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Indirect emotion regulation in intractable conflicts: A new approach to conflict resolution

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Intractable conflicts pose a great challenge to both humanity and science. The crucial role played by intergroup emotions in conflict dynamics has long been asserted in the field of conflict resolution. Therefore, regulating emotions in order to change attitudes and behaviour towards promoting peace is vital. One way to transform emotions is to use established emotion regulation strategies to change intergroup emotional experiences, and subsequently political positions. However, the use of direct emotion regulation may pose challenges in its application outside the laboratory, and especially among those who lack the motivation to regulate their emotions. Thus we describe recent research in which *Indirect Emotion Regulation* is used to overcome those very limitations. Here concrete cognitive appraisals are indirectly altered, leading to attitude change by transforming discrete emotions. Discoveries have both theoretical and practical implications regarding emotion regulation in intractable conflicts, thus promoting attitudes so critical for peace making.

Keywords: Emotion; Emotion regulation; Intergroup conflict.

Prior to the eruption of the Rwandan genocide in 1994, mass communication and news media broadcasted hateful messages to the Hutus regarding the Tutsi population. The aim of the government was to provoke and instigate violent acts of Hutus against Tutsis by increasing negative emotions such as hatred, fear, and disgust among the Hutu population (McDoom, 2011; Vollhardt, Coutin, Staub, Weiss, & Deflander, 2007). Tutsis were said to be part of a widespread conspiracy, planning a devious attack on the Hutus, which could take place at any moment and must be thwarted. They were systematically dehumanised, promoting an image of Tutsis as cockroaches and other disgust-inducing creatures. These messages have been recognised as playing a role not only in

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justifying, but in the actual eruption of the horrific violence which took place in Rwanda (des Forges, 1999; Gourevitch, 1998).

This substantiation corroborates widely acknowledged statements among scholars of intractable conflicts that emotions play a pivotal role in the dynamics of such conflicts (e.g., Bar-Tal, Halperin, & de-Rivera, 2007; Horowitz, 1985; Lindner, 2006; Petersen, 2002; Staub, 2005; Volkan, 1997). In spite of that, empirical investigations into the nature and implications of emotions within these unique contexts were quite rare until the last two decades or so. Recently, however, the role of emotions has begun to be examined within processes of conflict *resolution* in the context of intractable conflicts (e.g., Halperin, 2011; Reifen-Tagar, Federico, & Halperin, 2011; Sabucedo, Alzate, & Rodríguez, 2011). Each intergroup emotion has been found to have a discrete influence on attitudes and behavioural tendencies related to resolving intergroup conflict. Accumulated evidence shows that emotions affect public opinion on issues of negotiation and compromise, support for risk taking, and creative conflict resolution methods, as well as processing patterns of information relevant for peace-making processes (see Halperin, Sharvit, & Gross, 2011; Halperin, 2014). Furthermore, outside the context of intractable conflicts, several decades of research point to emotions as having a substantial influence in interpersonal conflict resolution and negotiation (for a review see Van Kleef, De Dreu, & Manstead, 2010).

In light of these findings, a question which occupies those who wish to study and promote conflict resolution is whether and in what ways intergroup emotions can be effectively transformed to reduce violence and promote more conciliatory positions. We believe that intractable conflicts, like all socio-political occurrences, are not led by fate, but rather are man-made phenomena, initiated and perpetuated by people. Thus, changing people's emotions using psychological methods constitutes a significant step towards understanding mechanisms which can then be used to transform and mobilise public opinion towards support for resolving conflicts.

In what follows we begin by describing the roles played by intergroup emotions in intractable conflicts. We then introduce the idea of emotion regulation, distinguish between direct and indirect emotion regulation approaches, and briefly describe the way existing strategies of emotion regulation can promote conflict resolution. Next, we focus on indirect regulation strategies and thoroughly review recent studies that demonstrate the role of indirect emotion regulation in shaping attitudes and behaviour in the context of intractable conflicts. We conclude by describing future challenges and opportunities for research on this topic.

THE EFFECTS OF INTERGROUP EMOTIONS ON PUBLIC OPINION IN INTRACTABLE CONFLICTS

Intractable conflicts have been defined as protracted (enduring for at least one generation) and perceived by society members as irresolvable. They are seen as

“zero-sum” in nature, and total in the sense that their goals are seen as existential to those who take part in them. They involve physical violence and are also perceived as central in the public agenda, and as such they demand extensive investment, both physical and psychological (Bar-Tal, 1998; Kriesberg, 1993, 1998).

Anyone who has ever experienced, either directly or indirectly, an enduring intractable conflict such as the ones in the Middle East, Kashmir, Sri Lanka, Chechnya, or Rwanda, recognises that although they are based on real issues, they are fuelled by a high magnitude of negative emotions like fear, hatred, despair, and contempt. These emotions are experienced on the personal level, but are based on group identification, and can be found in the public discourse, mass media, cultural products (e.g., arts, literature), and national ceremonies (e.g., Bar-Tal et al., 2007).

In the last two decades scholars have begun to empirically investigate the nature and implications of intergroup emotions in these contexts. In a nutshell, the basic assumptions of these scholars are that: (1) emotions are one of the most powerful engines of human behaviour; (2) in an intergroup context, the force of this engine is significantly amplified; (3) each discrete intergroup emotion has a unique nature, manifested in appraisals, emotional goals and action tendencies; and (4) each discrete intergroup emotion leads to concrete political implications regarding conflict, and conflict resolution dynamics.

More specifically, these recent studies suggest that intergroup emotions are more than just an automatic response to conflict-related events. Emotions have been found to play a causal role, forming attitudes, biasing attention and action, and by that, shaping reactions to conflict-related events. Importantly, most of these studies show that the effect of intergroup emotions on aggressive and conciliatory political attitudes goes above and beyond the effects of other prominent factors such as ideology (e.g., Halperin, Russel, Dweck, & Gross, 2011; Maoz & McCauley, 2008) and socio-economic conditions (e.g., Maoz & McCauley, 2008).

But how exactly do discrete intergroup emotions help to shape people’s attitudes and behaviour in intractable conflicts? The process begins with the occurrence of a new event and/or appearance of new information related to the conflict and/or recollection of a past conflict-related event. The event or information can be negative (e.g., war, terror attack, rejection of a peace offer) or positive (e.g., a peace gesture, willingness to compromise), but it must be appraised as meaningful. In most cases these events are experienced directly only by a handful of ingroup members and transmitted to other group members through leaders, the mass media, or other individuals. In these cases, if individuals self-categorise as members of the same group as the directly exposed individuals, they experience group-based emotions (Iyer & Leach, 2009; Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000; Smith, 1993).

The specific type of intergroup emotion elicited by the conflict-related event is determined by individuals' appraisal of the event (e.g., Roseman, 1984). In the context of intractable conflicts, such an appraisal is affected by each person's historical memory of the conflict (including personal and collective traumas), ideological beliefs regarding the conflict, and emotional sentiments targeted at the adversary and the conflict more generally (see Halperin, 2011; Halperin, Sharvit, & Gross, 2011). As a result, the same event would lead to different emotional and then political reactions among different people. We have suggested (Halperin, Sharvit, et al., 2011) and demonstrated (Halperin, 2011) that these background factors (e.g., ideology, collective memory, and emotional sentiments), coupled with the occurrence of a new event, shape the cognitive appraisal of that event. This appraisal provides the basis for the development of corresponding discrete emotions. In turn, these discrete emotions, and particularly the emotional goals and response tendencies embedded within them, dictate the subsequent behavioural and political responses to the event.

