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# Seeking moral elevation vs. avoiding damnation: An examination of two moral motivational orientations

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Seeking moral elevation vs. avoiding damnation: An examination of two moral  
motivational orientations

by

Justin T. Aoki

A Dissertation

Presented to the Graduate and Research Committee

of Lehigh University

in Candidacy for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Psychology

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Seeking moral elevation vs. avoiding damnation: An examination of two moral motivational orientations

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## ABSTRACT

The moral identity literature has focused on self-consistency motives as a primary explanation for why people with strong moral identities tend to behave in ways consistent with their values. In the current research, I seek to extend the literature beyond self-consistency, and propose an additional type of motivation that may also drive moral behavior: moral self-improvement, or ideal-oriented goals. Drawing from a diverse range of literatures (e.g., regulatory focus, self-discrepancy, proscriptive and prescriptive morality, and self-determination theory), I propose two broad moral orientations that may shape people's moral thoughts and behaviors. I further suggest that these two moral orientations will predict important differences in terms of affective and behavioral patterns. In particular, I propose that an *ought* moral orientation focuses an individual on maintaining their moral self by avoiding the failure of moral duties and obligations (primarily driven by the fear of becoming a worse person) (H<sub>1</sub>). Due to its prevention type focus, a moral ought orientation is predicted to lead to more active, negative emotions for moral failure, and more passive, positive emotions for moral success (H<sub>2</sub> and H<sub>3</sub>). In contrast, an *ideal* moral orientation is posited to focus an individual on improving their moral self by approaching the achievement of moral ideals and aspirations (primarily driven by the uplifting prospect of becoming a better person) (H<sub>1</sub>). Due to its promotion type focus, a moral ideal orientation is predicted to lead to more passive, negative emotions for moral failure, and more active, positive emotions for moral success (H<sub>2</sub> and H<sub>3</sub>). Because ought and ideal orientations are posited to correspond with prevention and promotion foci, I also anticipate that the framing of a prosocial behavior (e.g., as approaching gains vs. avoiding losses) may produce fit

effects, potentially enhancing its perceived value for individuals with the corresponding motivational orientation (H<sub>4</sub>). In addition, because an ideal orientation focuses a person on moral aspirations (i.e., things that are encouraged, but *not required*) rather than moral duties or necessities (as is the focus for ought orientations), ideal-oriented individuals are predicted to experience more intrinsic motivation when engaging in prosocial behaviors. This intrinsic motivation, is predicted to underlie the active and energizing emotions for moral achievement, and these energizing feelings are further predicted to increase motivation to engage in subsequent prosocial opportunities (H<sub>4</sub>).

Studies 1 and 2 examined the association between the hypothesized moral orientations and related constructs, and also looked at the differences in affective experiences for ought and ideal orientations. Supporting H<sub>1</sub>, Study 1 found that the two moral orientations were distinctly associated with different self-motives, regulatory foci, and loci of motivation. In support of H<sub>2</sub> and H<sub>3</sub>, Studies 1 and 2 found that moral ideal orientation predicted positive feelings for moral success and moral ought orientation predicted negative feelings for moral failure. Study 3 tested for fit effects between the proposed moral orientations and how a given moral behavior is construed, by framing a prosocial request in promotion vs. prevention-focused terms. Study 3 largely failed to support the predicted fit effects of H<sub>4</sub>, however, Study 3 did find that ideal orientation uniquely predicted donations to a charity (supporting a different prediction of H<sub>4</sub>). Study 4 attempted to experimentally manipulate ought vs. ideal moral orientations, and tested for their impact on prosocial seeking behavior. While the manipulation did not exert significant effects, Study 4 found correlational support for two of the predictions of H<sub>4</sub> using individual difference scores of moral orientation. Specifically, ideal orientation

uniquely predicted the number of prosocial websites participants chose to view, and ought orientation uniquely and negatively predicted time spent browsing the prosocial websites. Finally, Study 5 examined the influence of the two moral orientations on behaviors at a broader level (e.g., support for different types of social policies). While moral ought orientation did not predict support for a policy that would hinder prosocial solicitations, Study 5 found that ought orientation did predict feelings of general discomfort and threat from prosocial solicitations (supporting H<sub>4</sub>).

## **From Moral Cognition to Moral Ignition**

While the growing literature on moral psychology investigates a variety of issues and phenomena, at its heart is the hope that by better understanding the mysteries of human morality, we may be better able to discourage immoral actions and to promote prosocial behaviors. However, one of the major problems that has plagued moral psychologists is that people's moral beliefs and reasoning only *sometimes* leads to corresponding moral behavior. This disconnect between moral thought and moral action was most influentially addressed on a theoretical level by Augusto Blasi. Blasi highlighted the importance of the self-concept in bridging the gap (Blasi, 1980, 1983), and drew attention to the importance of moral identity in helping to predict when a person would act on or pursue their moral goals. Whereas Blasi's approach has focused on self-consistency as the mechanism that translates moral belief and identity into moral action, the current work examines an additional type of moral self-motive: self-improvement. These two moral self-motives are hypothesized to be embedded within broader, moral motivational orientations which I will detail further below.

### **Moral Identity: What is it, and what drives it?**

Although researchers have talked about moral identity (MID) in various ways and called it by different names (e.g., moral character, moral personality, moral centrality, moral chronicity, etc.), there is a consensus in the literature on what the underlying concept is. MID is largely defined as the extent to which moral issues (e.g., moral goals, values, actions, etc.) are intimately connected to or are part of an individual's sense of self (Aquino, Freeman, Reed, Lim, & Felps, 2009; Aquino & Reed, 2002; Blasi, 1983; Frimer & Walker, 2009; Hardy & Carlo, 2011; Narvaez & Lapsley, 2009). For example,

whereas some people may strongly identify as being an artist, and view things like drawing, sculpting, creative thinking, and spontaneity as defining characteristics of who they are, others strongly identify with the moral domain, and view things like volunteering, selflessness, and compassion as important parts of who they are. Thus, for an individual with a strong MID, moral strivings are deeply integrated with the self-concept and are central to the person they see themselves as being.

In addition to overall agreement among psychologists on what MID *is*, there is also substantial agreement on *how* MID influences decisions and behavior. The two hypothesized mechanisms that dominate are Blasi's idea of self-consistency (Blasi, 1980, 1983; Hardy, 2006; Narvaez & Lapsley, 2009), and a related social information processing approach (e.g., moral schemas and accessibility; Aquino, Freeman, Reed, Lim, & Felps, 2009; Hardy & Carlo, 2011; Narvaez & Lapsley, 2009; Narvaez, Lapsley, Gagele, & Lasky, 2006). Self-consistency is suggested to motivate moral action because people with a strong MID equate being moral with being authentic to their self; thus, being immoral (or failing to be moral) is seen as antithetical to who they are. As Blasi put it, self-inconsistency at this fundamental level is experienced as "*a fracture within the very core of the self*" (Blasi, 1983, p. 201).

The moral schema approach posits that individuals with a strong MID are more motivated than others to pursue moral actions because cognitions related to the moral domain have greater levels of accessibility and activation (e.g., these individuals are more likely to perceive issues in moral terms, think about moral consequences, and give greater weight to moral issues; e.g., Aquino, Freeman, Reed, Lim, & Felps, 2009; Hardy & Carlo, 2011; Narvaez & Lapsley, 2009; Narvaez, Lapsley, Hagele, & Lasky, 2006). For

example, a strong (vs. weak) MID is expected to give rise to appropriate moral actions because the rightness or wrongness of an action is more readily perceived, and also because moral (vs. non-moral) implications are deemed more important in decision making. Notice that the moral schema approach is compatible with the self-consistency approach. An individual who has a strong desire to remain consistent with their moral self-image would likely be attuned to the moral ramifications of their actions and weigh them accordingly.

### **A Lack of Support**

Perhaps due to the strong conceptual agreement regarding MID, few studies have directly tested its underlying mechanisms and predicted motivations (see Jennings, Mitchell, & Hannah, 2014 for a recent review). Instead, the bulk of the research has focused on demonstrating the positive consequences of MID on prosocial behavior. For example, Hardy (2006) found that MID predicted self-reported prosocial behavior and tendencies, above and beyond prosocial reasoning and empathy. Similarly, Aquino and Reed (2002) found that their measure of MID predicted self-reported engagement in prosocial behaviors in the past 2 years (e.g., having volunteered at a homeless shelter, helping feed the hungry, mentoring troubled youth, etc.). They also found that MID predicted the likelihood of actually engaging in a prosocial behavior (e.g., making a donation to a food drive; Aquino & Reed, 2002). Employing a different measure of MID (through a structured interview), Frimer & Walker (2009) found that MID predicted honest behavior (e.g., refusing or returning an “accidental” overpayment for their participation).

Another major focus of the literature is on understanding factors that contribute to or influence the cultivation of MID (e.g., Damon & Gregory, 1997; Hart, Atkins, & Ford, 1998; Narvaez & Lapsley, 2009). In terms of stable individual differences, affective capacities such as sympathy, empathy, temperament, guilt, and emotion regulation have been associated with various aspects of moral development and MID later in life. These capacities are thought to be a critical base from which an individual can learn to feel connected to others and cultivate a desire to help others (Hardy & Carlo, 2011; Hart et al., 1998; Hart & Carlo, 2005; Narvaez & Lapsley, 2009). In terms of social-environmental factors, parent-child attachment, parental involvement, and family support have all been shown to positively relate to the development of MID (Hardy & Carlo, 2011; Hart et al., 1998; Lovecky, 1997; Narvaez & Lapsley, 2009; Reimer, 2005). For example, a secure parent-child attachment and a healthy family environment enable children to be more receptive to parental influence, and ultimately, to internalize parental values. At a broader level, school, neighborhood, and community environments are thought to have an important impact on cultivating MID by setting the tone for what is acceptable, encouraged, and valued (Damon & Gregory, 1997; Hart et al., 1998; Narvaez & Lapsley, 2009).

The few studies of which I am aware that specifically investigate mechanisms underlying effects of MID on decisions and behavior have examined the influence of moral schemas and the accessibility of moral constructs (to the neglect of self-consistency motives). For example, Narvaez et al. (2006, Study 1) had participants attempt to memorize sentences involving characters who displayed various moral traits. They found that participants who had a stronger (vs. weaker) MID had significantly

greater recall of the sentences when cued with relevant moral dispositions (vs. semantic cues). In a second study, Narvaez et al. (2006) found that participants with a stronger (vs. weaker) MID were quicker at identifying a word when it reflected the negative judgments of a selfish character that they had read about earlier. Their findings suggest that individuals with a strong MID spontaneously form moral trait inferences, and are more sensitive to moral cues in activating and accessing their relevant memories and perceptions.

However, while these few studies examine a potential mechanism of MID, the moral schemas mechanism is so broad that it could be consistent with motives other than self-consistency. More specifically, the idea of moral schemas simply implies that moral content is more accessible and more strongly activated, but is silent on the issue of why (aside from the moral domain being self-important). In addition to consistency motives, it is possible that the importance of the moral domain to one's sense of self could also be associated with self-enhancement motives (i.e., the desire to increase the positivity of one's self-concept; Leary, 2007), self-expansion motives (i.e., broadening one's self-concept by incorporating others' views, beliefs, and identities into one's own; Leary, 2006) or – as addressed here – self-improvement motives (Sedikides, 1999; Sedikides & Hepper, 2009).

Given the fact that multiple motives may be consistent with the moral schema approach, coupled with the fact that the literature lacks direct empirical tests of the self-consistency mechanism, it is not surprising that some researchers have already begun to question a myopic focus on self-consistency. For example, Nucci (2004) suggested that self-consistency may not be the primary motive associated with MID, and also noted the

possibility that moral self-consistency could be the *result* of acting on one's moral identity/values rather than a motivator. For example, an individual may act according to their moral values and, only *after* having done so, feel satisfied or good about having acted in a self-consistent way. Likewise, it is conceivable that pangs of self-betrayal following from self-inconsistent behavior may tend to motivate restorative behavior (after the fact) rather than motivate consistent behavior (before the fact). In both examples, self-consistency (or inconsistency) is a resultant experience following from action, not a primary motivational force. The key point here is not to diminish the role that self-consistency plays in MID, but simply to note that other major motives or goals besides self-consistency may underlie the association between MID and prosocial behavior.

### **More to Moral Identity**

For an individual with a strong MID, moral issues are central to the self-concept. This self-importance of morality translates into a desire to do what one deems morally appropriate; however, there are different ways in which a person can construe and pursue such a general goal. Maintaining one's moral self-integrity by refraining from committing immoral actions (i.e., a self-consistency drive) is certainly one way that people fulfill their moral self-goals. However, I hypothesize that there is at least one other major way in which people can construe and pursue MID goals. In particular, I am interested in examining the idea that a motivation to become a morally better person (e.g., moral self-improvement) may also be an important, but generally overlooked, mechanism underlying the effects of MID on behavior.

**Two broad motivational orientations.** Across a variety of interrelated literatures (e.g., regulatory focus, self-discrepancy, self-motives, and goal pursuit), there is strong

support that behavior can be animated by two major motivational orientations. One can, broadly speaking, be characterized as an ideal or promotion orientation; the other can be characterized as an ought or prevention orientation. These two types of basic motivations have been well-established and studied in the self-regulatory literature as promotion vs. prevention focus (e.g., Crowe & Higgins, 1997; Higgins, 1997) and goals vs. anti-goals (Carver & Scheier, 1998). More specifically, a promotion focus emphasizes advancement and growth, with goals being viewed as ideals (things the person would like to accomplish). A promotion focus is primarily concerned with the presence or absence of positive outcomes or end states. For example, someone with a promotion focus in the moral domain might ask themselves, “Am I attaining my moral aspirations and becoming the moral person that I hope to be?” In contrast, a prevention focus emphasizes safety and responsibilities, with goals being viewed as oughts (things the person feels obligated to do). A prevention focus is primarily concerned with the presence or absence of negative outcomes or end states. For example, someone with a prevention focus might ask, “Am I living up to my moral obligations and avoiding becoming an immoral person?”

These two regulatory styles have been studied in a wide range of important behavioral domains, including academic performance (Lockwood, Jordan, and Kunda, 2002; Lockwood, Marshall, and Sadler, 2005; Lockwood, Sadler, Fyman, and Tuck, 2004), health behavior (Keller, 2006; Latimer, Williams-Piehot, Katulak, Cox, Mowad, Higgins, and Salovey, 2008; Lockwood et al., 2004), workplace productivity (Neubert, Carlson, Roberts, Kacmar, and Chonko, 2008), and consumer behavior (Arnold and Reynolds, 2009; Werth and Foerster, 2007). Past research has demonstrated that

promotion and prevention foci engender motivational and behavioral differences. For example, within a signal detection paradigm (e.g., making simple decisions regarding matches and mismatches in visual stimuli), Crowe & Higgins (1997) and Higgins, Roney, Crowe, & Hymes (1994) found that promotion-focused individuals tended to adopt an eager strategy, where they prioritized identifying “hits” (detecting matches) at the expense of increased false alarms (mistaking mismatches for matches). Thus, they tended to make inclusive (or liberal) decisions. In contrast to the trigger-happy pattern of promotion-focused individuals, those with a prevention focus tended to adopt a more conservative and vigilant strategy, where they prioritized “correct rejections” (rejecting mismatches) at the risk of increased “misses” (failing to detect matches). In short, a promotion focus tends to orient people toward pursuing opportunities, whereas a prevention focus tends to orient people toward avoiding errors. Furthermore, Crowe & Higgins (1997) found that prevention-focused individuals gave up more readily, and performed worse on difficult tasks (e.g., an impossible anagram, a hidden object task, and counting backwards by intervals of 9), or after experiencing failure, than promotion-focused participants.

In addition to influencing behavioral strategies, differences in regulatory focus have been linked to different affective experiences. In particular, Higgins, Shah, and Friedman (1997) found that a stronger promotion (vs. prevention) focus predicted experiencing cheerfulness-dejection emotions (e.g., happy, disappointed) more frequently. In contrast, individuals with a stronger prevention focus reported experiencing quiescence-agitation emotions (e.g., calm, agitation) more frequently. (I will return to the issue of affective differences in greater detail later in this paper.)

Related to work on regulatory focus (promotion vs. prevention focus), Carver and Scheier (1998) posit a distinction between goals and anti-goals. Specifically, goals represent positive reference points that people strive to approach by minimizing distance between where they are and where they want to be (a discrepancy-reducing system). Anti-goals, on the other hand, represent negative reference points that people avoid by maximizing distance between where they are and where they do not want to be (a discrepancy-amplifying system).

Applying these well-established distinctions to the moral domain, I suggest that moral behavior can likewise be animated by two broad motivational orientations. One can be characterized as an ought orientation, in which an individual feels a duty or obligation to uphold their moral self, for fear of becoming a worse person. An ought moral orientation can be likened to an anti-goal, since the focus is on steering clear of (maximizing the distance from) being a worse person. The second type can be understood as an *ideal* orientation, whereby an individual aspires to improve their moral self, in hopes of becoming a better person. An ideal moral orientation would be likened to a goal, since such an individual is focused on progressing toward (minimizing the distance to) becoming a better person. Importantly, whereas an ought orientation is consistent with a self-consistency mechanism for moral behavior, an ideal orientation posits a self-improvement motive that seems to be largely absent in the MID literature. Below, I will describe hypotheses regarding these two moral orientations in greater detail.

