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## **SELF-ESTEEM KEY TO NOT LETTING THE JOB GET IN THE WAY OF YOUR RELATIONSHIP**

### **Study results reported in *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin***

Thousand Oaks, California, London, United Kingdom, and New Delhi, India (July 13, 2006) – Do we feel accepted by our partners no matter how good or bad our professional life is going? Do we see our spouses as loving us for better or worse? These questions are explored in a recent study included in the July issue of SAGE's ***Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin***, an official publication of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, published by SAGE Publications.

The article, "For better or worse? Self-esteem and the contingencies of acceptance in marriage" presented research led by Sandra Murray of the University at Buffalo. The study, funded by the National Science Foundation and the National Institute of Mental Health, was culled from the daily diaries of over 150 married couples. It concluded that people with low self-esteem incorrectly perceived their partner's acceptance and love to be contingent on their professional accomplishments.

To help to unravel the mysteries of relationships as they naturally occur in real life, husbands and wives reported on their professional successes and failures while also reporting on the degree to which they felt accepted and loved by their partner. Self-esteem was found to be a key indicator of how people perceived their partner's approval and support. Men and women with low self-esteem felt that their partner's love was contingent on their daily professional successes—they felt more loved on days when they were more successful. Low self-esteem women also felt less accepted and loved by their partners on days when they failed at work or school. In contrast, men and women with high self-esteem perceived their partner's love as unconditional. In fact, high self-esteem women even tended to feel more loved on days when they reported failing at work.

The findings also suggested the importance of teaching people with low self-esteem how events in their own lives may, unreasonably, spill over into their marriages, causing them to see their spouses more negatively than is justified.

Go to <http://psp.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/32/7/866> to access the article in the July issue of ***Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*** at no charge for a limited time. To contact the researchers, please email Sandra L. Murray at [smurray@buffalo.edu](mailto:smurray@buffalo.edu).

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### **About *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin***

For over 30 years, the official monthly journal of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP), ***Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin (PSPB)*** has provided an international forum for the rapid dissemination of original empirical papers in all areas of personality and social psychology. SPSP counts more than 4,500 researchers, educators, and students in its membership worldwide. To contact the Executive Officer of SPSP, please phone David Dunning at (607) 255-6391, or email at [spsp@cornell.edu](mailto:spsp@cornell.edu). [www.spsp.org](http://www.spsp.org)

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