The emotion of anger provides an interesting example of said process. According to appraisal theories of emotion (Roseman, 1984; Scherer, Schorr, & Johnstone, 2001), anger arises when the actions of the outgroup are perceived as unjust and as deviating from acceptable norms. In addition, it involves appraisals of relative strength and high coping potential (Mackie et al., 2000). Thus, people who feel angry believe that action is needed to correct the perceived wrongdoing, and may believe that their group is capable of initiating such corrective action (Mackie et al., 2000).

In terms of action tendencies, previous studies conducted in the context of real-world conflicts have found various action tendencies associated with anger. Some have pointed towards an association between anger and the attribution of blame to the outgroup (Halperin, 2008; Small, Lerner, & Fischhoff, 2006). Other studies have found that individuals who feel angry appraise future military attacks as less risky (Lerner & Keltner, 2001) and anticipate more positive consequences for such attacks (Huddy, Feldman, & Cassese, 2007). Accordingly, studies conducted in the U.S. following the 9/11 attacks found that angry individuals were highly supportive of an American military response in Iraq and elsewhere (e.g., Huddy et al., 2007; Skitka, Bauman, Aramovich, & Morgan, 2006). Finally, the central role of group-based anger in motivating conflict eruption and aggression yielded further support in a recent study conducted in Serbia and Republika Srpska (Spanovic, Lickel, Denson, & Petrovic, 2010).

What follows is that discrete intergroup emotions, such as anger, mediate the effect of exposure to an event on attitudes and behaviour regarding peace and war. For example, research has shown that negative intergroup emotions such as hatred, fear and collective angst hinder progress towards conflict resolution. Specifically, discrete negative emotions such as fear and collective angst may lead to more right-wing inclinations (Hirschberger & Pyszczynski, 2010), strengthen ingroup ties (Wohl, Branscombe, & Reysen, 2010) and promote

risk-averse political tendencies (Sabucedo et al., 2011). Research has also shown that negative intergroup emotions, mainly anger and hatred, increase support for extreme aggression and military actions aimed at harming and even eliminating the opponent (Halperin, 2008, 2011).

At the same time, recent studies in the field of emotions in individual conflicts (e.g., Cesario, Plaks, Hagiwara, Navarrete, & Higgins, 2010; Fischer & Roseman, 2007) as well as intergroup conflicts (e.g., Gayer, Landman, Halperin, & Bar-Tal, 2009; Halperin, Russel, Dweck, et al., 2011; Reifen-Tagar et al., 2011; Spanovic et al., 2010) have demonstrated the pluripotentiality of some emotions. That is, seemingly negative emotions like anger and fear can sometimes be constructive in the context of conflict and negotiations. Indeed, the behaviour elicited from the experience of a particular emotion depends on how the relations between the ingroup and an adversarial group are framed. For example, Halperin, Russel, Dweck, et al. (2011) demonstrated that anger can lead to higher support for compromises in the absence of hatred within the context of an upcoming opportunity for peace. This is mainly due to the fact that anger can lead to risk-seeking behaviour, optimistic forecasting, and a belief in one's own capability or that of the ingroup to correct the negative situation (Halperin, 2011; Halperin, Russel, Dweck, et al., 2011; Reifen-Tagar et al., 2011). Additionally, similar patterns were found regarding fear and collective angst. Spanovic et al. (2010) showed that fear of the outgroup was related to increased motivation for aggression within an on-going conflict, but was negatively related to aggression in a conflict that had already been resolved. Halperin, Porat, and Wohl (2013, Study 2) pointed to the positive effect of collective angst as leading to more willingness to compromise in intractable conflict, when the relevant compromise is perceived as one that can decrease future threats.

Scholars have also examined, although less extensively, the role that positive intergroup emotions play in the context of conflicts. Hope, for example, has been found to play a constructive role in reducing hostility, increasing problem solving in negotiation contexts and promoting support for conciliatory policies (Cohen-Chen, Halperin, Crisp, & Gross, 2014). Furthermore, several studies conducted in the post-conflict settings of Northern Ireland (Moeschberger, Dixon, Niens, & Cairns, 2005; Tam et al., 2008) and Bosnia (Cehajic, Brown, & Castano, 2008) reveal a positive relationship between empathy and willingness to forgive the opponent for past wrongdoings.

EXISTING (DIRECT) STRATEGIES OF EMOTION REGULATION: REAPPRAISAL AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

If emotions play such a pivotal role in conflict, it is to be expected that interventions aimed at reducing violence and promoting reconciliation would tackle them directly, minimising some destructive negative emotions (e.g., hatred) and amplifying positive, more constructive ones. Yet, although some traditional

conflict-related interventions yield influence on emotions as a by-product, the main goal of most interventions, introduced by social psychologists, is focused directly on changing people's beliefs and attitudes towards the outgroup. We, on the other hand, argue that the rapid developments in the growing field of emotion regulation (e.g., Gross, 2007) should be better integrated and have more impact on how scholars of conflict resolution study emotions in conflict, and develop conflict resolution interventions.

One way to approach emotion transformation is to turn to well-established methods utilised to regulate emotions within the realm of intrapersonal and interpersonal relations. We define these methods as *direct emotion regulation* (Halperin, 2014), which involves processes targeted at influencing emotions that we (or others) experience, when we (or others) experience them, and how we (or others) experience and express them (Gross, 1998, 2007). Direct emotion regulation includes a number of strategies in which individuals are directly instructed or trained to regulate their negative emotions in order to influence political attitudes and behaviour.

One strategy that has received considerable empirical attention is cognitive reappraisal. Cognitive reappraisal (or "reappraisal" in short) involves changing the meaning of a situation in a way that elicits a change in the person's emotional response to that situation (Gross, 2008). Reappraisal has been found more effective than response-focused strategies, such as expressive suppression (or "suppression" in short), which involves hiding facial emotional expressions (e.g., Gross, 1998).

Cognitive reappraisal was successfully used to change the way people construe upsetting situations in order to decrease their aversiveness (Richards, Butler, & Gross, 2003). Empirical evidence suggests that people who used reappraisal more frequently to regulate their emotions reported significantly fewer negative emotions before entering a negative situation (Jackson, Malmstadt, Larson, & Davidson, 2000). Most relevant to the context of the current review, when reappraisal was manipulated in a lab setting it led to a significant subsequent decrease in displays of aggression (Barlett & Anderson, 2011), as well as a significant decrease in the experience of anger over time, which was measured in three intervals, separated by 90 seconds (Ray, Wilhelm, & Gross, 2008).

Outside the context of intractable conflicts, reappraisal has been found useful in improving the consequences of negotiation processes as well as in promoting agreed-upon solutions in interpersonal conflicts (Fabiansson, Denson, & Krueger, 2012; Sokol-Hessner et al., 2009; Wang et al., 2011; Wout, Chang, & Sanfey, 2010). These studies point to cognitive reappraisal as useful in minimising the damaging effect of negative emotions in rational decision making processes, negotiation and interpersonal conflicts.

Of late, we have begun to argue that many insights from research on cognitive reappraisal, previously focused on individuals and dyads, can be applied to the context of intergroup conflicts. The common tendency during war is to construe

events in a one-sided, biased way (see Kelman 1998). We postulate that reappraisal holds the potential to affect conflicts positively by reducing the magnitude of negative emotions directed towards the adversary, or by increasing positive emotions. Furthermore, reappraisal can promote conflict resolution by broadening perspectives and allowing feelings of hope to develop, which in turn may lead to increased support for conciliatory attitudes such as concession making, willingness to provide humanitarian aid, and openness towards the outgroup.