**Ought orientation.** As described above, a moral ought orientation is primarily concerned with meeting and maintaining one's moral standards – moral beliefs and values that are perceived to be mandatory or obligatory. However, because achieving

something that one expects of themselves is rather mundane (e.g., it would be odd to celebrate or be lauded for loving one's own child), the motivation to maintain one's moral standards is likely not driven by positive consequences of successful moral maintenance. Instead, the maintenance of one's moral standards is hypothesized to be driven primarily by a desire to avoid the negative implications of falling below or failing to meet one's moral standards. Such failures are predicted to be highly aversive. Failing to maintain one's moral standards is hypothesized to be aversive for reasons similar to Blasi's account (e.g., it is on par with failing to be oneself), but even further, it implies that one is not meeting some minimal or required level of morality. Thus, among individuals motivated by an ought orientation, the psychological costs of falling below one's moral standards is a stronger motivating force than the psychological gains of meeting one's moral standards.

**Ideal orientation.** In contrast, a moral ideal orientation is primarily concerned with rising above one's moral standards and improving as a moral being. Because such an orientation focuses on going above and beyond one's moral expectations, failure is not as threatening as it is to an individual with an ought orientation. More specifically, failure is relatively mundane for this moral orientation because not exceeding one's standards is to remain at one's norm or status quo. That is, whereas failure for an ought orientation means falling *below* one's standards, failure for an ideal orientation means falling *back to* one's standard. Moral success is predicted to be the primary motivational force for individuals with an ideal orientation because rising to the occasion and exceeding expectations is a positive and focal experience.

## Proscriptive and Prescriptive Morality

Janoff-Bulman and colleagues have investigated related ideas in their research examining approach vs. avoidance motivations in the moral domain (e.g., Janoff-Bulman, Sheikh, & Baldacci, 2008; Janoff-Bulman, Sheikh, & Hepp, 2009). More specifically, they suggested that the moral domain can be split into proscriptive morality and prescriptive morality. Proscriptive morality is about *inhibiting* immoral behaviors to *avoid* negative outcomes (an ought-like orientation), whereas prescriptive morality is centered on *activating* morally good behaviors to *approach* positive outcomes (an ideal-like orientation; Janoff-Bulman, 2012; Janoff-Bulman et al., 2009).

Although both proscriptive and prescriptive morality center around the theme of keeping individuals on a moral path, they are more than just different ways of doing the same thing. Just as the self-regulatory literature has found behavioral and affective differences between approach and avoidance orientations (e.g., risk aversion vs. risk seeking, vigilance vs. eagerness, and cheerfulness-dejection vs quiescence-agitation emotions; Higgins, 1997; Higgins et al., 1994; Higgins et al., 1997), Janoff-Bulman and colleagues have found that proscriptive vs. prescriptive morality engender differences in terms of moral decision-making and judgments. In particular, proscriptive moral failures (doing morally bad things) are perceived to be extremely morally blameworthy, whereas prescriptive moral failures (not doing morally good things) are seen as much less deserving of moral blame (Janoff-Bulman et al., 2009). In contrast, proscriptive moral successes (not doing morally bad things) are deemed undeserving of moral praise, whereas prescriptive moral successes (doing morally good things) are considered morally praiseworthy. In addition, proscriptive morality is perceived to be strict and rigid, being

comprised of moral duties or responsibilities. Prescriptive morality, on the other hand, is perceived to be more flexible or optional, being comprised of moral guidelines that people should (but aren't required to) follow. Thus, proscriptive morality gives rise to a *condemnatory* pattern of moral judgment (i.e., behaviors are largely construed as either blameworthy or not), whereas prescriptive morality engenders a *commendatory* pattern of moral judgment (i.e., behaviors are largely construed as either praiseworthy or not) (Janoff-Bulman et al., 2009).

While much of the current research was inspired by Janoff-Bulman and colleagues' work, it also extends it and highlights important nuances. In particular, their investigations of proscriptive morality focus on negative moral behaviors (things that people shouldn't do), whereas investigations of prescriptive morality focus on positive moral behaviors (things that people should do). However, some of my recent research (Aoki & Packer, 2014) suggests that *both* positive and negative moral behaviors can engender a condemnatory pattern or a commendatory pattern. More specifically, we found that positive moral behaviors followed a prescriptive judgment pattern (i.e., were seen as praiseworthy when committed and not deserving of blame when refrained from) when they were perceived as non-normative (i.e., doing them would be going beyond consensual moral standards and expectations). For example, non-normative behaviors like donating a significant amount of money to charity or volunteering at least once a month at a homeless shelter followed the typical prescriptive pattern. However, positive moral behaviors followed a proscriptive judgment pattern (i.e., were judged to be undeserving of praise when committed and blameworthy when refrained from) when they were perceived as normative (i.e., part of a consensual moral standard). Examples of

such positive normative behaviors included obeying traffic lights at an intersection and being loving and caring towards one's kids – things that individuals would expect themselves and others to do. A similar switching of effects was found for negative moral behaviors, such that when refraining from an immoral action was perceived to be normative (e.g., knowingly spreading an STD or robbing a store at gunpoint), the proscriptive pattern resulted (i.e., blame for committing, and lack of praise for refraining). But when moral restraint was seen as non-normative (or less normative, e.g., abstaining from unsafe sex or from drinking too much alcohol), a prescriptive pattern resulted (i.e., less blame for committing, and more praise for refraining).

The key point is that proscriptive and prescriptive moralities do not map simply onto avoiding negative moral behaviors (by restraining a motivation to do something wrong) vs. approaching positive moral behaviors (by activating a motivation to do something good). That is to say, proscriptive and prescriptive moralities should not be confounded with the valence of moral behaviors, since either type of morality can apply to positive *or* negative moral behaviors. I will suggest that the key distinction between proscriptive and prescriptive morality has to do with whether decisions and behavior are focused on avoiding negative or approaching positive moral *self-states*.<sup>1</sup> In particular, proscriptive morality centers on trying to avoid the failing to live up to moral duties and responsibilities, which can include both a focus on how committing a negative behavior *and* how refraining from a positive behavior goes against one's moral duties and obligations. Failure, in both cases, results in seeing oneself as a worse person.

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<sup>1</sup> While the theoretical definitions and descriptions of proscriptive and prescriptive moralities are consistent with this, in practice, the empirical studies tend to confound proscriptive and prescriptive morality with positive and negative moral behaviors (e.g., Janoff-Bulman et al., 2009; Sheikh & Janoff-Bulman, 2010).

Prescriptive morality, on the other hand, centers on trying to achieve moral aspirations and hopes, which can include both a focus on how refraining from a negative behavior *and* how committing a positive behavior brings one closer to one's moral aspirations and ideals. Success, in both cases, results in seeing oneself as a better person.

Thus, another way in which the proposed research will extend the work of Janoff-Bulman and colleagues is by bringing the self to the forefront. For example, the extant literature on proscriptive and prescriptive morality focuses on reactions to and moral judgments of *others* (e.g., whether or not participants blamed or praised someone else who did or didn't do a given moral action). In contrast, the proposed research focuses on moral judgments and decisions regarding one's own behaviors. In the sections that follow, therefore, I will further elaborate on the relation between the self-concept and the two hypothesized moral motivational orientations.

### **Self-Discrepancies and Moral Motives**

Self-Discrepancy Theory (Higgins, 1987) posits that ought vs. ideal motivational orientations are associated with distinct self-discrepancies. Specifically, conceptions of who one is now (their *actual* self) is not always who they feel that they should be (their *ought* self), or who they would like to be (their *ideal* self). Further, discrepancies between actual and ought selves vs. actual and ideal selves give rise to different self-regulatory dynamics. An actual-ought discrepancy signifies that one is failing with regard to duties and responsibilities, which is perceived as the presence of a negative outcome. An actual-ideal discrepancy signifies that one is not achieving their hopes and aspirations, which is perceived as the absence of a positive outcome. Similar to the findings with prevention and promotion foci, research that has examined the downstream

consequences of these different self-discrepancies has found that failing to live up to one's standards (an actual-ought discrepancy) tends to be associated with agitation-related emotions and symptoms (e.g., feeling irritated, spells of anxiety or panic), whereas failing to achieve one's aspirations (an actual-ideal discrepancy) has been associated with dejection-related emotions and symptoms (e.g., dissatisfaction, low interest; Higgins, Klein, Strauman, 1985). For example, Weisbuch, Beal, & O'Neal (1999) found that men with a high actual-ought discrepancy with respect to masculinity were more aggressive (consistent with an agitation pattern) than men with a high actual-ideal discrepancy.

Actual-ought vs. actual-ideal self-discrepancies implicate different self-motives. For example, because a concern with an actual-ought discrepancy focuses a person on aspects of the self that are deemed obligatory, the salient self-motive is *self-maintenance* (i.e., to uphold or preserve their ought self). This self-maintenance motive is very much in line with the oft-cited self-consistency mechanism in the MID literature, such that ought-oriented individual should seek to remain consistent with their moral self-standards (i.e., their moral ought self). However, as the concept of the ideal self would suggest, people with a strong MID may alternately be focused on going above and beyond their moral self-standards, rather than simply maintaining them. That is, an ideal-oriented individual may be driven by a *self-improvement* motive (i.e., the desire to improve, or make forward progress on aspects of one's self; Sedikides, 1999; Sedikides & Hepper, 2009)<sup>2</sup>. In the moral domain, this would translate into a desire to improve one's moral

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that self-improvement is distinct from the more widely-known self-enhancement motive. For example, the goal of self-improvement is to actually better oneself or to make real progress toward one's ideals, whereas the goal of self-enhancement is to merely perceive oneself in a favorable

self by engaging in morally good acts that exceed one's minimal moral expectations or standards. Importantly, while underlying self-motives may differ and produce different downstream effects, the specific behavior that one pursues in order to satisfy those motives can be the same (e.g., sponsoring a child in Africa can be motivated by a feeling of responsibility or duty to help others, or by a feeling of inspiration or aspiration to do something generous).

**Lay Theories of the Self.** Whereas moral self-maintenance focuses an individual on remaining the same, stable person (e.g., being their ought self), moral self-improvement focuses them on changing and transforming their self (e.g., becoming their ideal self). The large literature on implicit theories (e.g., Dweck, Chiu, & Hong, 1995; Dweck & Legget, 1988) also seems relevant to these processes and lends further theoretical support for there being two moral orientations with distinct effects. An *entity theory* is the view that one's attributes and abilities are fixed and stable, whereas an *incremental theory* is the view that those same qualities are malleable and changeable. Thus, an entity theory construes the self as stable and enduring, which is related to the goal of an ought orientation (i.e., to maintain one's minimal moral self). An incremental theory construes the self as flexible and potentially growing, which relates to the goal of an ideal orientation (i.e., to improve one's moral self).<sup>3</sup> Importantly, these self-theories

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light (whether or not it's merited or reflects reality; Leary, 2006; Sedikides, 1993). Thus, self-enhancing is prone to positive illusions (Taylor & Brown, 1988, 1994) and grandiose self-attributions (Leary, 2006; Sedikides & Gregg, 2008). Furthermore, since self-enhancement concerns maintaining a positive self-image, it leads to an avoidance of potentially self-threatening information (Leary, 2006), whereas striving for self-improvement opens one up to self-threatening feedback on the chance that it may be useful/relevant for future improvement (Sedikides & Hepper, 2009).

<sup>3</sup> While entity vs. incremental theories and ought vs. ideal orientations seem to fit well together, I see them as potentially independent from one another. In particular, one's implicit theory could moderate one's underlying moral self-motive, such that a person may be able to hold a self-improvement or a self-maintenance motive with an incremental theory; however, an entity theory is only conducive to a self-

are also associated with different types of goals, which in turn, give rise to distinct self-regulatory dynamics. In particular, Dweck and colleagues (Dweck et al., 1995; Dweck & Legget, 1988) suggest that an entity theory engenders *performance goals* (i.e., a concern with proving or demonstrating one's competence or ability), whereas an incremental theory is associated with *learning/mastery goals* (i.e., a concern with cultivating or improving one's competence or ability). Thus, failure for an entity theorist indicates that one is incompetent in a given domain, and this incompetence is seen as something intrinsic to the self and also as incorrigible. This "helpless" response to failure and setbacks is hypothesized to lead to the deterioration of motivation in the face of obstacles, further leading people to avoid challenges (Dweck & Legget, 1988). On the other hand, failure for an incremental theorist indicates that one is not improving in a given domain and that one should adjust one's strategies or redouble one's efforts in hopes of improving. This "mastery-oriented" pattern leads people to actively seek out challenges, bear difficult situations and maintain motivation in the face of failure.

Chiu, Dweck, Tong, & Fu (1997) made a direct link between implicit theories and the moral domain. They suggested that entity theorists tend to hold a duty-based conception of morality, where obligations and responsibilities (moral oughts) are seen as the foundation of morality. Furthermore, since entity theorists emphasize stability and fixedness, they are mostly concerned about maintaining the moral status quo. In contrast, incremental theorists were expected to hold a rights-based view of morality, where issues of human rights and ideals comprise the foundation of morality. Given incremental

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maintenance motive (or less amenable to a self-improvement motive), given that the ability to change one's self is a prerequisite for self-improvement. The relevance of implicit theories here is to further bolster the idea that there is substantial reason to expect, based on a variety of literatures, that there should be (at least) two major moral orientations.

theorists' emphasis on change and growth, they are primarily concerned about social change and reaching moral ideals. Similar to Janoff-Bulman and colleagues' findings, Chiu et al. (1997; Studies 3 and 4) found that a duty-based focus of morality led to an emphasis on punishing bad behaviors (i.e., a stronger blame response), whereas a rights-based view of morality led to an emphasis on rewarding good behavior (a stronger praise response). The current work differs from Chiu et al in a few ways. Most importantly, Chiu's implicit moral theories focuses on perceived differences in the *content* of the moral domain (e.g., differences in moral beliefs), whereas the current work regarding moral motivational orientations focuses on differences in how people act on their moral beliefs. Further, Chiu and colleagues focus on how implicit theories affected participants' moral judgments of *others* (similar to Janoff-Bulman's work), whereas I am focused on self-judgments and other behavioral consequences (e.g., prosocial behavioral tendencies).

### **Broad Hypotheses**

The overarching idea investigated in the current research is that there are two major types of moral motivational orientations associated with MID - an *ideal*-orientation, and an *ought*-orientation. This is opposed to the largely singular focus on consistency motives suggested by the established literature. Drawing from past research in a variety of literatures, I further predict that these two hypothesized moral orientations will be associated with different underlying self-regulatory processes, which will, in turn, lead to important differences in affective responses and overall behavior. More specifically, I propose four broad hypotheses.

**Associated with different self-motives (H<sub>1</sub>).** I hypothesize that the two types of moral orientation are associated with fundamentally different motivations with regard to the self. Specifically, I propose that an ideal orientation will primarily be driven by a desire to *improve* or elevate an individual's moral self-concept by going above and beyond moral self-standards (i.e., exceeding what they expect of themselves morally or doing more than they deem necessary). Thus, broadly speaking, an individual with an ideal orientation is focused on approaching a positive self-state. In contrast, I suggest that an ought orientation will primarily be driven by a desire to *maintain* the moral self-concept by ensuring that one doesn't fall below their moral self-standards (i.e., failing their moral duties and responsibilities). Thus, an individual with an ought orientation is hypothesized to focus on avoiding a negative self-state.

**Engender different moral construals (H<sub>2</sub>).** Given the hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>) that the two types of moral orientation are associated with different underlying self-motives, I further anticipate that ideal and ought orientations should often lead individuals to construe the same moral decision or situation in different ways (i.e., in a way consistent with the particular self-motive and self-standard associated with each), highlighting a more prescriptive vs. proscriptive approach to morality. More specifically, I suggest that an individual with an ideal orientation will be more likely to perceive a prosocial decision-point as a chance to rise above their moral standards and become a better person (a positive opportunity), whereas an individual with an ought orientation will be more likely to view the same prosocial decision-point as a potential risk of falling below their moral standards and becoming a worse person (a possibility for error or failure). Under

certain circumstances, this might even lead ought-oriented individuals to avoid prosocial opportunities for fear they might fall short.

However, I will note that there are, of course, limits to what sorts of moral decisions can be construed one way or the other. In particular, I suspect that motivational differences in construal will only hold for more moderate behaviors and decisions (e.g., donating to charity, volunteering at a soup kitchen, being kind to a stranger, etc.). Behaviors toward the extreme ends of the moral spectrum are likely *not* susceptible to flexible construal. For example, having an ideal orientation will probably not lead one to construe not murdering someone as an opportunity to better themselves; likewise, having an ought orientation will probably not (for most people) lead one to construe giving up all worldly possessions as one's moral duty, and feel debased if they fail to dedicate their entire life to aiding the poor.

**Evoke different affective responses (H<sub>3</sub>).** Following from research on regulatory focus and self-discrepancies, I further predict that the different moral orientations will lead to different affective states in response to success and failure of one's moral pursuits. For example, donating \$10 to a personally important charity might be construed as an expectation for one's self (in order to remain a moral person) for an individual with an ought orientation. Thus, failing to do so would be experienced as falling below one's moral self-standard (a proscriptive moral failure), which should evoke agitated feelings of self-threat (e.g., shame or blameworthiness). Succeeding at making the \$10 donation, on the other hand, would be experienced as simply meeting (or not falling below) one's moral self-standards (a proscriptive moral success), which should evoke relatively neutral to mildly positive feelings (e.g., relief or satisfaction).

In contrast, donating \$10 might be construed as an opportunity to achieve a moral aspiration for individuals with an ideal orientation. Thus, failing to do so would merely be experienced as non-improvement, or not exceeding one's moral expectations (a prescriptive moral failure), which should evoke less acerbic and more passive feelings that are relatively non-threatening to one's sense of self (e.g., disappointment). In contrast, giving the \$10 donation would be experienced as succeeding in going the extra (moral) mile and being a better person (a prescriptive moral success), which should evoke positive and uplifting feelings (e.g., happiness or praiseworthiness).

