OF EMOTION: NAIVE JUDGES

Stimulus	High-SM judge		Low-SM judge	
	Face	Voice	Face	Voice
High SM ($n = 30$)				
M[a]	3.353	4.047	3.196	3.564
Variance	.718	.636	1.117	1.769
Low SM ($n = 23$)				
M	2.518	2.957	2.493	3.094
Variance	1.348	.982	1.479	2.102

Note. SM = Self-Monitoring Scale.
[a] Average accuracy computed for each stimulus across all judges who rated him and then averaged across n stimulus persons; range = 0–7.

Discriminant Validation: SM versus M-C SDS

In the sample of 192 from which the subjects for the expression task were selected, scores on the SM and M-C SDS were very slightly correlated ($r = -.1874$). However, in the sample of 53 subjects chosen for this experiment, the correlation was $-.3876$ ($df = 51$, $p < .01$). Furthermore, individuals who scored below the median on the M-C SDS were better able than those who scored above the median to voluntarily communicate emotion in this experimental task ($F = 4.426$, $df = 1/51$, $p < .05$). These differences present a rival explanation of the differences observed in self-control of expressive behavior between high-SM and low-SM groups.

To discriminate between the SM and M-C SDS as predictors of self-control of expression ability, two analyses of covariance were performed. In the first, accuracy scores for naive judges collapsed across judge SM score and channel were examined as a function of stimulus SM scores as the independent variable and stimulus M-C SDS scores as the covariate. After removing the effects of the covariate (M-C SDS), there is still a highly significant treatment (SM) effect ($F = 7.13$, $df = 1/50$, $p < .01$). That is, individuals who scored high on the SM were better able than low-SM scorers to accurately express and communicate arbitrary emotions independent of their M-C SDS scores.

In the second analysis of covariance, accuracy scores for naive judges collapsed across judge SM score and channel were examined as a function of stimulus M-C SDS as the independent variable and stimulus SM scores as the covariate. The results of this analysis

are quite conclusive. After removing the effects of the covariate (SM), there is no remaining relationship between the independent variable (M-C SDS) and expression accuracy ($F = .75$, $df = 1/50$, *ns*). That is, whatever relationship exists between M-C SDS scores and self-control of expression ability is entirely accounted for by the slight negative correlation between the M-C SDS and SM.

Thus, the results of this experiment clearly indicate that scores on the SM are related to the self-control of expressive behavior. High-SM individuals were better able than low-SM individuals to express arbitrary emotional states in facial and vocal behavior.

VALIDATION: SELF-MONITORING AND ATTENTION TO SOCIAL COMPARISON INFORMATION

It has been proposed that out of a concern for social appropriateness of his behavior, a high-SM individual is particularly attentive to social comparison information and uses this information as guidelines to monitor and manage his self-presentation and expressive behavior.

Consistent with this formulation, high-SM individuals are seen by their peers as better able to learn what is socially appropriate in new situations than are low-SM. Two SM items which best predict performance in the emotion expression task are: "When I am uncertain how to act in a social situation, I look to the behavior of others for cues," and "I laugh more when I watch a comedy with others than when alone."

All of this suggests that, given the opportunity in a self-presentation situation, a high-SM individual should be more likely to seek out relevant social comparison information.

Method

Subjects

Subjects were recruited from the pretested introductory psychology subject pool on the basis of high-SM scores (SM > 15) or low-SM scores (SM < 9). A total of 14 high-SM and 13 low-SM subjects participated in the experiment and were paid $1.00.

Procedure

Each subject performed a self-presentation task in a situation designed to facilitate self-monitoring. He was asked to respond to a series of true–false self-descriptive personality test items in preparation for a discussion of how test-takers decide how to respond to ambiguously worded questionnaire items. During the task he was given the opportunity to consult a "majority response sheet" which listed the modal response of his introductory psychology class for each item in order to consider possible alternative interpretations of the items in preparation for the discussion.

Pretesting had indicated that the task was interpreted as neither social pressure to consult the information nor a test of resistance to temptation to cheat. Rather it appears that a situation was created in which the subjects knew that normative social comparison information was available to them and they could consult it or not as they wished in preparation for a later discussion of their self-descriptions on the questionnaire items.