Indeed, in a set of six different studies, cognitive reappraisal has recently been found to be effective in changing intergroup emotional experiences and subsequently political positions, within the context of intractable intergroup conflict. The first correlational evidence that reappraisal is associated with conciliatory attitudes was found in a study Halperin and Gross (2011) conducted in the midst of a war between Israelis and Palestinians in Gaza. Results of a correlational study, based on a second wave of a nationwide survey of Jewish Israelis ($N = 201$) showed that those who used reappraisal more frequently during the war maintained higher levels of hope, and in turn were also more supportive of providing humanitarian aid to Palestinians. Although interesting, these results did not indicate the causal influence of reappraisal on intergroup emotions and attitudes in intergroup conflict.

This limitation was addressed in two separate subsequent projects. In the first project, Halperin and colleagues (Halperin, Pliskin, Saguy, Liberman, & Gross, 2013) hypothesised that the use of cognitive reappraisal would be associated with lower levels of group-based negative emotions towards one's least-liked group, and lower levels of political intolerance towards that group. Participants were Israeli students at the Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya, who participated in the study in return for credit. Reappraisal was experimentally manipulated using a short set of instructions (*"try to adopt a neutral perspective while reading the excerpt. To do this, please read the excerpt from an exterior perspective, as if you were scientists examining it objectively and analytically, without assigning it personal or national relevance"*). These instructions led to reduced levels of negative emotions (anger, hostility, compassion (r), fear, empathy (r), and trepidation; emotions marked (r) were reverse coded) as well as reduced levels of political intolerance (measured using a 5-item scale – e.g., *"outgroup members should not be allowed to vote in the elections"*) towards Palestinian Citizens of Israel (Study 1) and towards one's least liked group (Study 2).

These findings serve as an indication for the ability of the reappraisal intervention in reducing negative emotions and altering political attitudes towards an outgroup. However, we wanted to examine whether reappraisal could induce conciliatory reactions to conflict-related events, and whether the positive effect would endure over time. To examine these questions, an additional series of experiments was conducted by Halperin and colleagues (Halperin, Porat, Tamir, & Gross, 2013). In the first study, a reappraisal training session was conducted on 39 Israeli university students who participated in the study in return for a

cafeteria voucher. Here, the experimenter taught participants to reappraise their emotional responses to anger-inducing pictures, based on the same reappraisal instructions used in the previous studies and described above. After the training session, participants watched a 4-minute anger-inducing presentation. In a seemingly separate study, participants were later asked about negative emotions towards Palestinians (such as anger, fear, and hatred). Next, their support of conciliatory policies was measured using a 4-item scale (e.g., “Regardless of the security situation, Israel needs to transfer food and medication to Gaza residents”) as well as their support for aggressive policies measured with a three-item scale (e.g., “If the Israeli Defense Forces detects a terrorist in a building full of civilians, Israel should bomb the building, even if most of the civilians will most likely be killed”).

Table 1 summarises the results found in terms of participants’ responses. Participants who were trained to reappraise expressed less anger than participants in the control condition. They also showed more support for conciliatory policies and less support for aggressive policies. These results were further replicated in a second study, in which 60 Israeli participants (serving a year of national service before their army service) received reappraisal training 1 week prior to a real, dramatic political event (the Palestinian United Nations bid). Participants agreed to take part in the study in return for admission to a public lecture. Following the event, emotional and political reactions were measured similarly to the first study. Participants in the reappraisal condition reported lower levels of negative emotions towards Palestinians, compared with control participants. They were more supportive of conciliatory policies and less supportive of aggressive policies compared to control participants. The effects were measured 1 week after the training and were mediated by a decrease in negative emotions in both studies.

TABLE 1
Means and standard deviations (in parentheses) of anger and support for policies as a response to reappraisal training

		<i>Anger toward Palestinians</i>	<i>Support for conciliatory policies</i>	<i>Support for aggressive policies</i>
Study 1	Reappraisal ($N = 20$)	3.67(1.33)	4.22(.89)	2.96(.88)
	Control ($N = 19$)	4.55(1.37)	3.32(1.34)	3.75(1.41)
Study 2 (1 week post training)	Reappraisal ($N = 30$)	3.81(.87)	2.5(.72)	2.50(.81)
	Control ($N = 30$)	4.41(.74)	2.28(.75)	3.00(.71)
Study 2 (5 months post training)	Reappraisal ($N = 26$)	3.28(1.07)	3.20(.81)	
	Control ($N = 25$)	3.97(.77)	2.79(.61)	

Data taken from Halperin et al. (2013). Can emotion regulation change political attitudes in intractable conflict? From the laboratory to the field. *Psychological Science*, 24, 106–111.

Although interesting, these results raise the question of whether the effects of reappraisal persist over time. To address that question, the effects of the reappraisal manipulation were measured with the same participants 5 months after the Palestinian United Nations bid. Participants were unaware of the link between this questionnaire and the study they had completed 5 months earlier. Results showed that participants who were trained to reappraise (vs. not) showed less anger towards Palestinians than control participants, and expressed more support for peaceful policies than control participants. The effect of reappraisal on support for peaceful policies was mediated by the experience of intergroup anger. Together, these studies provide preliminary support for our predictions, demonstrating that regulating emotions using reappraisal can effectively decrease negative intergroup emotions and increase support for conciliatory policies towards the rival group.

However successful, we believe that the use of direct emotion regulation may pose challenges in its application outside the laboratory, as well as among those who are not willing to act in order to regulate their emotions. Since most direct emotion regulation interventions take some time to learn and may require personal training, it would seem harder to broaden its scope to the societal level. An additional, related limitation is the fact that, in order for people to utilise these methods spontaneously and continuously, they must be motivated to regulate their emotions in the first place (Tamir, 2009). In other words, emotions serve certain functions, and people may be driven to experience them due to this function. Within the context of extreme and violent conflicts, in which people adhere to certain values and ideologies regarding the outgroup, it is doubtful that people would be internally motivated to transform their negative emotions towards the adversary outgroup. As well, the intergroup context adds the dimension of group identity and the relationship with the ingroup to this functionality. Feeling part of the group is a critical factor which shapes one's individual identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Tropp & Wright, 2001), and hence regulating negative intergroup emotions when the rest of the group experiences them might seem counterproductive. Thus, in order to overcome both the applicability issue and the question of motivation within the context of intractable conflict, it would be necessary to create methods to transform emotions without providing people with direct instructions to do so. For this reason, in recent years, an *indirect emotion regulation* approach has been developed and examined.

INDIRECT EMOTION REGULATION AS A NEW CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGY: THE GENERAL FRAMEWORK

Unlike the direct emotion regulation approach, which is usually targeted at decreasing negative or increasing positive emotions more generally, the main purpose of the indirect approach is to form focused interventions targeted at discrete intergroup emotions. Given the specificity of the emotion–action

tendency association (Frijda, 1986; Scherer, 2004), the first step in the process includes identifying the target action tendency associated with the desired conflict-related process (e.g., contact motivation, compromises, support for providing humanitarian aid etc.). The next step is then connecting it to a discrete emotion. For example, if the goal is to induce motivation to bring the conflicting parties into the negotiation room, then the target of the indirect regulation process would be reducing intergroup anxiety. On the other hand, if the goal is to increase support for providing humanitarian aid to the adversary outgroup, the target emotion would most likely be promoting empathy.

After identifying the discrete target emotion, the next challenge is to recognise the concrete message or content that would enable the regulation of that emotion. For this purpose we search for the emotion's core appraisal theme (e.g., Roseman, 1984; Scherer, 1984, 2004), which constitutes the basis for its motivational and behavioural implications. We presume that, by changing this core appraisal theme, the associated emotion can be regulated, leading to a transformation in emotional goals as well as action tendencies related to the conflict. For example, changing the appraisal of the outgroup's actions as unjust or unfair would dramatically reduce levels of intergroup anger, and changing the outgroup's evaluation as threatening would reduce fear.