**Produce different behavioral tendencies (H4).** The two types of moral orientation are hypothesized to produce distinct behavioral patterns in two ways. Firstly, if ought and ideal orientations are prevention and promotion focused, respectively (H<sub>1</sub>), then they should be susceptible to regulatory fit effects. Regulatory fit occurs when the manner in which a person pursues a goal matches their regulatory style (e.g., when a promotion-focused person pursues a goal in a gain/approach oriented way, or when a prevention-focused person pursues a goal in a loss/avoidance oriented way). Experiencing regulatory fit has been shown to increase the perceived value of one's decisions and to feel more motivated to pursue their goals (Cesario, Higgins, & Scholer, 2008; Freitas & Higgins, 2002; Spiegel, Grant-Pillow, & Higgins, 2004). Thus, it is hypothesized that framing a moral behavior as either avoiding a loss or approaching a gain should produce fit effects with ought and ideal moral orientations, accordingly. Secondly, if the two types of moral orientation evoke different affective states in response to success and failure of one's moral goals (H<sub>3</sub>), then it can be further hypothesized that they will lead to different behavioral tendencies for moral opportunities. In particular, if

someone with an ideal orientation is likely to experience highly positive and uplifting feelings (subjective vitality) for succeeding in their moral pursuits, they may be more energized and motivated to seek out moral opportunities. However, if an individual with an ought orientation is likely to experience only mildly positive (or neutral) feelings for succeeding their moral pursuits, they shouldn't be as motivated to seek out moral opportunities. If anything, individuals with an ought orientation may be more likely to avoid getting themselves into some moral decisions or predicaments (e.g., when success is uncertain or the chance of failure is high), as they may be construed as a potential threat or possibilities for failure.

### **Current Studies**

Study 1 examined associations between the two hypothesized moral orientations and constructs that they were expected to relate to (e.g., self-motives, regulatory focus, perceived standard of moral behavior, locus of motivation, and MID; H<sub>1</sub>). Study 1 also looked at whether the moral orientations distinctly predicted positive and negative feelings toward success and failure of prosocial behavior (H<sub>3</sub>) and whether they distinctly predicted self-reported volunteerism (H<sub>4</sub>). In Study 2, participants rated their positive and negative feelings toward different prescriptive and proscriptive moral behaviors, testing the extent that different moral motivational orientations are associated with a prescriptive vs. proscriptive morality (H<sub>2</sub>) in addition to predicting general positive and negative feelings (H<sub>3</sub>). Study 3 examined fit effects between moral orientation and regulatory focus (H<sub>4</sub>) by having participants respond to prosocial ads that were framed in either promotion vs. prevention terms. Study 4 attempted to test a causal relationship between moral orientation and prosocial behavior (H<sub>4</sub>) by manipulating moral

orientation. Finally, Study 5 examined the prediction that an ought orientation would be associated with greater avoidance of prosocial opportunities (H<sub>4</sub>) by having participants rate a hypothetical social policy that would limit prosocial solicitations.

An additional major aim across the studies in this dissertation was the creation of a reliable and valid measure of moral motivational orientation. Development of such a scale was a process that unfolded across studies (and that was more difficult than anticipated). In Studies 1 and 2, however, certain items that conceptually seemed related to moral ought vs. ideal orientations failed to load onto the anticipated components (and produced more than 2 components) in PCAs. For those studies, I dropped poorly/inconsistently loaded items so that the measure produced two clear and distinct components - with all ideal items loading onto a single component, and all ought items loading onto a second component. Further, I changed the moral orientation measure (e.g., reworded items, took out items, added new items, changed the instructions) in each subsequent study in attempt to resolve the issue. By Study 3, I had successfully developed a measure with two clear, distinct and reliable components corresponding to ideal vs. ought moral motivational orientations. I will explain the criteria used for dropping items and discuss the issue of using different measures later in this paper.

### **Study 1: A Measure of Moral Orientations and Validating the Constructs**

The primary goal of Study 1 was to examine individual differences in the two proposed moral motivational orientations. In order to do so, Study 1 examined the predicted relations between a measure based largely on existing regulatory focus scales but applied specifically to the moral domain and other established constructs in the literature (e.g., general regulatory focus, moral identity, and self-motives; H<sub>2</sub>). I

predicted that both an ought and an ideal orientation would positively correlate with the general measure of MID (the measure typically employed in the literature). However, I anticipated that only an ought orientation would positively correlate with a general prevention focus, self-maintenance motives, and having a stricter standard for engaging in the prosocial behaviors measured. In contrast, I predicted that only an ideal orientation would positively correlate with a general promotion focus, self-improvement motives, and a lower perceived standard for engaging in prosocial behaviors. I also predicted that engaging in prosocial behaviors would be perceived to be more intrinsically motivated for those with a stronger ideal (vs. ought) orientation.<sup>4</sup> Study 1 also looked at how the moral motivational orientations related to prosocial behavior and to feelings and emotions regarding the success and failure of moral actions (H<sub>3</sub> and H<sub>5</sub>). Consistent with the past literature, I predicted that the general measure of MID would positively correlate with self-reported amounts of prosocial behaviors (i.e., the stronger one's MID, the more time volunteered). However, I predicted that ideal and ought motivational orientations would differ, such that ideal orientation would be a stronger, positive predictor of self-reported amounts of prosocial behavior (H<sub>4</sub>). I also expected to see differences between an ought vs. ideal orientation with respect to positive and negative feelings toward past

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<sup>4</sup> An ought-oriented individual is motivated to do the right thing and avoid doing the wrong thing because it is perceived as a moral obligation. Thus, when an individual does the right thing or refrains from doing the wrong thing, it is because they feel compelled to abide by the moral law (an extrinsic source). The key issue is the lack of autonomy (perceived choice) over following one's moral beliefs. A feeling of autonomy is a critical component of self-determined, and thus, intrinsically motivated behavior. Since maintaining one's moral integrity concerns perceived duties, there is no room for personal choice and preference.

In contrast, an ideal-oriented individual is motivated to do moral good and avoid doing immoral things, because they perceive it as improving their moral self (i.e., going above and beyond their moral self-expectations). They are doing things that they don't normally do, or don't feel obligated to do. Thus, personal choice is involved, as they must actively go above their moral standards to become a better person. Janoff-Bulman et al. (2009) also supports this distinction, as they found that people considered prescriptive moral behaviors (moral ideals) to be more optional and open to one's personal preference, whereas proscriptive moral behaviors (moral oughts) were rated as more mandatory, or less discretionary.

and future prosocial behaviors. In particular, I predicted that an ought orientation would more strongly predict active (vs. passive), negative feelings in reaction to failures to engage in prosocial behaviors. In contrast, I predict that an ideal orientation would more strongly predict energizing and active (vs. passive), positive feelings toward successes in engaging in prosocial behaviors.

## **Methods**

**Participants & procedure.** Ninety-eight participants were recruited through Amazon Mechanical Turk and filled out the survey via Qualtrics. Participants first completed a series of measures that assessed their general MID (i.e., what has typically been measured in the literature), the hypothesized moral orientations, and measures that moral ought and ideal orientations were expected to correlate with (e.g., prevention vs. promotion focus, self-improvement vs. self-maintenance motives, and proscriptive vs. prescriptive self-standards toward engaging in prosocial behaviors). Following this, participants answered questions concerning their engagement in past prosocial behaviors (e.g., time spent volunteering per month), and also their feelings toward their success and failure to engage in prosocial behaviors. While there are a large variety of prosocial behaviors to potentially measure, Reed, Aquino, & Levy (2007) suggested that volunteering time resonates more with high moral identifiers than donating the equivalent amount of money or resources because it is seen as more self-expressive and effortful.

### **Measures.**

**General moral identity.** The go-to measure for MID is Aquino & Reed's (2002) 10-item scale of moral identity, and as such, their scale was used to measure an individual's *general* sense of MID ( $\alpha = .79$ ). Aquino & Reed's scale also distinguishes

between internalized vs. symbolized moral identity, which differentiates between more personal/private vs. social/public identity concerns. Each subscale was assessed through 5 items. For example, the internalized (private) subscale contains items such as, “It would make me feel good to be a person who has these characteristics” and “I strongly desire to have these characteristics” ( $\alpha = .67$ ), whereas the symbolized (public) subscale contains items such as, “I often wear clothes that identify me as having these characteristics” and “I am actively involved in activities that communicate to others that I have these characteristics” ( $\alpha = .85$ ). Each item was scored on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) (see Appendix A for the full scale).

***Ought vs. ideal moral orientations.*** To develop a measure of ought vs. ideal moral orientations I drew on existing promotion vs. prevention focus measures (e.g., Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda, 2002; adapted to the moral domain, of course) and conceptions of ought vs. ideal selves (e.g., Higgins, Klein, Strauman, 1985). I created a new 10-item measure that was intended to capture the relative strength of one’s ought vs. ideal moral orientation. Half of the items were designed to capture an ought orientation ( $\alpha = .82$ ), focusing on maintaining one’s moral self by avoiding becoming a worse person (e.g., “*Doing the right thing is important to who I am, primarily because it keeps me from becoming a worse person*”, “*In order to remain a good person, I feel like I must help others*”, “*As a central part of who I am, I have a responsibility to do good deeds*”). The other half captured an ideal orientation ( $\alpha = .86$ ), focusing on improving one’s moral self by becoming a better person (e.g., “*Doing the right thing is important to who I am, primarily because it makes me a better person*”, “*In order to become a better person, I strive to help others*”, “*As a central part of who I am, I have aspirations to do good*”).

deeds”). See Appendix B for the full scale.<sup>5</sup> Participants rated the degree to which each item represented them on a 9-point scale (1 = not me at all, 9 = completely me).

**Regulatory focus.** General promotion vs. prevention focus was measured using Lockwood’s et al. (2002) scale adapted for general life goals. The scale was comprised of 18 items, 9 that tapped a promotion focus (e.g., “I frequently imagine how I will achieve my hopes and aspirations”,  $\alpha = .89$ ), and 9 that tapped a prevention focus (e.g., “I am anxious that I will fall short of my responsibilities and obligations”,  $\alpha = .91$ ). Each item was rated on a 9-point scale, ranging from 1 (not at all true of me) to 9 (very true of me). See Appendix C for the full scale.

**Self-motives.** Self-improvement and self-maintenance motives were measured by 12 items (adapted from Breines & Chen, 2012). Six items tapped self-improvement (e.g., “I am primarily concerned about improving who I am”; “Making progress, as a person, is the most important thing to me”,  $\alpha = .91$ ), and 6 items tapped self-maintenance (e.g., “I am primarily concerned about maintaining who I am”; “Being consistent with my sense of self is what I desire the most”,  $\alpha = .79$ ). Each question was rated on a 9-point scale, ranging from 1 (not at all true of me), to 9 (very true of me). See Appendix D for the full scale.

**Prosocial self-standard.** The extent to which participants held themselves to a proscriptive (strict) or prescriptive (forgiving) regarding engagement in prosocial

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<sup>5</sup> After rating all of the items individually, the ought and ideal items were broken into pairs, and participants were asked to pick which item in each pair best represented them. Thus, the measure provided two values: the relative strength of each orientation based on scale ratings, and the proportion of ought vs. ideal statements chosen in a dichotomous fashion. There are multiple ways that an individual’s ought vs. ideal orientation can be calculated with these values. Given that the dichotomous choices provided much less nuanced information regarding ought and ideal orientations, I decided to go with the former option and obtained a mean score for both orientations for each individual.

behaviors was measured with 3 items that asked about participants' expectations and self-standards toward volunteerism (e.g., "I have a strong expectation for myself to engage in this behavior"; "I feel like I have a duty to engage in this behavior"; "Simply put, I expect myself to engage in this behavior",  $\alpha = .89$ ). Each item was rated on a 9-point scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree).

***Intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation.*** The extent to which engaging in prosocial behaviors was intrinsically vs. extrinsically motivated was measured with an adapted version of Mullan, Markland, & Ingledew's (1997) Behavioral Regulation in Exercise Questionnaire (BREQ) scale. The overall measure was comprised of 2 subscales: *external* regulation (e.g., "I donate because other people say I should", "When I volunteer/donate, it's often because I feel guilt-tripped (by others, or myself) into doing it",  $\alpha = .84$ ) and *intrinsic* regulation ("I find donating a pleasurable experience", "I get a lot of enjoyment and satisfaction from volunteering/donating",  $\alpha = .93$ ). The 9 items were rated on a 5-point scale, ranging from 0 (not true for me) to 4 (very true for me). See Appendix E.

***Prosocial behavior.*** Prosocial behavior was measured by asking participants to estimate the average amount of time (in hours) that they spend per month volunteering at non-profit organizations, charities, or events.

***Feelings toward prosocial behavior.*** Participants' feelings toward past prosocial behaviors (both successes and failures) were assessed with an 18-item measure, with 9 positive feelings (e.g., Praiseworthy, Satisfied, Pleasure, etc.), and 9 negative feelings (Blameworthy, Displeased, Guilty, etc.). For positive feelings, participants were asked "Thinking about the times that you have already volunteered for or donated to charities

and non-profit organizations, to what extent did it/does it make you feel the following?”. For the negative items, participants were asked, “Thinking about the times that you *decided not to* volunteer for or donate to charities and non-profit organizations, to what extent did it/does it make you feel the following?”. All items were rated on a 9-point scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 9 (completely), see Appendix F for the full scale. The inclusion of more energetic emotions (e.g., Alive and vitalized; Full of energy and spirit; Energized – adapted from Ryan & Frederick’s, 1997 Subjective Vitality Scale) allowed for an initial test of the idea that those with an ideal (vs. ought) moral orientation would be more energized by successful moral behaviors.

## Results

**Preliminary analyses.** A Principal Components Analysis (PCA) with an oblique rotation (Direct Oblimin) was used to assess the 12-item moral orientation measure. While the analysis did pull out two components (based on Eigenvalues  $> 1$  and the break point in the scree plot of eigenvalues) accounting for 61.8% of the variance, the components did not neatly divide into the intended ought and ideal components. The pattern and structure matrices showed that two of the intended ought items (“As a central part of who I am, I have a responsibility to do good deeds”, “Doing the right thing is mostly driven by my desire to meet my standards for myself”) loaded  $> .60$  onto an ideal-like component, and two of the intended ideal items (“Doing the right thing is important to who I am, primarily because it makes me a better person”, “In order to become a better person, I strive to help others”) loaded  $> .70$  onto an ought-like component. It is not entirely obvious why these items loaded onto the ‘wrong’ components, but one possibility is that because some of the items differed only in one or two words, it might

have been too easy for participants to gloss over the subtle differences and to treat two items as the same. For example, one of the ought items was “As a central part of who I am, I have a *responsibility* to do good deeds”, whereas the ideal item equivalent was “As a central part of who I am, I have *aspirations* to do good deeds” (italics added). It seems plausible that participants focused on the fact that both were talking about doing good deeds, and did not pay much attention to the words ‘responsibility’ and ‘aspirations’. In an attempt to remedy this issue, I dropped the four items that loaded  $> .50$  onto the opposite components, and reran the PCA. Again, the analysis revealed two components that accounted for 65% of the variance. This time, the pattern and structure matrices showed that the four remaining ought items loaded  $> .69$  onto one component, and the four remaining ideal items loaded  $> .63$  onto the other component.<sup>6</sup> The Cronbach’s Alpha for the reduced set of ought and ideal items were .82 and .79 (respectively), indicating good reliability. Ought and ideal orientation scores were modestly correlated with each other ( $r = .54$ ).

**Ought vs. ideal orientations.** The following analyses are based on linear regressions in which ought and ideal motivational orientation scores were entered simultaneously.

**MID.** As predicted, both ought ( $\beta = 0.27, t(95) = 2.56, p = .012$ ) and ideal ( $\beta = 0.31, t(95) = 2.93, p = .004$ ) orientations significantly and positively predicted the general

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<sup>6</sup> I ran all the analyses using both the original ought and ideal scales (i.e., using all of the items), and the shorter version. Despite the messy factor analysis when all items were included, the analyses looked very similar whether the original scales were used, or the short version were used. The only differences were that ought orientation marginally predicted general MID ( $p = .08$ ) using the original scales (vs.  $p = .012$  using the short version), and only ideal (but not ought) orientation predicted positive feelings ( $p < .001$  and  $p = .26$ ) using the original scales, whereas both ideal and ought orientations predicted positive feelings with the short version ( $ps < .004$ ).

measure of MID. Interestingly, though, when MID was broken down into the symbolization and internalization subcomponents (Aquino & Reed, 2002), the two types of moral orientation differed in which subcomponent of MID they significantly predicted. Specifically, only ought orientation strongly predicted symbolization, ( $\beta = 0.39, t(95) = 3.76, p < .001$ ), whereas ideal orientation was only marginally related,  $\beta = 0.20, t(95) = 1.92, p = .057$ . Likewise, only ideal orientation significantly predicted internalization ( $\beta = 0.29, t(95) = 2.48, p = .015$ ), whereas ought orientation did not,  $\beta = -0.12, t(95) = -1.06, p = .29$ . Although I had no a priori predictions concerning these subcomponents of MID, the results are congruent with the hypothesized distinction between ought and ideal orientations. Specifically, the symbolization subcomponent of MID captures more of an extrinsically driven form of moral identity (e.g., a more publically visible MID), which is consistent with my conception of an ought orientation. In contrast, the internalization subcomponent of MID captures more of a private and internally focused MID, which is consistent with my conception of an ideal orientation.