Unknown to the subject who performed this task alone, an observer in the next room recorded the frequency with which the subject consulted the majority response sheet and timed each look. The sheet had been left by the experimenter at the far corner of the subject's table so that consulting it required observable but not effortful behavior by the subject. It was expected that a high-SM subject would look more often, as measured by frequency and duration of looking, at this social comparison information than would a low-SM subject.

Results and Discussion

Results on the dependent measures of seeking out of social comparison information were analyzed as a function of both SM and M-C SDS scores ($r_{SM,M\text{-}C\ SDS} = -.067$, $df = 25$, *ns*) in a 2×2 (High SM, Low SM $\times$ High M-C SDS, Low M-C SDS) unweighted means analysis of variance.

There were three measures of seeking out social comparison information during the self-presentation task: (*a*) frequency of looking at the majority response sheet as recorded by the observer; (*b*) frequency of looking at the majority response sheet as measured by the subject's retrospective self-report; and (*c*) total duration of looking at the majority response sheet as timed by the observer. These three measures are highly intercorrelated ($r_{12} = .92$, $r_{13} = .90$, $r_{23} = .83$, $df = 25$, $p < .001$). The means for each of these measures are presented in Table 3.

For frequency of looking as recorded by an observer, a high-SM subject looked more frequently than a low-SM at the majority response sheet ($F = 4.70$, $df = 1/23$, $p < .05$).

TABLE 3

THREE MEASURES OF LOOKING AT SOCIAL COMPARISON INFORMATION

Measure	n	Frequency of looking[a]	Frequency of looking[b]	Total duration of looking (in seconds)
High SM, low M-C SDS	6	14.67	15.83	20.83
High SM, high M-C SDS	8	12.25	12.25	19.38
Low SM, low M-C SDS	7	5.14	5.83	5.43
Low SM, high M-C SDS	6	4.83	4.13	4.83

Note. SM = Self-Monitoring Scale; M-C SDS = Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale.
[a] Recorded by observer.
[b] Subject's self-report.

Given the opportunity to consult social comparison information in a self-presentation situation in which they expected to justify their self-descriptions, high self-monitors did so more frequently than did low self-monitors. There was no systematic relationship between M-C SDS and looking behavior ($F = .122$, $df = 1/23$, ns), nor was there any interaction between SM and M-C SDS scores ($F = .011$, $df = 1/23$, ns). Thus, there was no relationship between the tendency to describe oneself in socially desirable fashion and consulting social comparison information in this self-presentation situation.

Analyses of subjects' self-report of looking behavior and total time looking measured by the observer result in identical conclusions. For either measure, high-SM subjects were more likely than low-SM to seek out social comparison information.

CONCLUSIONS

Individuals differ in the extent to which they monitor (observe and control) their expressive behavior and self-presentation. Out of a concern for social appropriateness, the self-monitoring individual is particularly sensitive to the expression and self-presentation of others in social situations and uses these cues as guidelines for monitoring and managing his own self-presentation and expressive behavior. In contrast, the non-self-monitoring person has little concern for the appropriateness of his presentation and expression, pays less attention to the expression of others, and monitors and controls his presentation to a lesser extent. His presentation and expression appear to be controlled from within by his experience rather than by situational and interpersonal specifications of appropriateness.

A self-report measure of individual differences in self-monitoring was constructed. The Self-Monitoring Scale is internally consistent, temporally stable, and uncorrelated with self-report measure of related concepts.

Four studies were conducted to validate the Self-Monitoring Scale. According to their peers, individuals with high SM scores are good at learning what is socially appropriate in new situations, have good self-control of their emotional expression, and can effectively use this ability to create the impressions they want. Theater actors scored higher and hospitalized psychiatric ward patients scored lower than university students. Individuals with high SM scores were better able than those with low SM scores to intentionally express and communicate emotion in both the vocal and facial channels of expressive behavior. In a self-presentation task, individuals with high SM scores were more likely than those with low scores to seek out and consult social comparison information about their peers. Self-monitoring and need for approval were compared as predictors of each external criterion to demonstrate the discriminant validity of the SM.

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