But how can this core appraisal theme be changed? For this purpose, once the target core appraisal theme is identified, we search for a counter message or psychological process that can potentially reduce adherence to that very theme. This can be done by providing direct contradictory evidence (e.g., the outgroup had good and well-justified reasons to carry out a specific action). However, such a strategy could induce antagonism and even backfire. Alternatively, adjusted forms of existing socio-psychological interventions, which were originally created for different purposes, can be used in order to form a more subtle intervention. For example, existing power or self/group efficacy manipulations can potentially serve as buffers in the face of threat appraisals frequently leading to fear. Thus, instead of directly probing the target audience to regulate their emotions, indirect emotion regulation is executed by a subtle or indirect external intervention meant to change core appraisal themes related to a certain emotion (see Figure 1).

To demonstrate the abovementioned process, in the following sections we will provide three different examples of indirect regulation processes, targeting four different intergroup emotions. Each example deals with emotions that are directed or elicited by a different "target" within the conflict; the outgroup, the ingroup, and the conflict situation itself. Each of these target entities elicits different kinds of emotions, and each of the emotions is driven by appraisals associated with these organisms and which differ from one another. Importantly, although we have conducted additional studies addressing additional target emotions, we chose to provide one or two examples for each kind of emotion, each of which corresponds to a specific target within intractable conflict.

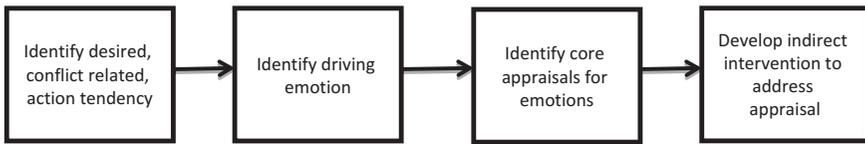


Figure 1. Indirect emotion regulation in intractable conflicts.

INDIRECT REGULATION OF EMOTIONS TARGETED AT THE OUTGROUP: THE CASE OF INTERGROUP HATRED AND ANXIETY

The first emotion, corresponding to the outgroup in conflict, is *hatred*. Hatred is one of the most powerful emotions in the context of intergroup conflicts (Opatow & McClelland, 2007; Sternberg, 2003). It is an extreme and continuous affective phenomenon, directed at a particular individual or outgroup (Sternberg, 2003). Often, hatred is a reaction to an act perceived as deliberate and unjust. Importantly, this emotion has been found to stem from a belief in the internal, stable evil character of the hated individual or group (Halperin, 2008). Hatred has a significant influence on conflicts as it leads to a desire to remove and hurt the hated outgroup. Politically it may lead to the establishment of extremist, racist parties that fuel power by hatred propaganda towards outgroups (Mudde, 2005). Therefore hatred has been found to be an influential force in conflicts (Petersen, 2002).

In a search for the core appraisal theme that should be the target of a hate-reducing intervention, a recent study revealed that hatred corresponds with the idea of stable negative characteristics in the outgroup, and the belief in the outgroup's inability to undergo positive change (see Study 2 in Halperin, 2008). Additionally, it was also alleged that this appraisal is likely based on a more fundamental belief that groups in general hold some stable, innate characteristics that cannot change in a meaningful way. This was supported by a study conducted in the Middle-Eastern context (Halperin, Russell, Trzesniewski, Gross, & Dweck, 2011, Study 1; $N = 500$), in which Jewish Israeli participants were interviewed via telephone regarding their implicit beliefs about groups in general using a 4-item scale (e.g., “Groups can do things differently, but the important parts of who they are can't really be changed”) and hatred appraisals regarding Palestinians more specifically (e.g., “All Palestinians are evil by nature”). According to the results, malleable beliefs about groups were associated with fewer hatred appraisals towards Palestinians ($r = .30, p < .001$), which were in turn associated with greater willingness to compromise ($r = .50, p < .001$). Of critical importance to the present framework, a growing body of literature suggests that implicit beliefs about the malleability of individuals (e.g., Blackwell, Trzesniewski, & Dweck, 2007; Heslin, Latham, & VandeWalle, 2005;

Plaks, Stroessner, Dweck, & Sherman, 2001) and groups (e.g., Halperin, Russell, Trzesniewski, et al., 2011; Rydell, Hugenberg, Ray, & Mackie, 2007) can be changed.

As such, we presumed that hatred appraisals could be attenuated by reducing adherence to “entity” (or fixed) implicit theories about groups, and by increasing acceptance of “incremental” (or malleable) implicit theories about groups (Levy, Stroessner, & Dweck, 1998; Rydell et al., 2007). To examine this hypothesis, Halperin and colleagues (Halperin, Russell, Trzesniewski, et al., 2011) conducted three experimental studies. One study was run among Israeli-Jewish students ($N = 76$). The second utilised an online survey platform and was conducted among a community sample of Palestinian citizens of Israel ($N = 59$), and the third study replicated the effect among Palestinians from the West Bank ($N = 53$), using another community sample and face-to-face questionnaires.

The main goal of these three studies was to establish the causal influence of implicit beliefs about groups in general on concession making through the mediation of hatred appraisals. In the first experimental study (Halperin, Russell, Trzesniewski, et al., 2011, Study 2) Jewish-Israeli participants were randomly assigned to one of two groups. Both read a short *Psychology Today*-style scientific article in which they learned about a renowned scholar who had found that groups in general were either malleable and could change (in the “incremental” condition) or had a fixed nature that could not be transformed (in the “entity” condition). Later in the session, participants were asked about hatred-related appraisals targeted at Palestinians, and their level of support for various concessions relevant to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, using the same measures that were used in the correlational study of the same project that was presented above (Halperin, Russell, Trzesniewski, et al., 2011). Results showed that teaching people that groups have a malleable (vs. fixed) nature led them to express fewer hatred-related appraisals towards the Palestinians, compared to those who learned that groups have fixed nature, $t(74) = 2.43$, $d = .56$, $p < .05$ (for further information, see Table 2). This further led people to be more willing to make concessions at the core of the conflict, regardless of their political orientation. Thus the indirect implementation of the idea of a malleable nature among groups in general led to a transformation in the appraisal of the specific outgroup as fixed, decreasing hatred appraisals and increasing support for compromises required for peace.

To determine whether the same pattern of findings would hold for the traditionally less-powerful sides of the dispute, in the next two studies (Halperin, Russell, Trzesniewski, et al., 2011, Studies 3–4) the same method was used to change the mind-sets of Palestinian citizens of Israel and non-Israeli Palestinians living in the West Bank. In both studies, participants in the incremental condition showed significantly fewer hatred appraisals of Israeli-Jews than those in the entity condition: Study 3, $t(57) = 2.19$, $d = .58$, $p < .01$; Study 4, $t(51) = 2.19$, $d = .60$, $p < .05$ (see Table 2). Even more importantly, in line with

TABLE 2
Mean and standard deviations (in parentheses), of levels of hatred appraisals toward outgroup (Palestinians in Study 2, Israeli Jews in Studies 3–4)

		<i>Hatred appraisals toward outgroup</i>
Study 2 (Jewish-Israelis)	Malleable ($N = 37$)	2.83 (.75)
	Fixed ($N = 39$)	3.32 (1.01)
Study 3 (Palestinian Citizens of Israel)	Malleable ($N = 28$)	2.83 (1.21)
	Fixed ($N = 31$)	3.64 (1.49)
Study 4 (Non-Israeli Palestinians)	Malleable ($N = 26$)	3.26 (1.10)
	Fixed ($N = 27$)	3.82 (.82)

Data taken from Halperin, Russell, Trzesniewski, et al. (2011). Promoting the peace process by changing beliefs about group malleability. *Science*, 333, 1767–1769.

the previous studies (Halperin, Russell, Trzesniewski, et al., 2011), reduced hatred appraisals mediated the effect of a malleability manipulation regarding groups in general on support for compromises required for peace.