***Self-motives.*** In support of my predictions, ought orientation significantly predicted self-maintenance scores ( $\beta = 0.48, t(95) = 4.61, p < .001$ ), but ideal orientation did not,  $\beta = 0.06, t(95) = 0.58, p = .56$ . In contrast, ideal orientation predicted self-improvement scores ( $\beta = 0.49, t(95) = 4.93, p < .001$ ), but ought orientation did not,  $\beta = 0.12, t(95) = 1.21, p = .23$ . This pattern suggests that, as hypothesized, an ought motivational orientation is associated with consistency type motives, whereas an ideal orientation is associated with change and improvement type motives.

***Regulatory focus.*** Consistent with my predictions, ought orientation significantly and positively predicted general prevention focus ( $\beta = 0.63, t(95) = 6.13, p < .001$ ), while

ideal orientation *negatively* predicted prevention focus,  $\beta = -0.39$ ,  $t(95) = -3.78$ ,  $p < .001$ . For promotion focus, only ideal orientation was a significant predictor ( $\beta = 0.61$ ,  $t(95) = 6.45$ ,  $p < .001$ ), while ought orientation was not,  $\beta = 0.01$ ,  $t(95) = 0.15$ ,  $p = .86$ .

**Perceived standard.** The extent that participants held themselves to a strict personal standard for volunteering was independently predicted by *both* ought and ideal orientations,  $\beta = 0.27$ ,  $t(95) = 2.54$ ,  $p = .01$  and  $\beta = 0.30$ ,  $t(95) = 2.83$ ,  $p = .006$ , respectively. This was inconsistent with my predictions, since I anticipated that those with an ideal orientation would construe volunteering as more of a matter of preference compared to ought-oriented individuals.

**Locus of motivation.** Supporting my predictions, ought orientation was a significant predictor of *extrinsic* motivation to volunteer ( $\beta = 0.37$ ,  $t(95) = 3.28$ ,  $p = .001$ ), while ideal orientation was not,  $\beta = -0.05$ ,  $t(95) = -0.43$ ,  $p = .67$ . For *intrinsic* motivation to volunteer, both ought and ideal orientations were significant predictors, however, the relative strengths of the associations were consistent with my predictions. Specifically, ideal orientation had a stronger association with intrinsic motivation ( $\beta = 0.58$ ,  $t(95) = 6.52$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .24$ ) than ought orientation did,  $\beta = 0.18$ ,  $t(95) = 2.05$ ,  $p = .04$  ( $\Delta R^2 = .02$ ).

#### **Prosocial feelings and behaviors.**

**Volunteerism.** While I predicted that both ought and ideal orientations would significantly predict self-reported hours (per month) of volunteerism, only ideal orientation was a significant predictor ( $\beta = 0.36$ ,  $t(94) = 3.16$ ,  $p = .002$ ), whereas ought orientation was not,  $\beta = -0.01$ ,  $t(94) = -0.10$ ,  $p = .92$ . In a separate analysis, I also predicted that the general measure of MID would significantly predict volunteerism,

which it did,  $\beta = 0.30$ ,  $t(95) = 3.05$ ,  $p = .003$ . In a third analysis, I also examined associations between moral orientation and the subcomponents of MID and volunteerism and found that only symbolization (but not internalization) was a significant predictor,  $\beta = 0.28$ ,  $t(94) = 2.82$ ,  $p = .006$  and  $\beta = 0.09$ ,  $t(94) = 0.91$ ,  $p = .37$  (respectively). This was interesting because while symbolization predicted volunteerism, ought orientation (which was associated with symbolization) did not. This suggests that while ought and ideal orientations were associated with the symbolization and internalization subcomponents of MID (respectively), they are not the same constructs. When accounting for all of the variables (ought orientation, ideal orientation, general MID, symbolization, and internalization) in a single analysis, only ideal orientation remained a significant predictor of volunteerism,  $\beta = 0.31$ ,  $t(91) = 2.56$ ,  $p = .01$ . All other variables were non-significant,  $ps > .52$ .

**Feelings.** While I originally predicted a difference between active and passive feelings (both positive and negative) regarding past success and failures of volunteerism for the different moral orientations, a PCA with Direct Oblimin rotation revealed that all the positive emotion items (regardless of whether they were active vs. passive) loaded onto a single factor, and all the negative items loaded onto a single factor (based on eigenvalues  $> 1$  and the break point of the scree plot of eigenvalues). Thus, I combined all the positive items into a single positive feelings measure, and all the negative items into a single negative feelings measure. Both ought and ideal orientation significantly predicted positive feelings toward past successful volunteerism,  $\beta = 0.29$ ,  $t(95) = 2.92$ ,  $p = .004$  and  $\beta = 0.37$ ,  $t(95) = 3.74$ ,  $p < .001$  (respectively). Thus, participants seemed to experience equally positive feelings for past volunteerism, regardless of their moral

orientation. However, only ought orientation significantly predicted negative feelings toward past failures to volunteer ( $\beta = 0.36$ ,  $t(95) = 3.14$ ,  $p = .002$ ), whereas ideal orientation was not a significant predictor,  $\beta = -0.10$ ,  $t(95) = -0.83$ ,  $p = .41$ . This pattern of results is broadly consistent with my predictions because individuals with an ought orientation were hypothesized to be more concerned about failing their moral goals than those with an ideal motivational orientation.<sup>7</sup>

## Discussion

The moral orientation measure designed for this initial study turned out to be a little messy. However, dropping four items resulted in the remaining eight items loading onto factors representing an ought vs. an ideal orientation. Overall, however, the shorter version of the measure (and, surprisingly, the original measure as well) provided evidence consistent with my conceptualization of two moral motivational orientations.

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<sup>7</sup> To demonstrate that the moral orientations are not redundant with other established moral constructs, I examined their relationship to identification with all of humanity (IDAH) and empathic concern. Ought and ideal orientation both significantly predicted IDAH scores,  $\beta = 0.31$ ,  $t(95) = 2.91$ ,  $p = .005$  and  $\beta = 0.26$ ,  $t(95) = 2.41$ ,  $p = .018$  (respectively). Given that the two moral orientations were distinctly associated with different outcomes, it suggests that IDAH is somewhat unique from ought and ideal orientations. I also ran the key analyses above while controlling for IDAH (i.e., the two moral orientations and IDAH were entered simultaneously). The results were the same, with ideal orientation uniquely predicting volunteerism, self-improvement, promotion focus, positive emotions, and intrinsic motivation ( $ps < .02$ ), and only ought orientation predicting self-maintenance, negative emotions, and extrinsic motivation ( $ps < .01$ ). Similar to the previous analyses, both orientations predicted prevention focus ( $ps < .001$ ), with a positive relationship for ought orientation ( $\beta = 0.65$ ) and a negative relationship for ideal orientation ( $\beta = -0.37$ ).

In contrast to IDAH, only ideal orientation significantly predicted empathic concern ( $\beta = 0.32$ ,  $t(95) = 2.79$ ,  $p = .006$ ), whereas ought orientation was non-significant,  $\beta = 0.07$ ,  $t(95) = 0.65$ ,  $p = .52$ . However, ideal orientation and empathic concern were only modestly correlated with each other ( $r = .36$ ), suggesting that the two factors, while related, were not the same. I ran all the key analyses controlling for empathic concern (i.e., both moral orientations and empathic concern were entered simultaneously). Similar to the analyses controlling for IDAH, including empathic concern into the regression analyses did not affect the results. Ideal motivational orientation still uniquely predicted volunteerism, self-improvement, promotion focus, and intrinsic motivation ( $ps < .006$ ). In contrast, ought motivational orientation uniquely predicted self-maintenance, negative emotions, and extrinsic motivation ( $ps < .003$ ). Both orientations predicted prevention focus ( $ps < .001$ ), but the relationship was positive for ought orientation ( $\beta = 0.63$ ) and negative for ideal orientation ( $\beta = -0.39$ ).

Ought and ideal subcomponents were differentially and significantly associated with the majority of the other measures that were predicted to relate to the two moral orientations in different ways (H<sub>1</sub>). More specifically, an ought moral orientation was uniquely correlated with the symbolization subcomponent of MID, self-maintenance motives, general prevention focus, extrinsic motivation to volunteer, and negative feelings about failures to volunteer. In contrast, an ideal orientation was correlated with the internalization subcomponent of MID, self-improvement motives, general promotion focus (and negatively correlated with prevention focus), and self-reported time engaged in volunteerism.

While Study 1 was unable to test for differences between active and passive feelings (due to the measure being insensitive to such differences) toward failed and successful prosocial behaviors, the general measure of positive and negative feelings also provided support for distinct effects of the two moral orientations on emotions toward successful or failed prosocial behaviors (H<sub>3</sub>). In particular, while both moral orientations were positively associated with general positive feelings toward successful prosocial behaviors, only ought orientation scores were positively associated with negative feelings toward failed prosocial behaviors. The latter pattern is consistent with the hypothesis that the more ought-oriented an individual is, the more it is that they would construe prosocial failures as falling below their moral standards, giving rise to greater negative feelings (H<sub>2</sub> and H<sub>3</sub>).

In support of H<sub>4</sub> (that an ideal orientation would lead individuals to seek out more prosocial opportunities than those with an ought orientation), ideal motivational

orientation uniquely and positively predicted self-reported hours of volunteering per month.

Overall, the majority of Study 1's results supported the predicted distinctions between the underlying motives and consequences of ought and ideal moral orientations, and provided initial validation of these two moral constructs.

### **Study 2: Relations to Proscriptive and Prescriptive Moralities**

The aim of Study 2 was to examine relationships between ought and ideal moral motivational orientations and the distinction between proscriptive and prescriptive moralities put forth by Janoff-Bulman and colleagues. As mentioned in the introduction of this dissertation, my use of the terms *proscriptive morality* and *prescriptive morality* differ slightly from Janoff-Bulman's definitions. Instead of proscriptive and prescriptive moralities being limited to avoiding negative moral behaviors vs. approaching positive moral behaviors, my past research (Aoki & Packer, 2014) suggests that the two types of morality are independent from the valence of moral behaviors. What seems to be the crucial distinction between proscriptive and prescriptive morality is the perceived strictness or leniency associated with the moral belief or behavior (e.g., is it obligatory or optional to avoid or engage in a given moral behavior?). Thus, my use of the term 'proscriptive morality' refers to a strict sense of morality, whereby appropriate moral action (either enacting or refraining from doing a certain behavior) is seen as obligatory. In contrast, my use of the term 'prescriptive morality' refers to a lenient sense of morality, whereby appropriate moral action is greatly encouraged, but optional.

This study was designed to test whether a person's moral orientation can make one type of morality (proscriptive vs. prescriptive) more salient than the other (H<sub>2</sub>). For

example, if ought-oriented individuals are indeed more worried about failing their moral duties and responsibilities, they should focus on proscriptive (i.e., strict and obligatory) moral standards; conversely, if ideal-oriented individuals are indeed more concerned about achieving their moral aspirations, they should focus on prescriptive (i.e., lenient and optional) moral standards. We examined emotional reactions to imagined proscriptive and prescriptive moral successes and failures. Following our previous research (Aoki & Packer, 2015) showing that proscriptive vs. prescriptive moralities are independent of the valence of behavior, the study included positive and negative behaviors for both forms of morality. I reasoned that if ought and ideal moral orientations make one type of morality (proscriptive vs. prescriptive) more salient than the other, then there should be differences in affective reactions in response to proscriptive vs. prescriptive moral failures and successes. Specifically, I predicted that a moral ought orientation would make *proscriptive* moral failures and successes more salient. Thus, failing a moral obligation (a proscriptive failure) was expected to evoke greater self-blame and shame (active negative feelings) for ought-oriented individuals vs. ideal-oriented individuals. It was also expected that successfully meeting a moral obligation (a proscriptive success) would evoke greater feelings of satisfaction and contentment (passive positive feelings) for those with a greater ought (vs. ideal) orientation. In contrast, I predicted that moral ideal orientation would make *prescriptive* moral failures and successes more salient. Thus, ideal-oriented individuals were expected to experience greater self-praise and excitement (active positive feelings) for successfully doing something morally exceptional (a prescriptive success), as compared to ought-oriented individuals. It was also expected that failing to go above and beyond

morally (a prescriptive failure), would lead to greater feelings of disappointment and dissatisfaction (passive negative feelings) for individuals with a stronger ideal (vs. ought) orientation.

## **Methods**

**Participants & procedure.** Ninety-three participants were recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk and filled out the survey via Qualtrics. The design of study 2 was a continuous measure of Moral Orientation (ranging from low to high in Ought and Ideal) x 2 (Moral Valence: Positive vs. Negative behaviors) x 2 (Moral Type: Proscriptive vs. Prescriptive standard toward behavior) x 2 (Moral Outcome: Success vs. Failure), with moral valence, standard, and outcome as within-subjects variables. Participants first completed a measure of their moral orientation, and then were presented with a set of moral behaviors that represented the full range of combinations between moral valence, standard, and outcome. That is to say, each participant saw a total of 12 behaviors, with 3 behaviors falling into each of the following 4 categories: moral **Rights** (positive behaviors with a proscriptive standard; “Provide basic care for a family pet”, “Obey traffic lights at an intersection”, and “Be loving and caring toward one’s kids”), moral **Wrongs** (negative behaviors with a proscriptive standard; “Sexually harass a coworker”, “Emotionally abuse a child”, and “Knowingly spread an STD”), moral **Goods** (positive behaviors with a prescriptive standard; “Donate a significant amount of money to charity”, “Volunteer at least once a month in a hospital”, and “Help a physically disabled person load their groceries into their car”), and moral **Bads** (negative behaviors with a prescriptive standard; “Have unsafe sex”, “Make a small mistake, then let

someone else take the blame”, and “Not leave a tip after dining out”).<sup>8</sup> Each of the behaviors were also either moral failures (i.e., committing a Wrong/Bad or refraining from doing a Right/Good) or moral successes (i.e., refraining from doing a Wrong/Bad or committing a Right/Good). All of the behaviors were presented in a random order for each participant. For each behavior, participants were told to imagine that they had just committed (or refrained from doing) the behavior. They were then instructed to rate their feelings on a variety of measures (e.g., blame, praise, satisfaction, disappointment, and perceived standard).

### **Measures.**

***Ought vs. ideal moral orientation.*** In light of the measure from Study 1 being a bit messy, and after running a pilot study to test alternate items for the moral orientation measure, Study 2 included 4 items from the original measure, 8 items from the pilot study, and 9 new items (see Appendix G for all items). Items were rated on a 9-point scale, from 1 (not at all true of me) to 9 (completely true of me). A PCA with Direct Oblimin rotation that included all of the ought and ideal orientation items revealed 5 factors. Forcing fewer factors (e.g., 4, 3, and 2) did not help to make sense of the item loadings. I believe part of the issue was that the old items, the pilot tested items, and the new items were presented on 3 different pages, however, it was apparent that many of the items simply performed poorly/were not effective. I was able to reduce the measure to 8 items (4 ideal and 4 ought items), which a factor analysis split into 2 components with the items loading onto the anticipated components ( $\alpha$ 's for the ought and ideal components =

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<sup>8</sup> The behaviors were based on previous data that I have collected, which were a part of a study that specifically sought to distinguish moral Rights, Wrongs, Goods, and Bads.

.78 and .86, respectively). Similar to Study 1, moral ought and ideal motivational orientation scores were modestly correlated at  $r = .49$ .

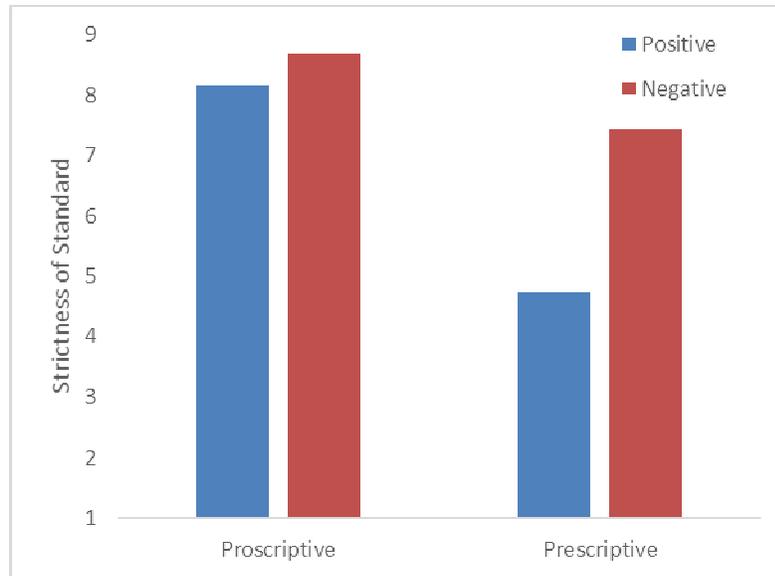
**Manipulation check: Perceived standards.** To ensure that the behaviors did in fact have proscriptive (more obligatory) vs. prescriptive (optional) moral standards, the extent that participants held themselves to a strict standard for engaging in (or refraining from) the various moral behaviors that they read about was measured by the same three items used in Study 1 (e.g., “I have a strong expectation for myself to engage in this behavior”; “I feel like I have a duty to engage in this behavior”; “Simply put, I expect myself to engage in this behavior”;  $\alpha = .90$ ). Generally speaking, I expected proscriptive behaviors to be associated with stricter standards than prescriptive behaviors.

**Feelings following behaviors.** Participants’ feelings about committing and refraining from the moral behaviors (which corresponded to moral success and failure for different behaviors) were measured with 14 items. Participants were asked to indicate the extent that they would experience each feeling if they were to engage in (or refrain from) the various behaviors. Half of the items measured potential differences in active vs. passive positive feelings (e.g., “I would feel praiseworthy” vs. “I would feel satisfied with myself”;  $\alpha = .98$  for all positive items), and the other half measured potential differences in active vs. passive negative feelings (e.g., “I would feel blameworthy” vs. “I would feel disappointed”;  $\alpha = .97$  for all positive items). Items were rated on a 9-point scale, ranging from 1 (not at all) to 9 (completely). See Appendix H.

## Results

**Manipulation check.** To ensure that the proscriptive and prescriptive moral behaviors differed accordingly in terms of moral standard or strictness, I ran a repeated-

measures ANOVA with moral type and moral valence predicting perceived standard. As predicted, there was a large difference between the proscriptive and prescriptive moral behaviors, with proscriptive behaviors being rated as more obligatory and strict ( $M = 8.42$ ,  $SD = 0.82$ ) than prescriptive behaviors ( $M = 6.08$ ,  $SD = 1.21$ ),  $F(1, 92) = 382.20$ ,  $p < .001$ . There was also a significant main effect of moral valence, with negative behaviors being rated as having a stricter standard ( $M = 8.05$ ,  $SD = 0.95$ ) than positive behaviors ( $M = 6.45$ ,  $SD = 1.16$ ),  $F(1, 92) = 158.91$ ,  $p < .001$ . Both of these main effects, however, were qualified by a significant interaction between the moral type and valence,  $F(1, 92) = 85.64$ ,  $p < .001$ . All simple effects were significant ( $ps < .001$ ). Importantly, although proscriptive negative behaviors (Wrongs) were associated with stricter standards than prescriptive negative behaviors (Bads) – the latter were still highly elevated in terms of strictness relative to prescriptive positive behaviors (Goods) – see Figure 1. This is not terribly surprising, but it is important to keep in mind when interpreting the subsequent results.



**Figure 1.** Perceived strictness of moral standard as a function of moral type (proscriptive vs. prescriptive) and moral valence (positive vs. negative behaviors).

**Ought vs. ideal orientation.** Similar to Study 1, a PCA on emotion ratings with Direct Oblimin rotation revealed that all the positive items formed a single factor (regardless of active vs. passive), and all negative items formed a separate factor (regardless of active vs. passive). Thus, for the following analyses, all positive items were averaged into a single positive emotion factor, and all negative items were averaged into a single negative emotion factor. Again, while this prevented me from testing predicted differences between active vs. passive feelings, observing differences between general positive and negative feelings toward proscriptive and prescriptive moral behaviors could still be informative.

I revised my predictions accordingly. For positive feelings following from (imagined) successful behaviors, I predicted an interaction between moral type (prescriptive vs. proscriptive) and ideal moral orientation scores. Specifically, I predicted that there would be a strong, positive relationship between ideal orientation scores and

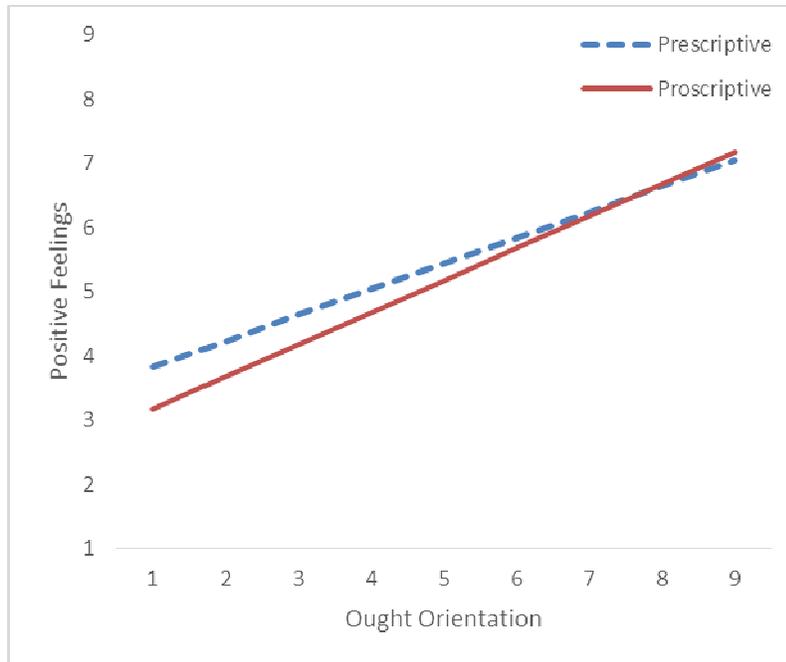
positive feelings for prescriptive (but not proscriptive) moral successes. Highly ideal oriented individuals were expected to be attuned to behaviors that can improve their moral self (opportunities provided by *prescriptive* behaviors), and should thus experience stronger positive feelings following successful prescriptive behaviors. In contrast, I assumed that even highly ideal-oriented individuals would have trouble construing successful compliance with *proscriptions* as self-improving; as such, ideal orientation scores were hypothesized to have no effect on positive feelings toward proscriptive moral successes.

For negative feelings following from (imagined) failed behaviors, I predicted an interaction between moral type and ought orientation scores. Specifically, I predicted that there would be a strong, positive relationship between ought orientation scores and negative feelings for prescriptive (but not proscriptive) moral failures. I assumed that proscriptive failures would be associated with strong negative feelings, regardless of ought or ideal orientation scores. However, for prescriptive failures, I predicted that individuals with higher ought orientations would construe the failures more harshly, and thus experience stronger negative emotions.

The following analyses examined positive feelings following moral success and negative feelings following moral failures separately, using repeated measures ANCOVAs with moral type (proscriptive vs. prescriptive) and moral valence (positive vs. negative) as within-subjects factors, and ought orientation and ideal orientation scores entered simultaneously as covariates.

***Positive feelings following moral successes.*** Neither moral type nor moral valence predicted positive feelings following moral successes ( $F_s(1, 89) > 0.35, ps >$

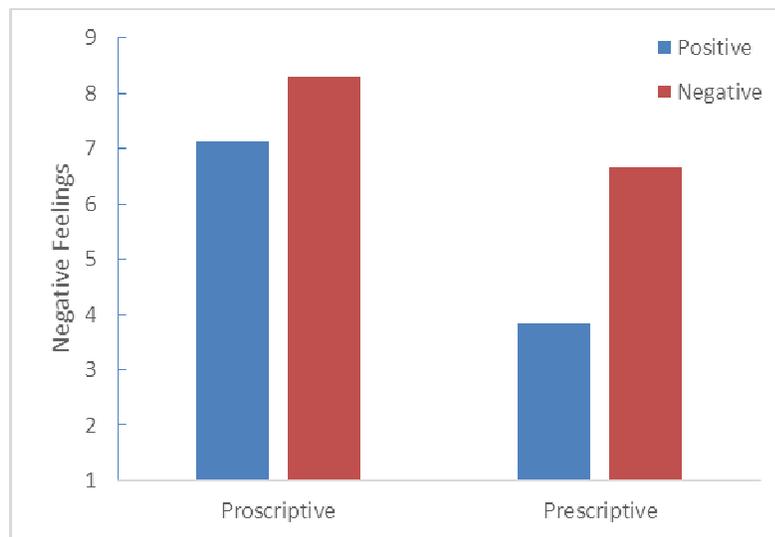
.56). However, both ought orientation ( $F(1, 89) = 7.37, p = .008$ ) and ideal orientation scores ( $F(1, 89) = 19.87, p < .001$ ) were significant, positive predictors of positive feelings. Consistent with Study 1, ideal orientation had a stronger relationship with positive feelings. However, inconsistent with predictions, there was a significant 2-way interaction ( $F(1, 89) = 3.84, p = .05$ ) between moral type and *ought* orientation (but not ideal orientation,  $F(1, 89) = 2.11, p = .15$ ), such that participants had slightly more positive feelings toward successful prescriptive (vs. proscriptive) behaviors at the lower end of the ought orientation scores (see Figure 2). This might suggest that people who were not at all ought oriented felt more positively about successful prescriptive than proscriptive moral behavior. Alternatively, it could be interpreted such that positive feelings toward successful proscriptive behaviors were ramped up for those high in ought orientation. No other 2-way or 3-way interactions were significant ( $F_s(1, 89) > 2.20, p_s > .14$ ).



**Figure 2.** Mean positive feelings toward successful behaviors as a function of moral type (proscriptive vs. prescriptive behaviors) and mean ought orientation scores.

**Negative feelings following moral failures.** There was a significant main effect of moral type ( $F(1, 90) = 62.44, p < .001$ ) and moral valence ( $F(1, 90) = 14.51, p < .001$ ) on negative feelings following moral failures. For moral type, participants rated feeling significantly more negative feelings toward failed proscriptive moral behaviors ( $M = 7.73, SD = 1.14$ ) than toward failed prescriptive moral behaviors ( $M = 5.25, SD = 1.27$ ),  $F(1, 92) = 391.07, p < .001$ . For moral valence, participants rated feeling more negative feelings toward moral failures involving negative behaviors (committing Wrongs or Bads;  $M = 7.49, SD = 1.28$ ) vs. moral failures involving positive behaviors (not committing Rights or Goods;  $M = 5.49, SD = 1.24$ ),  $F(1, 92) = 28.02, p < .001$ . There was no main effect of moral ought orientation ( $F(1, 90) = 0.96, p = .33$ ), but there was a significant, positive main effect for moral ideal orientation ( $F(1, 90) = 5.60, p < .001$ ),

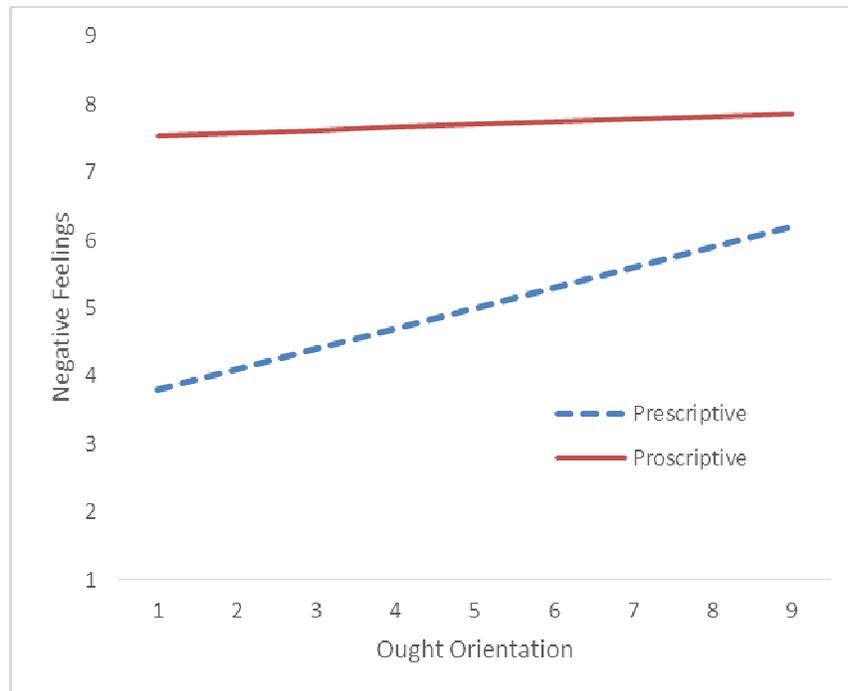
with greater negative feelings felt for failed behaviors as ideal orientation scores went up. These main effects were qualified by a 2-way interaction between moral type and moral valence ( $F(1, 90) = 6.86, p = .01$ ) and a 2-way interaction between moral type and ought orientation ( $F(1, 90) = 5.84, p = .02$ ). The moral type x moral valence interaction on negative feelings following moral failures (see Figure 3) mirrored the pattern on the manipulation check/moral standard scale. There were strong negative feelings toward both positive and negative proscriptive failures; however, for failed prescriptions, only negative behaviors elicited highly negative feelings, whereas positive prescriptions were low in negative feelings.



**Figure 3.** Mean negative feelings toward failed behaviors as a function of moral type (proscriptive vs. prescriptive behaviors) and moral valence (positive vs. negative behaviors).

More importantly, the pattern of the moral type x ought orientation interaction was consistent with predictions, such that proscriptive failures received high negative feeling ratings regardless of ought orientation scores (i.e., among everyone), but prescriptive

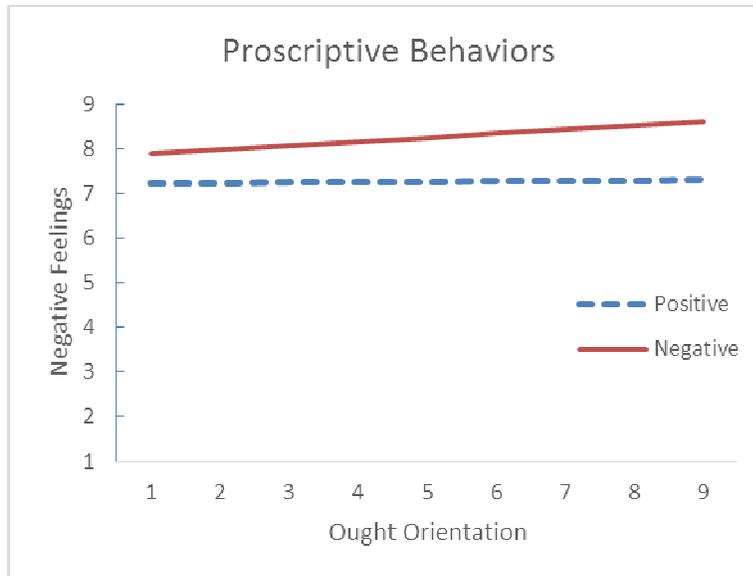
failures only received high ratings of negative feelings among individuals with high ought orientation scores (see Figure 4).



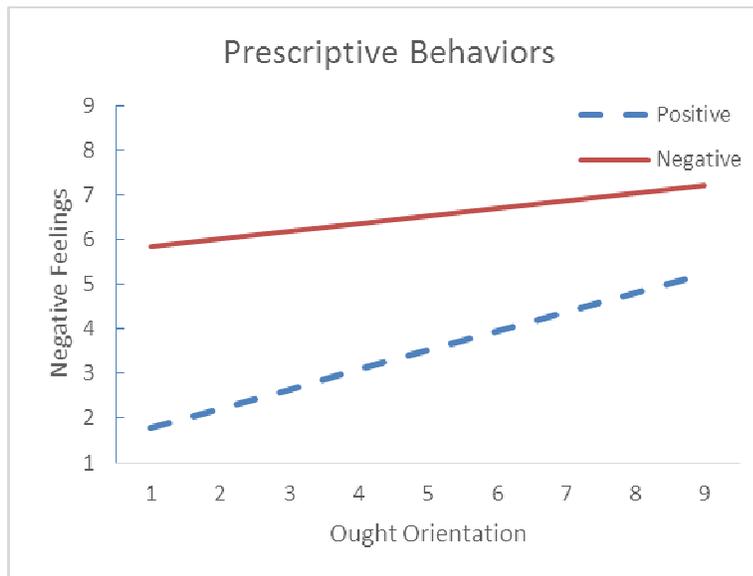
**Figure 4.** Mean negative feelings for failed behaviors as a function of moral type (proscriptive vs. prescriptive behaviors) and mean ought orientation scores.

The 2-way interactions were further qualified by a significant 3-way interaction between moral type, moral valence, and ought orientation scores,  $F(1, 90) = 4.90, p = .03$ . This interaction revealed that the effect of ought moral orientation on negative emotional responses to prescriptive failures was driven primarily by reactions following from failures to engage in positive moral behaviors (Goods). As such, negative feelings toward *proscriptive* moral failures were uniformly high and did not differ as a function of moral valence ( $F(1, 91) = 0.68, p = .41$ ), ought orientation scores ( $F(1, 91) = 0.28, p = .60$ ), nor their interaction ( $F(1, 91) = 0.72, p = .39$ ), see Figure 5. In contrast, negative feelings toward *prescriptive* moral failures varied as a function of an interaction between moral

valence and ought orientation scores ( $F(1, 91) = 5.78, p = .02$ ). Negative feelings for negative prescriptive failures (committing moral Bads) were significantly higher than positive prescriptive failures (not committing moral Goods;  $F(1, 91) = 44.75, p < .001$ ) and did not vary significantly as a function of ought orientation scores ( $\beta = .18, t(91) = 1.70, p = .09$ ). However, negative feelings toward positive prescriptive failures increased significantly as ought orientation scores increased ( $\beta = .41, t(91) = 4.33, p < .001$ ), see Figure 6. This pattern is more nuanced than the hypotheses, but is consistent with the broader prediction that moral motivational orientations affect construals of moral situations. When situations are unambiguous (e.g. violating moral proscriptions) the influence of orientations is likely to be minimal. However, when situations are more open to interpretation, these orientations are likely to exert stronger effects. In this case, individuals who take an ought based approach to morality appear to treat moral prescriptions more as oughts – experiencing more negative emotions when they don't live up to them.



**Figure 5.** Mean negative feelings toward failed *proscriptive* behaviors as a function of moral valence (positive vs. negative behaviors) and mean ought orientation scores.



**Figure 6.** Mean negative feelings toward failed *prescriptive* behaviors as a function of moral valence (positive vs. negative behaviors) and mean ought orientation scores.