However, can the very same intervention be used to promote different goals and to change another emotion relevant to conflict resolution processes? Intergroup anxiety has been found to reduce motivation for intergroup contact, thus hindering another important avenue to the promotion of peaceful resolution of conflicts (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). In thinking about the core appraisal themes leading to intergroup anxiety, Halperin and colleagues (Halperin et al., 2012) realised that intergroup anxiety in intractable conflicts is likely to be driven by a combination of two appraisals: (1) the outgroup repeatedly threatens to hurt the ingroup and (2) the outgroup will never change, and thus they will always try to hurt the ingroup.

Accordingly, we (Halperin et al., 2012) hypothesised that by teaching an incremental theory about groups it would be possible to down-regulate intergroup anxiety and increase motivation to meet and communicate with outgroup members. According to this view, the group malleability manipulation would be effective in promoting contact motivation through intergroup anxiety reduction by creating expectations for less threatening behaviour by the outgroup. Alternatively, the intervention was thought to be effective in increasing contact motivation because it would lead people to believe that by meeting outgroup members in person they might be able to convince them to abandon the violent approach and replace it with a constructive dialogue.

This hypothesis was examined within an intractable conflict taking place in Cyprus, using a community sample of Turkish Cypriots. The aim of this study was to increase the motivation of Turkish Cypriots ($N = 62$) to engage in contact with Greek Cypriots (Halperin et al., 2012). Participants were randomly assigned to one of two groups and read a *Psychology Today*-style scientific article. The

articles described groups that were involved in violent actions, and had strong separatist tendencies, making the text more relevant to the specific context. The articles also reported studies showing that, over time, these groups had (in the malleable condition) or had not (in the fixed condition) changed these negative behaviours and tendencies (for more information regarding the content of the articles see Halperin et al., 2012). Later in the session, participants' level of intergroup anxiety was measured (five items: *suspicious*, *defensive*, *anxious*, *self-conscious*, and *careful*). This was followed by a direct assessment of their willingness to engage in contact with Greek Cypriots.

Results showed that Turkish Cypriot participants in the malleable condition had significantly less anxiety regarding Greek Cypriots than those in the fixed condition, $t(60) = 2.37$, $d = .61$, $p < .05$ (see Table 3). In addition, Turkish Cypriots in the malleable condition were more willing to engage in contact with Greek Cypriots than those in the fixed condition, $t(60) = 2.43$, $d = .67$, $p < .05$. Furthermore, intergroup anxiety was a significant mediator of the relation between the incremental intervention and willingness to have contact (Figure 2).

TABLE 3
Mean and standard deviations (in parentheses), of participants' level of anxiety and willingness for contact with Greek Cypriots

	Anxiety	Willingness to contact Greek Cypriots
Malleable ($N = 32$)	2.50 (1.40)	.16 (1.48)
Fixed ($N = 30$)	3.35 (1.40)	-.80 (1.37)

Data taken from Halperin et al. (2012). Promoting intergroup contact by changing Beliefs: Group malleability, intergroup anxiety and contact motivation. *Emotion*, 12, 1192–1195.

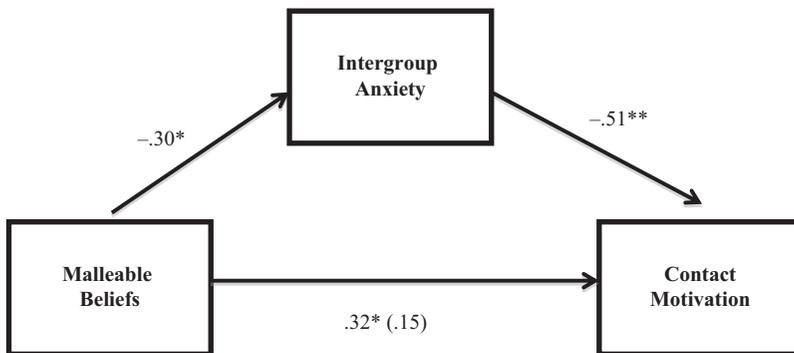


Figure 2. Reduced levels of intergroup anxiety mediate the effect of experimentally induced incremental beliefs about groups on contact motivation.

In conclusion, a relatively simple and non-explicit manipulation, that in no way referred to the specific conflict or outgroup, succeeded in creating a change in two detrimental and extreme emotions in conflict, hatred and anxiety. This led to a transformation in core political attitudes that up until now have been traditionally perceived as stable and fixed; supporting policies needed to promote peace.

INDIRECT REGULATION OF EMOTIONS TARGETED AT THE INGROUP: THE CASE OF GROUP-BASED GUILT

While hatred and intergroup anxiety are emotions directed at the outgroup, other emotions are elicited by the individual's relationship with the ingroup. One such emotion, which plays a crucial role in the resolution of conflicts and in post-conflict reconciliation processes, is guilt. Guilt is an unpleasant emotion elicited when people's behaviour deviates from what is perceived to be acceptable by moral standards and norms (Wohl & Branscombe, 2011). When the ingroup or its representatives have acted in a manner which is perceived to be morally unacceptable, and the individual believes that the harm was controlled and avoidable, the individual may experience group-based guilt (Wohl, Branscombe, & Klar, 2006). According to Branscombe (2004) three conditions are needed for collective guilt to be experienced: (a) people have to self-categorise as group members, (b) they must recognise the ingroup as responsible for the harm done, (c) the harm should be perceived to be immoral or illegitimate.

Studies have shown that group-based guilt leads to the motivation to repair the damage caused by the behaviour of the ingroup by compensating the outgroup or offering an apology (e.g., Branscombe & Doosje, 2004; Brown & Cehajic, 2008; Brown, González, Zagefka, Manzi, & Čehajić, 2008; Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 1998; Iyer, Leach, & Crosby, 2003; McGarthy et al., 2005). As such, group-based guilt has the potential to play a constructive role in conflict resolution processes.

In a set of studies Čehajić and Brown (2010) reiterated that the appraisal associated with guilt was the acceptance of responsibility for acts targeted at the outgroup and perceived as extremely immoral. However, this appraisal was maintained to be extremely hard to induce in people, since it creates a dramatic threat to the group's positive image and potentially incorporates negative elements into the group's collective identity (Halperin, Bar-Tal, Sharvit, Rosler, & Raviv, 2010). Thus the desire to maintain a positive group image serves as an obstacle for the emergence of experienced guilt (Wohl & Branscombe, 2004).

In order to address this obstacle and up-regulate group-based guilt, we (Čehajić, Effron, Halperin, Liberman, & Ross, 2011) turned to self-affirmation theory (Sherman & Cohen, 2006; Steele, 1988), which stipulates that people can tolerate a threat to a specific aspect of their identity if they are able to secure or affirm other aspects of their positive self-image. Such self-affirmation can be accomplished by focusing on an important source of pride (McQueen & Klein,

2006). Prior research on self-affirmation suggests that it can be efficacious in reducing ingroup bias (Sherman, Kinias, Major, Kim, & Prenovost, 2007) and can lead groups to admit to negative ingroup traits like racism (Adams, Tormala, & O'Brien, 2006). In some cases, guilt can allow criticism against the ingroup (Cohen et al., 2007).