## Discussion

As in Study 1, the current measure of emotions could not distinguish active vs. passive feelings, and I was unable to test the more nuanced predictions in moral feelings articulated in H<sub>3</sub> (e.g., more active negative and passive positive feelings toward proscriptive failures and successes for ought orientation, vs. more passive negative and active positive feelings toward prescriptive failures vs. successes for ideal orientation). However, Study 2 was still able to examine effects of moral orientation on broad positive and negative emotions associated with imagined proscriptive and prescriptive moral successes and failures. While ideal orientation scores predicted higher positive feelings toward successful behaviors more globally, rather than being specific to or enhanced for prescriptive behaviors (due to ideal orientation highlighting prescriptive morality H<sub>2</sub>), this pattern was still consistent with the prediction that an ideal motivational orientation focuses people on achieving positive moral self-states (vs. avoiding negative moral self-states; H<sub>1</sub>), leading to greater positive feelings toward moral success more generally (H<sub>3</sub>). In addition, Study 2 did find some support for the prediction that those with higher ought orientation scores would construe prescriptive failures more in terms of failed obligations (H<sub>2</sub>), and thus associated greater negative feelings toward prescriptive failures (H<sub>3</sub>). Overall, while some of the key interactions were not observed (e.g., no evidence for ideal motivational orientation specifically highlighting prescriptive morality), Study 2 still found general support for ought and ideal motivational orientations distinctly affecting people's construals and emotional reactions to moral behaviors.

### **Study 3: Moral Orientations and Regulatory Fit**

While Studies 1 & 2 tested for differences in positive and negative emotions between ideal and ought moral orientations – a prediction stemming from the regulatory focus literature, Study 3 drew on the idea of regulatory fit (e.g., Higgins, 2005) to further demonstrate the importance of accounting for the two motivational orientations in the moral domain. In particular, research by Higgins and colleagues suggests that when an individual's regulatory style matches the way that they pursue a goal (e.g., a promotion focused person pursuing a goal in an eager, gain-oriented way, or a prevention focused person pursuing a goal in a vigilant, loss-oriented way), it produces regulatory fit, which can lead a person to feel better about their decision, ascribe greater value to their decision/action, and to be more motivated in their goal pursuit (e.g., Cesario, Higgins, & Scholer, 2008; Freitas & Higgins, 2002; Spiegel, Grant-Pillow, & Higgins, 2004). Thus, I reasoned that framing a prosocial message or solicitation (e.g., prosocial advertisements – as used in the current study) in either a promotion-focused or a prevention-focused way may produce fit, making it feel more convincing or motivating, depending on whether one has an ideal or an ought moral orientation. For example, an ad that encourages donating money to those in poverty can either be framed in terms of helping to create a better life for those in poverty (a promotion frame that should produce fit for those with an ideal orientation) or helping to prevent dismal living conditions for those in poverty (a prevention frame that should produce fit for those with an ought orientation). In addition to prevention and promotion framing, Study 3 tested whether an intrinsic vs. an extrinsic focus would further moderate potential fit effects. In particular, while ought and ideal orientations are theoretically orthogonal to extrinsic and intrinsic motivations, I

anticipated that ought orientations would tend to be more extrinsically motivated, while ideal orientations would tend to be more intrinsically motivated.

I predicted an interaction between moral orientation (ought vs. ideal) and the framing of the ads (prevention vs. promotion). In particular, I predicted that a prevention framing would produce regulatory fit for an ought-oriented individual, whereas a promotion framing would produce fit for an ideal-oriented individual. Thus, individuals with an ought orientation were predicted to find the ads more appealing and be more likely to donate (and donate more) when they were framed with a prevention (vs. promotion) focus. In contrast, I predicted that those with an ideal orientation would rate the ads as being more appealing and would be more likely to donate (and donate more) when they were framed with a promotion (vs. prevention) focus.

Further, I predicted that the interaction between moral orientation and the regulatory framing might be moderated by the locus of motivation (intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation), resulting in a possible 3-way interaction. Specifically, I anticipated that while both ought and ideal orientations would be influenced by regulatory-style-matched ads when participants were directed to think about them in an intrinsic fashion, only an ought orientation would be influenced by their style-matched ad when directed to think them in an extrinsic fashion. Thus, I expected a strong fit effect for ought-oriented individuals when the ads were framed in a prevention-focused way, regardless of the targeted motivation (either extrinsic or intrinsic). However, for ideal-oriented individuals, strong fit effects were only predicted for when the ads were framed in a promotion-focused way with intrinsic (but not extrinsic) motivation highlighted.

Lastly, I anticipated the possibility that empathic concern would positively predict ad appeal and donation behaviors. However, similar to Study 1, I predicted that the effects of moral motivational orientations on ad ratings and donations would be independent from empathic concern. Thus, I expected that controlling for empathic concern would not affect results predicted above.

## **Methods**

**Participants & procedure.** One-hundred and ninety-nine participants were recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk. Participants first completed a measure of their moral orientation. They were then told that they rate two different advertisements. Study 3 employed a 2 (Regulatory Focus: Promotion vs. Prevention Focus) x 2 (Targeted Motivation: Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Motivation) x Moral Orientation (continuous) design. In the extrinsic motivation condition, participants were told that their task was to “*imagine what your close friends and family would think about the ads and how the ads would make them feel*”. Participants in this condition also rated the ads based on how they anticipated their close friends and family would judge the ads immediately before they rated the ads for themselves. The idea was that by getting participants to adopt the perspective of close others, it would make an external source of motivation for moral behavior more salient. In the intrinsic motivation condition, participants were instead told that their task was to “*imagine what you think about the ads and how the ads make you feel*”. Participants in this condition simply rated the ads for themselves.

The two ads were prosocial in nature (e.g., one encouraged blood donation and the other encouraged donating money to reduce poverty). Regulatory focus was manipulated by framing the ads in either promotion-focused terms or in prevention-

focused terms. In the promotion focus condition, the ads framed donating as an opportunity to create a positive moral outcome (e.g., giving hope and creating prosperity). In the prevention focus condition, donating was framed as a way to prevent negative moral outcomes (e.g., preventing tragedy and erasing poverty; see Figures 7 and 8 for the actual ads).



**Figure 7.** Prevention framing (top) and promotion framing (bottom) of prosocial advertisement 1.

**I will.**

**prevent TRAGEDY.**

**prevent Death.**

**Did you know...**  
a single blood donation can prevent up to 3 deaths?

**I will.**

**give HOPE.**

**give Life.**

**Did you know...**  
a single blood donation can save up to 3 lives?

**Figure 8.** Prevention framing (top) and promotion framing (bottom) of prosocial advertisement 2.

Participants were then led to believe that they had completed the study, but they were informed that there was a short, bonus study that they could opt to do for an extra \$0.10. The majority of participants (80%) decided to do the “bonus” study. In this

portion of the study, participants filled out a measure of their locus of motivation (intrinsic vs. extrinsic) for donating and volunteering, a measure of empathic concern, their self-standard for donating and volunteering, and a measure of general regulatory focus. Lastly, participants were told that they could donate some or all of their bonus pay to The American Red Cross if they wanted.

### **Measures.**

***Ought vs. ideal moral orientation.*** Given that the revised measure in Study 2 was not much cleaner than the measure used in Study 1, I decided to try another revision. This time, the instructions were more heavy-handed in terms of informing participants that there are different ways that people can think about their moral goals. They read:

“Some people are primarily concerned with making sure that they are ***meeting their moral obligations*** (i.e., things they feel they must do) ***for fear of falling below their moral standards or responsibilities.***

Other people are primarily focused on ***striving toward their moral ideals*** (i.e., things they feel are not required, but would be good to do) ***to go above and beyond as a moral being.***”

The two moral orientations were then measured with 12 items. Five items tapped an ought orientation (e.g., “I often feel like my moral goals are things I have to do”; “I often think about how I might fail to be a morally good person”,  $\alpha = .84$ ), and 7 items tapped an ideal orientation (e.g., “I focus on how I can become a better person morally”; “A major goal in my life right now is to achieve my moral ambitions”,  $\alpha = .89$ ; see Appendix I for the full measure). Items were rated on a 9-point scale, ranging from 1 (not at all true of me) to 9 (completely true of me).

**Empathic concern.** Empathic concern was measured with the same 7-item version of Davis' (1980) measure of empathy used in Study 1 (e.g., "I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me"; "Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems"; "I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person",  $\alpha = .86$ ). See Appendix J. Items were rated on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

**Ad ratings.** A 6-item measure captured how appealing and effective participants found the ads (e.g., "I found the ad very appealing"; "I think the ad is very effective"; "The ad makes me want to help others",  $\alpha = .95$ ; see Appendix K for the full measure).<sup>9</sup> The items were rated on a 9-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 9 = strongly agree).

**Donation.** Participants were given six options with respect to donating their bonus pay: They could donate all \$0.10, \$0.08, \$0.06, \$0.04, \$0.03, \$0.02, or none of their bonus pay.

## Results

**New moral orientation measure.** A PCA with Direct Oblimin rotation revealed 2 factors accounting for 61.69% of the variance. Thankfully, the item loadings were as anticipated, with all the ought items loading onto one factor, and all the ideal items loading onto the other factor. Thus, there was no need to cut any items.

**Ad ratings.**<sup>10</sup> Analysis of favorable ad ratings employed multiple linear regressions with main effect terms for ought orientation, ideal orientation, regulatory

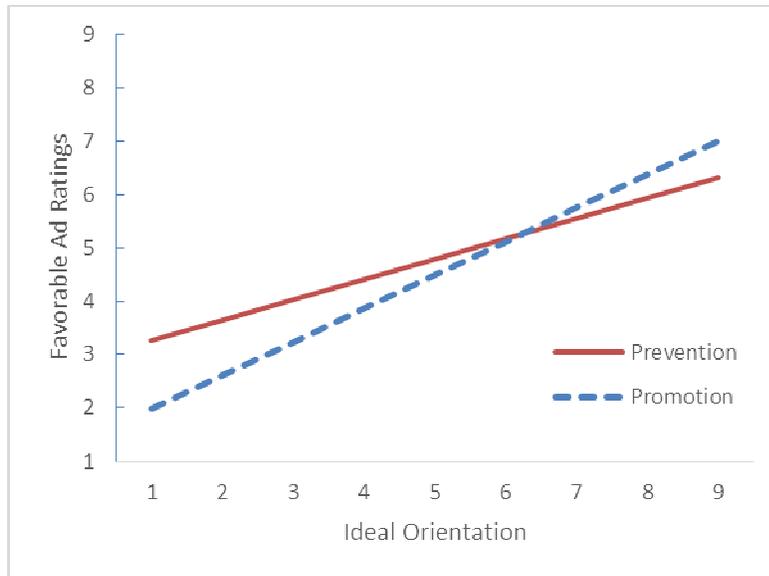
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<sup>9</sup> Participants in the extrinsic condition completed the same measure adapted for one's family and friends perspective *in addition to* (and immediately before) completing the self-focused ad ratings.

<sup>10</sup> The ad ratings for both ads were averaged together in this analysis. However, because the ad ratings were only modestly correlated ( $r = .46$ ), I ran the same regression analyses predicting the ratings for the two ads, separately, and the pattern of the results was the same.

focus condition and locus of motivation condition entered into step 1. Two-way interaction terms between ought orientation x regulatory focus, ideal orientation x regulatory focus, ought orientation x locus of motivation, ideal orientation x locus of motivation, and regulatory focus x locus of motivation were entered into step 2. Lastly, 3-way interaction terms between ought orientation x regulatory focus x locus of motivation, and ideal orientation x regulatory focus x locus of motivation were entered into step 3. There was a significant main effect of ideal orientation scores – such that they positively predicted favorable ad ratings ( $\beta = 0.42$ ,  $t(194) = 5.93$ ,  $p < .001$ ), whereas ought orientation scores had no relation to ad ratings,  $\beta = 0.01$ ,  $t(194) = 0.07$ ,  $p = .94$ .

There was a marginally significant 2-way interaction between ideal orientation and regulatory focus condition,  $t(189) = 1.79$ ,  $p = .07$ . Specifically, ideal orientation had a stronger positive association with ad ratings (see Figure 9) when participants viewed promotion-focused ads ( $\beta = 0.55$ ,  $t(96) = 5.89$ ,  $p < .001$ ) compared to prevention-focused ads ( $\beta = 0.26$ ,  $t(97) = 2.38$ ,  $p = .02$ ), although both slopes were significant. This pattern hinted at a fit-like effect produced by an ideal orientation with promotion-focused ads, although no such pattern was found for ought orientation and prevention-focused ads ( $t(189) = -1.04$ ,  $p = .30$ , for the ought orientation x regulatory focus interaction). No other 2-way or 3-way interactions were significant ( $ts(144) < -1.08$ ,  $ps > .28$ ).



**Figure 9.** Mean favorable ad ratings as a function of ideal orientation scores and regulatory focus condition (prevention vs. promotion).

**Donation behavior.** Analysis of donation amounts followed the same multiple regression logic as above. Contrary to predictions, none of the 2-way interactions ( $ts > 1.60, ps > .11$ ) or 3-way interactions ( $ts < -0.52, ps > .60$ ) was significant. Thus, there was no support for any fit effects between moral orientation and regulatory framing of the ads on donation behavior. However, consistent with Study 1, ideal orientation scores significantly and positively predicted the amount of money donated by participants ( $\beta = 0.21, t(151) = 2.39, p = .02$ ), whereas ought orientation scores did not,  $\beta = -0.10, t(151) = -1.12, p = .26$ .<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> I reran the multiple regressions predicting ad ratings and donation behavior while controlling for empathic concern. The results for ad ratings remained unchanged, but the main effect of ideal orientation predicting donation behavior was no longer significant. Thus, for the most part (and similar to Study 1) empathic concern was independent from ought and ideal motivational orientations.

## Discussion

The main goals of Study 3 were to test for fit effects between ideal orientation with a promotion focus, and ought orientation with a prevention focus, and further, to examine whether the fit effects were moderated by extrinsic vs. intrinsic motivation. There was some support for a fit effect via the interaction between ideal orientation and regulatory focus condition when predicting ad ratings - as such, there was a stronger association between ideal orientation and favorable ad ratings when the ads were framed in promotion vs. prevention-focused terms. However, the interaction was marginal, and there was no analogous interaction between ought orientation and prevention focus, nor was there a similar ideal-orientation x regulatory focus interaction predicting actual donation behaviors.

Despite failing to find support for the major predictions, Study 3 did bolster findings from Study 1. In particular, ideal (but not ought) orientation predicted favorable ratings for the prosocial ads and actual donations to the American Red Cross. This mirrored Study 1, where ideal (but not ought) orientation predicted self-reported time spent volunteering per month. Similar to Study 1, there was also evidence that ideal orientation and empathic concern were independent factors (e.g., both were unique predictors of favorable ad ratings, the two factors were only modestly correlated,  $r = .45$ , and controlling for empathic concern did not significantly alter the pattern of results).

### **Study 4: Causal Effect of Moral Orientation on Prosocial Opportunity Seeking**

Whereas Studies 1, 2, and 3 were correlational, Study 4 examined the causal effects of an ought vs. ideal moral orientation on prosocial behaviors. Past research on regulatory focus has demonstrated that a prevention vs. promotion focus can be

manipulated by getting people to think about approaching positive outcomes vs. avoiding negative outcomes. More specifically, Higgins (1994) successfully manipulated regulatory focus by asking participants to come up with a strategy that would help them to meet a positive outcome (e.g., being a good friend) vs. help them to avoid a negative outcome (e.g., being a poor friend). Similarly, Lockwood et al. (2002) primed a prevention vs. promotion focus in the academic domain by asking participants to think about a negative academic outcome that they would like to avoid (prevention focus), or a positive academic outcome that they would like to achieve (promotion focus), and to describe strategies that they could use to help them prevent or promote the outcome. Given that the moral motivational orientations were hypothesized to be conceptually related to the two components of regulatory focus (ideal orientation with promotion focus, and ought orientation with prevention focus; H<sub>1</sub>), I reasoned that the moral orientations could be manipulated in a similar way. Thus, Study 4 provided a direct test of the hypothesis that an ideal orientation will lead to a greater tendency to actively seek out and approach prosocial opportunities than an ought orientation (H<sub>4</sub>). Specifically, Study 4 tested this hypothesis by first manipulating moral orientation (via a similar method to the regulatory focus literature), then allowing participants to select different websites to view (half of which had multiple prosocial opportunities), and to request additional information regarding any of the websites if they desired. I predicted that participants in the moral ideal condition would A) select more prosocial websites to browse than those in the moral ought condition, B) spend more time browsing the prosocial websites than those in the ought condition, and C) select additional information for a greater number of prosocial websites than those in the ought condition.

## Methods

**Participants & procedure.** One-hundred and sixty-eight participants were recruited from Mechanical Turk. Using a method similar to manipulations used in past research (e.g., Higgins, 1994; Lockwood et al., 2002), moral ought vs. ideal orientation was manipulated by having participants write about their moral goals. In the moral ought condition, they were told to write about some of their moral obligations and responsibilities (i.e., things they felt they *must* do). In the moral ideal condition, participants were told to write about their moral aspirations and ideals (i.e., things they felt were good to do, but were not necessary). To strengthen the manipulation, participants in the ought condition were further asked to write about how meeting the obligations they wrote about could help them to prevent or avoid negative consequences in their life or the lives of others, whereas those in the ideal condition were told to write about how achieving the ideals they wrote about could help to promote positive consequences in their life or the lives of others (see Appendix L for the full instructions). Following this, participants were given a list of (and the hyperlinks to) the websites to six different organizations/companies with a brief description of each. Importantly, three were prosocial in nature (e.g., animal rescue and rehabilitation, providing meals and other services for the elderly and disabled, and providing literacy services and resources to those in need), and three were non-prosocial (see Appendix M for the full list with the descriptions). They were told that they had to choose three websites to browse and rate. After browsing each website of their choice, they rated it on a variety of filler dimensions (e.g., how confusing the layout was, whether the website had an attractive logo, etc.). Once all three websites were rated, participants filled out an individual difference

measure of their moral orientation and then were led to believe that the study was over. However, on the same page that thanked participants for completing the study, they were told that if they were interested in learning more about any of the companies or wanted the URL to any of the websites, they could enter their email and then check-off which of the companies they were interested in learning more about.

### **Measures.**

***Prosocial-seeking behavior.*** The extent to which participants approach prosocial opportunities and information was indexed by (A) how many prosocial websites they chose to view - ranging from 0 to all 3, (B) the average amount of time (in seconds) they spent browsing the prosocial websites they chose, and (C) how many prosocial companies they wanted additional information for – ranging from 0 to all 3.

***Ought vs. ideal mindset manipulation check.*** To get a sense of whether or not participants actually adopted an ought vs. ideal mindset, participants completed the same moral orientation measure used in Study 3.<sup>12</sup>

### **Results**

**Number of prosocial websites.** While participants in the moral ideal condition selected to view slightly more of the prosocial websites ( $M = 2.32$ ,  $SD = .67$ ) than those in the moral ought condition ( $M = 2.23$ ,  $SD = .76$ ), the difference between them was non-significant,  $t(167) = 0.82$ ,  $p = .41$ .

**Time spent on prosocial websites.** Again, the results were in the right direction, with those in the ideal condition spending more time on the prosocial websites ( $M = 54.07$  seconds,  $SD = 48.35$  seconds) than those in the ought condition ( $M = 45.73$

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<sup>12</sup> Consistent with Study 3, a PCA with Direct Oblimin rotation revealed 2 factors, with all the ought items loading appropriately onto one factor, and all the ideal items loading onto the other factor.

seconds,  $SD = 37.61$  seconds); however the difference was again non-significant,  $t(165) = 1.24, p = .22$ .

**Additional information for prosocial websites.** Inconsistent with the predictions, there was no difference between the ought and ideal conditions in terms of asking to receive more information for prosocial companies, with both means being close to zero ( $M_s = 0.24$  and  $0.20$ ,  $SD_s = .63$  and  $.62$ , respectively),  $t(167) = 0.45, p = .65$ .

**Manipulation check.** Using moral orientation condition to predict individual differences in ought orientation and ideal orientation scores revealed no differences – perhaps indicating a failure to situationally manipulate these distinct orientations. Specifically, while the ought condition predicted a slightly higher ought orientation score ( $M = 4.96, SD = 1.80$ ) compared to the ideal condition ( $M = 4.59, SD = 2.10$ ), the difference was not significant,  $t(163) = 1.21, p = .22$ . Furthermore, the ought and ideal conditions had roughly the same ideal orientation score ( $M_s = 6.39$  &  $6.35, SD_s = 1.67$  &  $1.71$ , respectively),  $t(163) = 0.13, p = .89$ .

**Individual difference scores in place of manipulation.** Given that the manipulation of moral motivation orientations did not exert significant effects, I decided to examine whether individual difference scores for moral ought and ideal orientations predicted the DVs. For the following analyses, I used linear regressions analyses with ought and ideal scores entered into step 1 simultaneously.

**Number of prosocial websites.** Consistent with predictions, ideal orientation scores significantly and positively predicted the number of prosocial websites participants chose to browse,  $\beta = 0.08, t(161) = 2.21, p = .03$ . In contrast, ought orientation scores were not a significant predictor,  $\beta = -0.04, t(161) = -1.42, p = .16$ .

***Time spent on prosocial websites.*** Contrary to original predictions, ideal orientation scores did not predict time spent on prosocial websites,  $\beta = 3.04$ ,  $t(160) = 1.46$ ,  $p = .15$ , whereas ought orientation scores were a significant predictor,  $\beta = -4.26$ ,  $t(160) = -2.36$ ,  $p = .02$ . Importantly, however, the association between ought motivational orientation and time spent browsing was negative, such that the more ought-oriented participants were, the *less* time they spent browsing prosocial websites. This finding may be consistent with the prediction that an ought-orientation leads people to construe prosocial situations or opportunities as potentially self-threatening. I will expand on this in the following discussion section.

***Additional information for prosocial websites.*** Ought and ideal orientation scores did not predict the number of prosocial websites for which participants requested additional information,  $\beta = 0.004$ ,  $t(161) = 0.15$ ,  $p = .88$  and  $\beta = -0.002$ ,  $t(161) = -0.05$ ,  $p = .96$ , respectively.

## **Discussion**

The primary goal of Study 4 was to provide causal support for the hypothesized link between a moral ideal orientation and approaching prosocial opportunities and situations. Unfortunately, since the moral orientation manipulation failed, the results are unable to speak to a causal relationship. However, using the individual difference measures for moral ought and ideal orientations as predictor variables offered some correlational support for the predictions. For example, ideal orientation scores (but not ought orientation scores) were positively associated with the number of prosocial websites participants chose to browse. Perhaps more interestingly, the higher their ought orientation scores, the less time participants spent browsing the prosocial websites. This

finding could be consistent with the hypothesis that ought-oriented individuals are more likely to find prosocial opportunities potentially self-threatening (H<sub>4</sub>). That is to say, the longer they spend browsing a prosocial website that has many links and solicitations to make donations or to get involved, the more pressure or obligated they may feel to act prosocially, and thus, the worse it would be if they do not donate or volunteer.

Although I have suggested ways in which the data are consistent with some of the predictions, it is important to keep in mind that the moral ought and ideal measures came *after* the selection of websites to browse and recorded time spent on the websites.

Secondly, although giving people the option to request additional information regarding any of the companies seemed like a reasonable measure of moral approach behavior in theory, in practice, it turned out to be a poor dependent variable, as only 13.7% of all participants opted to receive any additional information for any of the prosocial companies. It is possible that because there were only 3 prosocial websites, and because participants were already on their computer, they could have easily remembered the company names or bookmarked the websites, negating the need to request any information. In addition, it is possible that instructing participants to focus on the aesthetics and interface of the websites made them process the information more superficially, which might have prevented or hindered those with an ideal orientation from generating moral motivation from the prosocial websites.

### **Study 5: Moral Orientations and Broader Behaviors**

While Study 4 examined the relationship between moral motivational orientations and the seeking out of prosocial opportunities, the focus was limited to a single instance on a small scale. However, the idea that ideal-oriented individuals may be more likely to

actively seek out opportunities to engage in prosocial behaviors and that ought-oriented individuals may be motivated to avoid getting themselves into such situations (H<sub>4</sub>), can be applied more broadly. In particular, these moral approach and avoidance tendencies could influence people at the level of social policy, in terms of supporting a policy that increases or reduces the likelihood of being approached by people soliciting for causes, a possibly desired or undesired opportunity to engage in prosocial behavior.

I hypothesized that if ought-oriented individuals more readily construe prosocial solicitations as moral obligations (vs. opportunities), charitable solicitations might be seen as a potential threat to the self. More specifically, if a person were to always accept any and every request to donate and volunteer, they would have no money and no time for anything else. Given that the general population falls somewhere below that level of moral rigor, there will be many instances when a person says “no” to a prosocial request, or is not able to donate as much money or volunteer as much time as he/she would like. Such situations are expected to lead to a greater sense of self-threat for moral ought (vs. ideal) orientations. Thus, I predicted that ought orientation (but not ideal orientation) would lead individuals to rate solicitations for prosocial causes as more threatening, and would be more supportive of policy that would limit the personal reach of charitable solicitations (e.g., a policy that forbids prosocial solicitors from approaching a person in public without their permission). To rule out an alternative explanation that ought-oriented individuals are more supportive of the prosocial-hindering policy simply because they moralize privacy to a greater degree, I predicted that ought orientation would be no different than ideal orientation in predicting support for the control (non-prosocial) policy

that proposed a restriction or ban on companies or salespeople approaching people with free samples or products.

Another potential consequence of the hypothesis that ought-oriented individuals will experience or anticipate more aversion toward prosocial failures is that if they are not able to avoid a potentially self-threatening prosocial situation (e.g., being asked to donate to a prosocial cause), they may attempt to mitigate the potential self-threat by devaluing the prosocial cause. Thus, ought-oriented individuals may experience a *collapse of compassion* to a greater extent than ideal-oriented individuals. The collapse of compassion is the phenomenon that “As the number of people in need of help increases, the degree of compassion people feel for them ironically tends to decrease” (Cameron & Payne, 2011, p. 1). For example, Cameron & Payne (2011) had participants view a picture of either a single child, or 8 children suffering from the Darfur conflict. Half of the participants were immediately asked to rate how much compassion they felt toward the child/children. For the other participants, before being asked to rate their compassion, they were told that they would later be asked to donate to the child/children. The participants that rated their compassion immediately after viewing the child/children expressed greater compassion for the 8 children compared to the single child. However, the opposite pattern was found for those that anticipated being asked to donate. That is, they expressed less compassion toward the 8 children compared to the single child.

The collapse of compassion is thought to occur because although people often experience compassion for individuals who are suffering, the suffering of many people can be so much to bear that people down regulate their emotions (and, thus, compassion) so as to avoid highly aversive feelings. I hypothesized that if an ought orientation leads

individuals to experience or anticipate more aversion toward failures of prosociality (e.g., not helping, or not being able to help others) as compared to an ideal orientation, those with a higher ought orientation might be particularly motivated to down regulate their emotions, dampening their compassion. Thus, I predicted that there should be a larger drop in compassion (comparing the single child condition vs. the eight children condition) the greater one's ought orientation compared to an ideal orientation.

## **Methods**

**Participants & procedure.** One-hundred and twenty-one participants were recruited through Amazon Mechanical Turk. Participants first completed a measure of their moral orientation. They were then asked to rate their opinion regarding three hypothetical social policies (one filler, one control, and one critical policy). The proposed legislation of interest stipulated that solicitors for charities or volunteer opportunities would not be legally able to approach people and ask for donations or other kinds of help. Instead, they would have to wait for individuals to approach them and ask for more information before they could give their pitch:

“Solicitors of (or on behalf of) any charity, volunteer opportunity, or non-profit organization cannot legally approach people or call out to them to ask for donations, volunteers, or any other kind of aid. Instead, solicitors must wait (where they will not impede the public) for individuals to approach them and specifically ask for additional information before the solicitors can ask for any kind of donation or aid.”

In this policy, prosocial opportunities would still be available, but people would be able to avoid them more easily. The control policy was very similar to the prosocial policy,

except that it was about soliciting for sales and samples rather than donations and volunteering:

“Employees of any company cannot legally approach people or call out to them to offer free samples, coupons, or any kind of promotion. Instead, employees must wait (where they will not impede the public or their customers) for individuals to approach them and specifically ask for additional information before the employees can offer any kind of promotion.”

The filler policy was about harsher consequences for pet owners who fail to pick up after their pet/s in public places. Participants then answered questions regarding their own past and current involvement in being a charitable solicitor, and the extent to which they find being asked to donate or volunteer as a potentially self-threatening experience.

Lastly, following Cameron & Payne (2011), participants read a passage describing the ongoing conflict in Darfur and the massive suffering it has caused civilians there. In one condition (randomly assigned), participants were shown a picture of *one* child from Darfur.<sup>13</sup> In the other condition, participants were shown pictures of *eight* children from Darfur (see Appendix N for the pictures). Crucial to inducing collapse of compassion, participants in both conditions were told that they would later be asked how much they would donate to the child/children. They were then asked to rate how compassionate they felt towards the child/children.

### **Measures.**

***Ought vs. ideal moral orientation.*** Study 5 used the same measure of moral orientations as Studies 3 and 4 ( $\alpha = .85$  and  $.92$  for ought and ideal items, respectively).

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<sup>13</sup> The child shown for each participant was randomly selected from 8 possible children (the same 8 children shown in the multiple children condition)

***Social policy support.*** In order to assess participants' opinions of the social policies, 4 items indexed the extent that participants supported each policy ("I strongly support this policy"; "I think this policy makes a lot of sense"; "I would vote in favor of this policy if a vote was being held right now"; "I believe that this policy should be enacted";  $\alpha = .91$ ). Items were rated on a 9-point scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree).

***Perceived threat of solicitations.*** In order to more directly assess whether ought-oriented individuals found such prosocial solicitations to be potentially self-threatening, participants were asked 5 questions (rated on a 9-point scale, 1 = strongly disagree, 9 = strongly agree) related to perceptions of self-threat ("I find it unpleasant when people ask me to donate money to a prosocial cause"; "I feel that my response to these kinds of requests reflects my character, for better or for worse"; "I feel bad when I say "no" to these sorts of requests"; "It doesn't bother me at all to turn down these requests"; "It often makes me feel uncomfortable when people come up to me and ask me to donate";  $\alpha = .61$ ).<sup>14</sup>

***Compassion.*** Using Cameron & Payne's 2011 compassion measure, participants were asked to rate their feelings toward the child/children in the Darfur passage according to 9 items (e.g., "How sympathetic do you feel toward the child/children?"; "How urgent are the needs of the child/children?";  $\alpha = .96$ ). Each item was rated on a 9-point scale (1 = not at all, 9 = extremely). See Appendix N.

***Participation in solicitation.*** The extent to which participants have themselves been (or currently are) solicitors for prosocial causes may be an important factor to

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<sup>14</sup> The relatively low (though acceptable) internal consistency was due to the measure being comprised of two components (as revealed by factor analysis). I investigated this further in the analyses below.

account for, as one might imagine that such individuals would be opposed to any legislation that would make it harder than it already is to recruit volunteers and donors, *regardless of one's moral orientation*. Thus, two items measured participants' past and current level of prosocial solicitation ("Have you ever been (or are you currently) a solicitor for a prosocial event or organization?", and if so, "Including all prosocial events and organizations that you have solicited for, approximately how many combined hours have you spent soliciting?"). The first item was a dichotomous yes/no question, and the second item was open-ended. In analyses involving this variable, I controlled for both items (in separate analyses) and tested the possible interactions between the two items and the moral motivational orientations in predicting support for the prosocial-hindering policy (see footnote 19).

## **Results**

**Moral Orientation.** A PCA with Direct Oblimin rotation revealed 2 factors (based on eigenvalues  $> 1$  and the break point in the scree plot for eigenvalues) accounting for 68.36% of the variance. With the exception of a single ought item (which loaded onto both factors), all the ought items loaded onto one factor, and all the ideal items loaded onto the other factor. For the reported analyses, I took out the single ought item that loaded  $< .50$  onto the ought-like component.<sup>15</sup>

### **Policy support.**

**Prosocial-hindering policy.** While it was predicted that ought orientation (but not ideal orientation) would be a significant predictor of support for the proposed policy that would limit solicitation for prosocial causes, neither orientation was a significant

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<sup>15</sup> I ran all the analyses using all the ought items and the results were the same.

predictor ( $\beta = 0.09$ ,  $t(118) = .91$ ,  $p = .36$  for ought orientation, and  $\beta = 0.05$ ,  $t(118) = .50$ ,  $p = .65$  for ideal orientation).<sup>16</sup>

**Control policy.** For the control policy (limiting non-prosocial solicitation), both ought and ideal orientations were predicted to be non-significant predictors of policy support. However, Contrary to predictions, ought moral orientation positively predicted support for the control policy that would limit solicitation in non-prosocial domains ( $\beta = 0.31$ ,  $t(118) = 3.17$ ,  $p = .002$ ). Ideal orientation was not a significant predictor,  $\beta = -0.01$ ,  $t(118) = -.08$ ,  $p = .94$ . This result was puzzling because I would have expected that ought orientation scores would either significantly predict support for both the prosocial policy and the control policy (suggesting the moralization of privacy) or that ought orientation would not predict support for either (suggesting a null effect).

**Threat of prosocial solicitation.** Consistent with the predictions, ought orientation was a significant positive predictor of perceived threat from prosocial solicitations ( $\beta = 0.21$ ,  $t(118) = 2.16$ ,  $p = .03$ ), whereas ideal orientation was not,  $\beta = 0.16$ ,  $t(118) = 1.74$ ,  $p = .08$ . Somewhat surprisingly, however, ideal orientation was trending toward significance. Taking a closer look at the perceived threat of prosocial solicitation measure, a factor analysis revealed that the 5 items broke into 2 factors. One factor revolved around feeling bad about turning down prosocial solicitations (“I feel bad when I say “no” to these sorts of requests”; “It doesn’t bother me at all to turn down these requests”; “I feel that my response to these kinds of requests reflects my character, for better or for worse”), whereas the other factor was more clearly about experiencing

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<sup>16</sup> Controlling for experience as a solicitor (using either the dichotomous item or the open-ended item) for prosocial causes did not change the results. In addition, I tested for the possible interactions between experience as a solicitor (again, using either version of the variable) and the moral orientations, but none were significant ( $ps > .12$ ).

discomfort when encountering prosocial solicitations (“I find it unpleasant when people ask me to donate money to a prosocial cause”; “It often makes me feel uncomfortable when people come up to me and ask me to donate”). After separating the two factors into their own measures, I reran the analyses. For the first factor (feeling bad about saying no), only ideal orientation was a significant predictor,  $\beta = 0.22$ ,  $t(118) = 2.21$ ,  $p = .03$ . For the second factor (discomfort toward prosocial requests), only ought orientation was a significant predictor,  $\beta = 0.24$ ,  $t(118) = 2.36$ ,  $p = .02$ . The results suggest that ought orientation and ideal orientation lead individuals to experience different kinds of discomfort with prosocial opportunities. Although it is not completely consistent with my theorizing, the fact that the two moral orientations distinctly predicted two different types of threat or discomfort toward prosocial opportunities further highlights the importance of accounting for the two moral orientations. It is interesting that an ideal motivational orientation only predicted greater discomfort about turning down prosocial opportunities, perhaps suggesting a sense of disappointment in missing a prosocial opportunity. In contrast, an ought motivational orientation predicted greater discomfort about *encountering* prosocial opportunities in the first place, suggesting a more global sense of threat or discomfort toward prosocial solicitations. However, it still seems a bit puzzling that an ought orientation would not be associated with discomfort toward turning down prosocial requests, since I would have predicted that those with an ought orientation would feel even worse for saying no to helping than those with an ideal orientation.