Using these findings as a background, we (Čehajić et al., 2011) hypothesised that, by offering people the opportunity to affirm their positive self-image, we would enable them to more freely experience and express group-based guilt. The rationale was that affirming a positive aspect of the self, if answered, would in fact enable people to accept responsibility and experience guilt while maintaining their (and their group's) positive identity. In order to examine this idea and its applicability to the context of violent intergroup conflicts, a self-affirmation manipulation was applied within the realm of two violent conflicts. In the first study (Čehajić et al., 2011, Study 2) Jewish-Israeli students ($N = 139$) were presented with a simple self-affirmation manipulation and were prompted to describe a personal success, how it made them feel, and its reflection upon them (vs. control group who wrote about what they planned to pack for a long trip). Following this manipulation, all participants read an article which described a highly infamous event that occurred during the war in Gaza between Israel and the Palestinian movement of Hamas during 2008. The event involved the three daughters and niece of a Palestinian physician who were killed in his home by the Israeli army. An internal investigation conducted by the Israeli army confirmed that there had been no military justification for targeting his house. After reading the article describing the story, participants filled in a 4-item scale of group-based guilt (e.g., "*When I think about things Israel has done during the war (e.g., the killing of the doctor's family), I sometimes feel guilty*"), as well as a 4-item scale measuring support for reparation policies (e.g., "*I think that Israel owes something to the Palestinian people because of the things we have done to them during the war in Gaza*").

Results showed that participants in the self-affirmation condition experienced more guilt compared to those in the control condition ($p = .01$). Furthermore, those in the self-affirmation group were more willing to make reparations to the Palestinians, compared to those in the control condition ($p = .03$). Importantly, group-based guilt partially mediated the effect of the self-affirmation manipulation and of acknowledgment of ingroup responsibility on support for reparation policies (Figure 3). To make sure that this model did indeed fit the data better than other models we examined the reversed mediation and found that it did not yield significant results.

In order to demonstrate the relevance of these findings beyond the Israeli-Palestinian context, the very same model was examined among Serbian participants within the context of the Srebrenica genocide that took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1995. Participants ($N = 97$) were all high-school

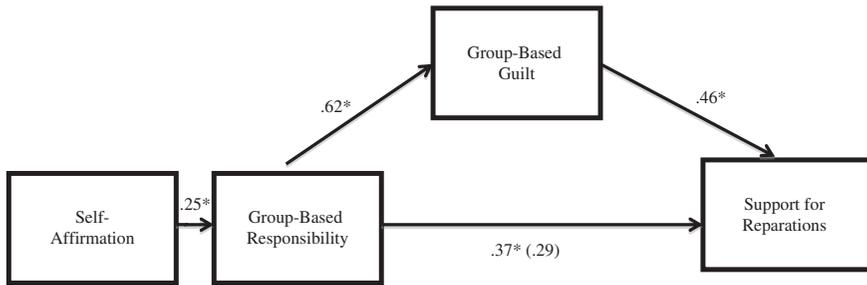


Figure 3. Self-affirmation leads to support for reparations through acknowledgement of responsibility and group-based guilt.

students and the study utilised the same methodology and measures as the previous one, with contextual and cultural adjustments. As expected, results were similar to those found in the first study. Participants in the self-affirmation group expressed more group-based guilt, $F(2, 94) = 6.33, p = .003$, and more support for reparation policies compared to those in the control condition, $F(2, 94) = 4.74, p = .01$ (see Table 4). Similar to the previous study, group-based guilt partially mediated the relationship between the self-affirmation manipulation and acknowledgement of ingroup responsibility on support for reparation policies.

Interestingly, in these two studies we used a third experimental group in which participants were given the opportunity to affirm their group rather than their positive self-image. In line with the findings of Miron, Branscombe, and Biernat (2010)—who showed that when White American participants affirmed their

TABLE 4
Means and standard deviations (in parentheses) of Israelis and Serbians' degree of responsibility, group-based guilt, and support for reparations

		<i>Ingroup responsibility</i>	<i>Group-based guilt</i>	<i>Reparations for victims</i>
Israelis (Study 2)	Self-affirmation ($N = 46$)	4.72 (1.37)	4.06 (1.54)	3.36 (1.27)
	Control ($N = 46$)	4.04 (1.50)	3.26 (1.47)	2.81 (1.55)
Serbians (Study3)	Self-affirmation ($N = 31$)	4.32 (1.70)	2.89 (2.22)	3.74 (1.53)
	Control ($N = 38$)	3.00 (1.40)	2.07 (1.68)	3.10 (1.48)

Adopted from Čehajić et al. (2011). Self-affirmation, acknowledgment of ingroup responsibility for victimization, and support for reparative measures. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 101, 256–270.

American identity (vs. control), they felt greater collective guilt for racial inequality—we expected the group affirmation manipulation to increase group-based guilt in our studies as well. Surprisingly, the results did not support this hypothesis, probably due to the dissonance created by the fact that most participants affirmed their group image on the same domain for which they were expected to express guilt.

In conclusion, willingness to make reparations, induced by the acceptance of group-based guilt, was found to play an important role in the context of intergroup conflict. These studies show that by bolstering individual feelings of global self-integrity, and addressing the conflicting needs involved in appraisals associated with guilt, the inclination to respond defensively to threatening information can be reduced. Furthermore, the experience of group-based guilt can be increased, and reparations can be supported.

INDIRECT REGULATION OF EMOTIONS TARGETED AT THE CONFLICT/SITUATION: THE CASE OF HOPE

Lastly, a pivotal characteristic of intractable conflicts refers to emotions associated with the context or the situation itself. One such emotion is hopelessness, which is associated with the belief that the conflict is irresolvable. Hope has previously been defined as a positive emotion which is rooted in envisioning and imagining a goal in the future, to which the person attaches importance (Snyder, 2000), and that the person believes is realistically attainable (Averill, Catlin, & Chon, 1990).

If the future goal is desirable and the future envisioned is perceived to be better than the current state, it is followed by a positive change in mental state (Beck, Weissman, Lester, & Trexler, 1974; Lazarus, 1999). Specifically, what takes place is the occurrence of affective associations and positive feelings regarding the future goal (Beck et al., 1974; Snyder, 2000; Stotland, 1969). Previous studies within the context of conflicts have pointed towards hope as associated with conciliatory attitudes such as forgiveness (Moeschberger et al., 2005) and support for humanitarian aid (Halperin & Gross, 2011).

More relevant for those who aspire to address long-term conflicts are the action tendencies or behavioural outcomes that the experience of hope prompts. Although hope has not been associated with any physiological responses, and does not necessarily have a physical action tendency (Lazarus, 1999), it does have a cognitive manifestation of thinking and planning ways to achieve the goal in question (Stotland, 1969). The planning and development of pathways energises and directs behaviour (Staats & Stassen, 1985) and, when combined with a sense of agency regarding those paths, becomes action to achieve those goals (Snyder, 2000).

Given this definition of hope, it is not surprising that an on-going, highly negative situation (such as an intractable conflict) might induce despair rather

than hope (Sällfors, Fasth, & Hallberg, 2002; Stotland, 1969) which, when translated into behaviour, can become apathy, indifference, and unwillingness to create change. Coleman and colleagues (Coleman, Vallacher, Nowak, & Bui-Wrzosinska, 2007) discuss the paradoxical cycle of hope and despair in intractable conflicts, in which, although the situation is ever changing in its volatility, its very essence is seemingly constant. Subsequently, those involved in conflict adopt this perception of the conflict as stable and unchanging, further feeding into its hopelessness in a cyclical manner.

Thus, in order to transform despair to hope, the belief that a different, better future of the conflict is impossible since conflicts are fixed must be changed to a belief in peace as a possibility, since conflict situations are malleable. Yet a direct manipulation referring to the conflict situation might prove to be ineffective and might even backfire, since most people living in such situations have already lost faith in the possibility of positive change. Hence, in order to overcome negative reactions to direct reference to the conflict, one would need to alter people's general beliefs about the malleability of conflict, which would be applied indirectly to the specific conflict by participants.

Importantly, although implicit theories about groups were previously used to regulate hatred and anxiety, the core appraisal involved in hope focuses on situations, not groups. Therefore, in order to change an appraisal which has to do with situations changing in the future, the intervention needed to emphasise conflict *situations* as malleable, rather than stating that groups have the capability to go through change.

We (Cohen-Chen et al., 2014) conducted two studies among Jews in Israel, aimed at examining ways to induce hope by indirectly imparting the perception of the conflict as malleable and able to change. The goal of Study 1 was to examine the relationship between implicit theories about conflicts *in general*, levels of hope, and support for concessions towards peace. For this purpose, a correlational study ($N = 203$) was implemented on a community sample, conducted using an online survey platform. The survey was sent to participants randomly out of an existing 70,000-participant pool who were registered to the participants pool of the survey company. Here we measured the extent to which participants believe that conflicts in general are malleable using a three-item scale (e.g., “*Under certain circumstances and if all core issues are addressed, the nature of conflicts can be changed*”). In addition, levels of hope with relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict were measured using a 3-item scale (e.g., “*I am hopeful regarding the end of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict*”), as well as a 4-item scale measuring support for concessions on concrete issues of the conflict (based on Halperin, Russell, Trzesniewski, et al., 2011).

Results showed that incremental beliefs about conflicts were positively associated with hope ($r = .42, p < .001$) as well as with support for concessions regarding the core issues of the conflict ($r = .37, p < .001$). Thus the more participants believed in the malleability of conflicts in general, the more they

experienced hope regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict specifically, and the more they were willing to make concessions. An association was also found between hope and support for concessions, indicating that the more hopeful participants felt regarding the possibility of ending the conflict, the more they were willing to make concessions in order to achieve this resolution ($r = .59, p < .001$). Furthermore, the effect of incremental beliefs about conflicts on support for concessions was mediated by hope, indicating that people who believe that conflicts in general can change tend to experience higher levels of hope regarding the specific conflict, which is associated, in turn, with higher support for concessions crucial for peace making.

The second, experimental study ($N = 80$) was conducted on a community sample using the same online platform as used in Study 1. Here we examined whether indirectly changing appraisals about conflict situations' potential of changing since their nature is malleable (vs. fixed) would lead to higher support for concession making, by up-regulating levels of hope. Participants learned that a new longitudinal and in-depth study had found that conflicts in general were either malleable ("Incremental" condition, "*The article's findings show that the violence and hostility that accompanied most of the conflicts examined changed throughout the years*") or fixed by nature ("Entity" condition, "*The article's findings show that the violence and hostility that accompanied most of the conflicts examined did not change throughout the years*"). Neither article referred directly to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in any way.

Results showed that those who learned that conflicts are malleable experienced higher levels of hope regarding the end of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict compared to those who learned that conflicts cannot change, $t(76) = -2.19, d = .51, p = .03$, and this led them to be more willing to support concessions towards peace than those in the entity group, $t(76) = -2.16, d = .48, p = .03$ (see Table 5). Moreover, hope mediated the effect of an incremental manipulation on support for concessions towards peace (Figure 4).

TABLE 5
Means and standard deviations (in parentheses) of hope and support for concessions to peace

	Hope	Support for concessions to peace
Malleable ($N = 38$)	4.33 (1.36)	3.79 (1.16)
Entity ($N = 40$)	3.55 (1.73)	3.19 (1.31)

Data taken from Cohen-Chen et al. (2014). Hope in the Middle East: Malleability beliefs, hope, and the willingness to compromise for peace. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*.

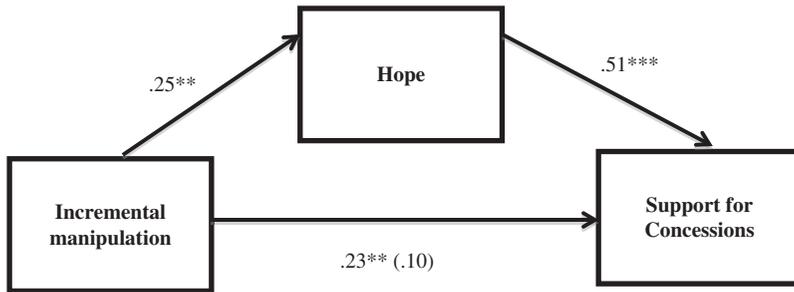


Figure 4. Hope mediates the effect of experimentally induced incremental beliefs about conflicts on support for concessions.

Thus, although the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as the outgroup (i.e., the Palestinians) was in no way referred to, the mere reference to conflict situations as capable of change led participants to believe that the specific conflict could be resolved, and this led them to hold peace-making attitudes towards concession making. Indeed, by conveying an appraisal-based, concrete message, hope was indirectly up-regulated and induced, leading to a political outcome of supporting concessions.

Emergent literature expands the scope of previous work regarding hope. One such line of work (Cohen-Chen, Crisp, & Halperin, 2013) indirectly regulated hope regarding conflict resolution by inducing a belief in a changing world (as opposed to unchanging), without referring to conflict situations in any way, as well as without necessarily implying the improvement of a given situation or the potential of the situation to change. Another set of studies (Saguy & Halperin, 2014) showed that exposure to internal criticism within the outgroup can increase hope regarding the future of the conflict. Israelis who heard a Palestinian criticising the Palestinian society were more hopeful about the future relations with Palestinians, and were, as a consequence, more open to the outgroup perspective.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Past research indicates that intractable conflicts involve, and are at least partly propelled by, very intense and strong group-based emotions (Bar-Tal et al., 2007; Halperin et al., 2012; Horowitz, 1985; Kelman, 1998; Lindner, 2006; Petersen, 2002; Reifen-Tagar et al., 2011; Staub, 2005; Volkan, 1997). Thus, regulating emotions in order to promote support for conflict resolution can play an important role. Despite the significance of well-established methods for direct emotion regulation and their potential in changing attitudes towards peace, we identify a number of limitations. This includes both issues of the applicability of these

methods on a societal level, as well as people's low motivation to regulate and transform emotions and associated attitudes towards the outgroup. There is consequently a need for an innovative, indirect method to regulate emotions within the context of intractable conflicts.

In this review chapter we have elaborated on indirect emotion regulation, an appraisal-based method that uses concrete messages and cognitive interventions regarding core appraisals associated with emotions considered to be powerful barriers to peace. By transforming these appraisals, public opinion and attitudes about peace can be changed by affecting discrete emotions. Using examples from current and novel research, we illuminated the effectiveness of indirect emotion regulation in transforming emotions and attitudes that help pave the way to peace. For each emotion, categorised according to the appraisal target (the outgroup: hatred and anxiety; the ingroup: guilt; and the conflict: hope), the core appraisal is identified and an intervention addressing the appraisal is developed and empirically examined. Results point to indirect emotion regulation as successful in utilising cognitive, appraisal-based interventions to regulate emotions in conflict and promote peace-making attitudes.

Theoretical and applied significance

This framework of indirect emotion regulation holds theoretical implications both within the realm of emotion regulation and the field of emotions in intergroup conflict. In the field of emotion regulation effective methods for directly regulating emotions exist. However, they do not account for the lack of motivation to regulate emotions within an intractable conflict situation. Additionally, most of them address negative vs. positive emotions, without catering to the appraisals of each discrete emotion. By utilising appraisals associated with discrete emotions to indirectly regulate emotional experiences and associated attitudes, these mechanisms can be examined while bypassing motivational limitations. This makes it possible to expand knowledge regarding discrete emotions. Another theoretical implication lies within the process used to identify first the emotions leading to certain attitudes and then the appraisals which drive the emotional reaction. As such, we offer a bridge between the field of emotion regulation and that of conflict resolution, furthering our endeavour to use psychological tools to address important political questions.

This research also serves to expand the domain of emotions in conflict and conflict resolution. Many studies have established the significance of emotions in conflict (e.g., Bar-Tal et al., 2007; Kelman, 1998; Petersen, 2002; Staub, 2005) and its resolution (e.g., Halperin et al., 2012; Reifen-Tagar et al., 2011). However, indirect emotion regulation utilises aggregated knowledge regarding emotions in conflict and appraisal theories to develop concrete, cognitive interventions to transform those emotions in order to achieve political outcomes needed to promote peace.

In addition to their theoretical implications, our findings have applied relevance. The indirect regulation of emotions aimed at inducing attitudes and behavioural tendencies for conflict resolution can serve as the basis for a large range of long-term educational programmes that are rooted in science and can be utilised by numerous agents of change. Although we refer to discrete emotions, short-term psychological interventions have been found to have long-term, recursive effects. It is not the intervention's content alone, but the frequent application to various contexts, that creates the effect's endurance over time (Yeager & Walton, 2011).

Having said that, past work has indicated that despite the benefits of reducing prejudice to intergroup relations, these changes are not necessarily positive in all cases, especially if it lowers minority members' inclination to challenge an unequal or unfair system (Dixon, Durrheim, & Tredoux, 2007; Dixon, Tropp, Durrheim, & Tredoux, 2010; Reicher, 2007; Saguy & Chernyak-Hai, 2012; Saguy, Tausch, Dovidio, & Pratto, 2009; Wright & Lubensky, 2009). As such, it is possible that regulating intergroup emotions to change intergroup attitudes poses the same challenge and it is important to take this into consideration when the stakes are as high as those in intractable conflicts. Hence future research and practice should focus on regulation of those discrete emotions preventing constructive political actions (e.g., hatred), while making efforts to avoid the regulation of other emotions that can potentially promote social change (e.g., anger). The proposed framework, as well as previous work (e.g., Halperin, Russel, & Dweck et al., 2011), show that such a careful distinction is indeed possible.

Limitations, challenges, and future directions

Although indirect emotion regulation has been found to be efficacious in bypassing the motivational and practical challenges of direct emotion regulation, it is still in its initial stage of progress. The current methods offer us a number of challenges to ensuring the applicability of the methods in solving conflict outside the laboratory environment.

First, the regulation methods used are individual-based, and future research should address the challenge of more properly adjusting these strategies to the group level. Such adjustments include the incorporation of identity and identification aspects into the regulation methods, and examining issues such as social norms and group-based motivations. At the same time, we find it promising that the individual-based manipulations have an effect on group-based emotions, indicating a mechanism and an intervention that can be strengthened even more.

Another limitation of the current project that should be addressed in future work is the clear concentration on the strong, rather than on the weak, side of asymmetrical conflicts (i.e., the respondents were mostly drawn from dominant/majority, rather than subordinate/minority groups). Specifically, while certain studies included participants of the weak side of the conflict (see for example

Halperin, Russell, Trzesniewski, et al., 2011, studies 3–4; Halperin et al., 2012), the lion's share of studies were conducted among the strong side, a fact that can potentially limit the generalisability of some of our findings. Additionally, some of the emotions examined, such as guilt, are typical of the strong party, as opposed to the weak side. It would be prudent to examine the way emotions affect members of the weaker party, as well as further examine indirect regulation strategies of emotions typically associated with the weak side, such as humiliation or fear.

When examining issues of applicability, it is important to invest thought in the ability of these studies to reach and create influence on a societal level, in order to create a widespread effect on mobilisation towards peace. One way this can be achieved is using such short interventions as a basis for extensive educational workshops that can be adjusted and run among the general population. An additional direction uses appraisal-based content to develop media-based interventions (in the form of online games and short films) spread using social networks and popular media. These media-based interventions utilise existing findings on indirect emotion regulation in order to implement a mindset or message that would transform conflict-related appraisals on a larger scale. Another direction would be to utilise the scientific knowledge acquired in such studies in order to change social norms and more specifically, social norms regarding emotions. Relatedly, it is also imperative to examine ways to change not only specific emotions and attitudes but widespread social norms that would support the promotion of peace. Lastly, future work should examine whether the impact of these interventions endures over time and can withstand conflict-related events and conflicting messages from various sources that may wish to strengthen conflict-perpetuating attitudes.

In addition to improving on the understanding of indirect emotion regulation as a way of promoting conflict resolution, there are a number of methodological limitations, which require more attention in future endeavours. One such limitation refers to concerns regarding effects of demand characteristics. In addition to the use of indirect measures, future research should focus on differentiating as much as possible between the manipulations and dependent measures that deal more specifically with the local conflict. Another limitation pertains to the lack of control condition in some of the aforementioned studies. Control conditions are needed in order to better understand the psychological mechanisms at work, and the source of the differences between the groups. As well, the current work utilises self-report measures, and while this can serve as an indication for real behaviour, it cannot replace examining behavioural outcomes. Thus the effect of these methods on behavioural measures, as opposed to attitudinal change, should be examined. Things such as voting patterns, information processing, and political action to promote peaceful resolution are, in our view, the next step. For example, future studies should examine the effects of indirect emotion regulation on decision-making patterns and information acquisition in light of new

opportunities for peace. In addition, the effect of various media-based messages, aimed at transforming intergroup emotions, on voting patterns is in progress. Lastly, some of the aforementioned studies include small sample sizes which constrain the ability to draw wider conclusions. Although the variety of sample types and contexts helps to overcome this limitation to some extent, future research would do well to increase the sample sizes and rectify this limitation.

In addition to the current methods aforementioned in this chapter there are many indirect methods that have yet to be investigated and should be incorporated into this newly emergent toolbox for indirect emotion regulation. Future work should also expand existing knowledge of indirect emotion regulation to a larger range of group-based emotions and conflict-related attitudes. These include, among others, emotions like contempt, empathy, regret, shame, and Schadenfreude. Furthermore, combining indirect and direct methods of emotion regulation may enable researchers to enhance and strengthen effects. Lastly, it would be prudent to examine the effect of indirect emotion regulation on various types of populations, such as leaders, in order to account for differences based on issues like power and accountability.

Another direction for future studies might focus on contextual issues. In line with existing studies on direct emotion regulation within various cultures, indirect emotion regulation should further be examined within different cultural contexts, as well as within different types of intergroup conflict other than intractable conflict. As well, different political views may require different approaches to regulation, since they derive from different psychological needs (Jost, Nosek, & Gosling, 2008).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this review has shown that indirect emotion regulation is an effective method to overcome emotional barriers to conflict resolution while bypassing a number of limitations faced by directly instructing people to regulate their emotions. It is a unique and novel approach by which political attitudes and behavioural tendencies are changed by transforming emotional experiences within the context of intractable conflict. Using relatively simple cognitive interventions to change core appraisals and thus regulate emotions, we believe that this framework paves the way towards promoting conflict resolution.

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