**Collapse of compassion.** To test predictions regarding collapse of compassion, main effects of ought orientation, ideal orientation, and child condition (single vs.

multiple children) were entered into step 1 of a regression analysis predicting compassion toward the child/children from Darfur. Interaction terms (ought orientation x child condition, and ideal orientation x child condition) were entered into step 2. The predicted 2-way interaction between ought orientation and child condition was not significant,  $t(115) = 0.34, p = .73$ . The interaction between ideal orientation and child condition was also non-significant,  $t(115) = -1.25, p = .22$ . There was, however, a significant main effect of ideal orientation, such that ideal scores were positively associated with compassion ratings,  $\beta = 0.45, t(117) = 4.82, p < .001$ . There was also a significant main effect of child condition ( $\beta = 0.20, t(117) = 2.48, p = .02$ ), with higher compassion ratings for multiple children ( $M = 7.43, SD = 1.39$ ) compared to a single child ( $M = 6.67, SD = 1.96$ ). This was surprising, because such a pattern runs counter to the collapse of compassion literature (i.e., there should have been less compassion toward multiple children vs. the single child).

## **Discussion**

Study 5 provided a mixed set of findings. Unexpectedly, ought orientation scores did not predict support for the key policy that would limit prosocial solicitations, but they did predict support for the policy that limited non-prosocial solicitations (e.g., sales and promotions). One possible explanation is that ought-oriented individuals place importance (moral or otherwise) on privacy with respect to solicitations of any kind, but that showing support for a policy that makes it harder to solicit for prosocial causes feels wrong, or soliciting for prosocial causes (vs. selling material goods) seems more justified.

Consistent with predictions, Study 5 found that ought orientation predicted a general discomfort toward prosocial solicitations. In contrast, ideal orientation predicted

feeling bad for turning down prosocial solicitations (e.g., missing moral opportunities). The former finding suggested that ought orientation should, in theory, evoke a greater desire to avoid prosocial solicitations altogether, but unfortunately it did not translate into support for the prosocial-hindering policy, as mentioned above.

Finally, not only did Study 5 fail to find an exacerbated collapse of compassion effect for ought-oriented individuals, but the pattern of compassion ratings was the opposite of the collapse of compassion literature. This was surprising because Study 5 used the original materials (e.g., the same pictures of the children and their captions) from the Cameron and Payne (2010) paper. It is possible that Study 5 did not replicate the typical collapse of compassion literature due to the nature of the study. Specifically, because participants were asked about their moral beliefs and goals, and how they felt about prosocial solicitations *prior* to the collapse of compassion measure, participants may have been hyper aware of their moral beliefs and values, or at least more than usual (e.g., in typical collapse of compassion studies). If their sense of morality was highlighted, then instead of dampening their response to the suffering of many (the collapse of compassion), they may have increased their expressed compassion to reflect their heightened sense of morality.

### **General Discussion**

People do good things for others all the time. Whether it is helping an elderly person cross a busy street, feeding the homeless in a soup kitchen or making an anonymous donation, there is no shortage of good deeds. The motivations behind those good deeds, however, may be more complex than they appear on the surface. If a young boy escorts an elderly woman across an intersection, should he feel proud or was he just

doing what his parents taught him to do in such a situation? If a woman gives a tithing to her church, are her actions commendable, or is she only living up to the minimal standards of her religious community? The current research demonstrates that the motivational orientations that drive actions can have important effects on a person's feelings, goals, and future behaviors.

The main purpose of this dissertation was to gain a better understanding of different moral motivations, and how they can affect cognitions and behaviors in important ways. In particular, while the existing moral literature has focused primarily on a *self-consistency* motive, the five studies in this paper investigated the moral motivation of *self-improvement*. Throughout this dissertation, the former type of moral motivation was conceptualized as an *ought orientation*, because in addition to the self-consistency motive, it was hypothesized to center around fulfilling one's moral duties and obligations (i.e., moral oughts) and concern about falling below minimal moral standards. More specifically, a moral ought orientation was predicted to contain elements of a prevention focus (e.g., the desire to avoid being/becoming a worse person or to fail at one's moral obligations), proscriptive morality (e.g., displaying a condemnatory pattern where the success of one's moral behaviors is not praiseworthy, but their failure is highly blameworthy), and to be associated with an extrinsic locus of motivation (e.g., feeling like one is simply following the moral laws, doing so because they have to). As such, I hypothesized that ought-oriented individuals would tend to experience greater negativity toward moral failure, but would also potentially be less likely to pursue prosocial opportunities in the first place.

In contrast, the other type of moral motivation was conceptualized as an *ideal orientation*, because in addition to the self-improvement motive, it was hypothesized to focus primarily on doing more than is required in order to strive toward one's moral hopes and aspirations (i.e., moral ideals). More specifically, a moral ideal orientation was predicted to contain elements of a promotion focus (e.g., the desire to be/become a better person and to achieve one's moral aspirations), prescriptive morality (e.g., exhibiting a commendatory pattern where the success of one's moral behaviors is deemed laudatory, but their failure is *not* deserving of blame), and self-determination/an intrinsic locus of motivation (e.g., feeling like one chooses to do good behaviors because they enjoy it). As such, I hypothesized that ideal-oriented individuals would tend to feel more energized by moral success, and would be potentially more likely to actively seek out prosocial opportunities.

### **Summary of Findings**

I will first briefly summarize Studies 1 through 5 and their findings, and then describe in greater detail how the findings relate to the central hypotheses.

Study 1 examined the relationship between the hypothesized moral motivational orientations and different constructs that were expected to be related to moral ought and ideal orientations in distinct ways. Study 1 found that the two moral orientations distinctly predicted self-motives, regulatory focus, locus of motivation, feelings toward moral failure and success, and self-reported prosocial behavior.

Study 2 examined the relationship between moral motivational orientations and moral type (proscriptive vs. prescriptive morality) in predicting feelings toward moral success and failure. While Study 2 did not observe predicted interactions between ideal

orientation and moral type in predicting positive feelings toward moral success, it did find support for the predicted interaction between ought orientation and moral type in predicting negative feelings toward moral failure. Specifically, individuals with higher ought orientations experienced greater negative feelings regarding prescriptive moral failures.

Study 3 tested for fit-like effects between moral motivational orientation and regulatory focus in response to prosocial appeals (i.e., advertisements for prosocial causes). In general, there was no support for fit effects, and no evidence that locus of motivation (extrinsic vs. intrinsic) interacted with moral orientation to predict favorable ratings of prosocial ads or donation behavior. However, consistent with Study 1, ideal (but not ought) orientation uniquely predicted donation behavior, as well as favorable ratings for the prosocial ads.

Study 4 attempted to test a causal relationship between ideal orientation and seeking opportunities for prosocial behavior. While the moral orientation manipulation did not work as expected, individual differences in moral orientation demonstrated that ideal orientation was uniquely correlated with the number of prosocial websites participants chose to view, and ought orientation was uniquely and *negatively* correlated with time spent browsing the prosocial websites.

Study 5 examined the impact of moral motivational orientation on broader decisions and behaviors (e.g., support for social policies). Specifically, Study 5 tested a predicted relationship between ought orientation and desire to avoid prosocial solicitations. While ought orientation did not predict support for a policy that would

hinder prosocial solicitations, it did predict general discomfort toward being approached with prosocial solicitations.

**Associated with different self-motives (H<sub>1</sub>).** My first hypothesis predicted that the two moral orientations would be associated with distinct motivations with respect to the self. Specifically, it was hypothesized that an ought orientation would be associated with the motivation to meet and maintain one's moral self-concept for fear of falling short of their moral standards and obligations. Thus, an ought orientation was thought to be pushed by the desire to avoid negative self-states. In contrast, an ideal orientation was hypothesized to be driven by the motivation to improve or elevate one's moral self-concept by exceeding what is expected of them. Thus, an ideal orientation was predicted to be propelled by the desire to approach positive self-states.

In support of H<sub>1</sub>, Study 1 found that only ought orientation was associated with general self-maintenance motives (e.g., "I am primarily concerned about maintaining who I am"), whereas only ideal orientation was associated with general self-improvement motives (e.g., "I am primarily concerned with improving who I am"). Further, Study 1 found that ought orientation was positively (and ideal orientation was *negatively*) associated with a general prevention focus, whereas only an ideal orientation was positively associated with a general promotion focus.

**Engender different moral construals (H<sub>2</sub>).** My second hypothesis suggested that the two moral orientations would shape individuals' construals of moral decisions or situations. More specifically, it was hypothesized that ought-oriented individuals would be more likely to construe a prosocial behavior or opportunity as a moral obligation (at which they could fail), whereas ideal-oriented individuals would be more likely to

construe the same prosocial behavior or opportunity as a chance to achieve a moral ideal. Thus, it was predicted that an ought orientation would lead people to hold a stricter standard (i.e., view it as more obligatory) toward engaging in a prosocial behavior than an ideal orientation.

Inconsistent with H<sub>2</sub>, Study 1 found that both ought orientation and ideal orientation positively predicted the strictness of standards to which participants held for themselves regarding volunteering. Thus, both ought and ideal orientations seemed to lead people to raise the bar in terms of their prosocial self-expectations.

**Evoke different affective responses (H<sub>3</sub>).** Building on the previous 2 hypotheses, it was predicted that ought and ideal orientations would lead people to experience different affective states in response to moral successes and failures. Specifically, because an ought orientation was predicted to put the spotlight on falling below one's moral obligations, ought-oriented individuals were hypothesized to experience greater negativity and aversive feelings toward moral failures than ideal-oriented individuals. In contrast, because an ideal orientation was predicted to highlight moral self-improvement and achievement, ideal-oriented individuals were hypothesized to experience greater positive feelings and emotions toward moral success than ought-oriented individuals. Drawing on the regulatory focus literature (e.g., Higgins, 1987; Higgins et al., 1997), I further hypothesized that a difference between active and passive feelings would emerge for the two orientations. In particular, it was anticipated that moral failures would lead to more *active* negative (i.e., highly aversive) feelings for an ought orientation, but more *passive* negative (i.e., mildly undesirable) feelings for an ideal orientation. In contrast, moral success was predicted to lead to more *passive*

positive (i.e., mildly desirable) feelings for an ought orientation, but more *active* positive (i.e., highly energizing) feelings for an ideal orientation.

Unfortunately, the measure of feelings employed in the current studies did not differentiate statistically between active and passive states for either the negative or positive emotions, and so I was unable to test that portion of H<sub>3</sub>. However, results from Studies 1 and 2 did support H<sub>3</sub> broadly speaking. For example, while Studies 1 and 2 found that both ought and ideal orientations predicted positive feelings toward moral success, ideal orientation had a stronger relationship with positive feelings. Study 1 also found that ought orientation (but not ideal orientation) predicted negative feelings toward moral failures. Study 2 found that ought orientation only predicted negative feelings toward prescriptive failures (not doing moral Goods, or doing moral Bads), but not proscriptive failures (not doing moral Rights, or doing moral Wrongs), since negative feelings were uniformly high towards failed proscriptives. Consistent with H<sub>2</sub> and H<sub>3</sub>, it suggested that ought orientation construed prescriptive moral failures more in terms of moral obligations, thereby eliciting greater negative feelings toward failed moral prescriptions.

**Produce different behavioral tendencies (H<sub>4</sub>).** The final hypothesis was that the two moral motivational orientations would produce different behavioral patterns. First, given that an ought orientation was hypothesized to be characterized by a prevention focus (i.e., focusing on not falling below one's moral self-standard), and an ideal orientation by a promotion focus (i.e., focusing on improving one's moral self), the two moral orientations were hypothesized to be susceptible to regulatory fit. In particular, an ought orientation was predicted to produce fit effects when paired with a prevention

focused prosocial situation, and an ideal orientation was predicted to produce fit effects when paired with a promotion focused prosocial situation.

Secondly, the two moral orientations were hypothesized to lead to different behavioral tendencies toward moral opportunities. Specifically, ideal-oriented individuals were predicted to more actively seek out prosocial situations and opportunities than ought-oriented individuals. Furthermore, it was hypothesized that ought-oriented individuals might actually be more likely to avoid prosocial situations and opportunities to circumvent potential moral failures.

Study 3 found a hint of support for a fit effect between the ideal motivational orientation and promotion focus - specifically, an ideal orientation more strongly predicted favorable ratings toward a prosocial advertisement when it was framed with a promotion (vs. prevention) focus. However, the same pattern was not found for predicting actual donation behavior, and was also absent for ought orientation and prevention focus. Thus, overall, the current research does not provide strong evidence that moral orientations and regulatory focus produce fit effects.

Greater support was found for the hypothesis that an ideal orientation would lead to more prosocial behavior seeking. For example, Study 4 showed that ideal orientation (but not ought orientation) predicted the number of prosocial websites that participants chose to browse. Study 1 found that ideal orientation (but not ought orientation) predicted the average amount of time spent volunteering per month. Similarly, Study 3 found that ideal orientation predicted actual donations to the American Red Cross, whereas ought orientation did not.

There were mixed results for the hypothesis that ought-oriented individuals may avoid prosocial situations. In support of the hypothesis, Study 4 found that ought-orientation scores were associated with spending *less* time viewing prosocial websites. Also, Study 5 found that ought orientation predicted general perceptions of threat and discomfort from prosocial solicitations, whereas ideal orientation predicted feeling bad specifically toward turning down prosocial opportunities. However, inconsistent with this hypothesis, the general perceptions of threat from prosocial solicitations (experienced by ought-oriented individuals) did not lead to increased support for a social policy that would hinder prosocial solicitations.

### **Contributions to the Literature**

I believe the current dissertation, overall, makes some important contributions to the literature. At the theoretical level, this dissertation identified a rather large gap in the moral literature due to an almost exclusive focus on moral self-consistency motives as the primary mechanism for acting on one's moral goals (Blasi, 1980, 1983; Aquino & Reed, 2002). The additional consideration of moral self-improvement motives, and the distinction between moral ought and moral ideal orientations investigated here drew from and built on established research across a variety of social, cognitive, and developmental literatures. In addition to shedding light on an alternative moral motivation, the five studies presented in this dissertation also provided a direct investigation of a moral self-consistency motive – something that is surprisingly lacking in a literature that relies on such a mechanism to explain the relationship between moral identities and moral action. Further, not only did the studies provide a test of the existence of distinct moral motives,

they also offered some insight into the affective and behavioral consequences of these different moral orientations.

On a more practical level, the current dissertation offers a potentially useful measure of the two hypothesized moral orientations. While early renditions of the ought and ideal orientation measure were not well-formed, the two constructs did a good job in distinctly predicting and correlating with a variety of factors that were hypothesized to relate to the two moral orientations in different ways. Further, by Study 3, I was able to create a moral orientation measure with two clear components corresponding to the hypothesized moral motivational orientations. The same measure was also used in Studies 4 and 5, and across these three studies, it held up well to factor analyses.

However, an important caveat is that the measure included heavy-handed instructions that essentially gave participants a brief description of ought and ideal orientations (without using those terms, of course) as examples of ways that people can think about their moral goals. It is unclear whether the heavy-handed instructions are necessary with the ought and ideal items from Study 3 (as I did not want to mess with the measure in subsequent studies). However, assuming that they are necessary, I can speculate as to why. It is possible that the average person does not reflect very deeply about or very often on their moral goals, and thus many people may not pick up on the subtle changes in wording and framing of the moral orientation items without the aid of examples that clearly separate the two. It is worth noting that similarly heavy-handed instructions are used in assessment of other constructs that are psychologically distinct but may not be highly salient to lay people – a notable example being internal vs. external motivation to respond without prejudice (Plant & Devine, 1998).

## Limitations and Future Directions

Unsurprisingly, the results of the current studies were not perfect due to various issues and shortcomings that were discovered throughout the five studies. Some of the issues were minor annoyances; however some had a more substantial impact on the utility of a study. For example, Study 4 was important because it was designed to provide causal support for the two moral orientations and their different effects on prosocial-seeking behavior. However, because the moral orientation manipulation did not exert observable effects (even on the orientation manipulation check), Study 4 had to rely on the same (or similar) individual difference measure of moral orientation that was used in all the other studies. Thus, while Study 4 bolstered some of the findings from the prior studies, it did not add anything substantially new (save a different form of prosocial behavior used as the dependent measure). In light of this, future research should prioritize causal testing, to bring this research from a reliance on correlational results to the next level, helping to show that the different moral orientations do indeed *cause* the hypothesized effects.

Although Study 4 attempted to use a manipulation that has been successful in the regulatory focus literature (Higgins, 1994; Lockwood et al., 2002), it is clear that manipulating a moral ought vs. ideal orientation may take a more potent approach. One possibility is that instead of having participants write briefly about their obligatory or optional moral goals (about which they only wrote ~2 sentences), it might be better to have participants make repeated moral judgments in a way that is consistent with either an ought or ideal orientation. For example, participants might see a range of moral behaviors with the task of explaining how each upholds or fails a moral obligation or

duty in some way (for the ought orientation condition), or how each surpasses or satisfies a moral expectation in some way (for the ideal orientation condition). This type of manipulation could be an improvement over the one used in Study 4, if multiple repetitions of making such judgments might help to form an ought or ideal mindset in the participant.

Alternatively, it is possible that the failed manipulation of moral motivational orientation hints at a lack of malleability of motives in the moral domain. Past research suggests that the moral domain is different from the non-moral domain in many ways (e.g., Skitka, 2010). In particular, the moral domain is thought to be characterized by feelings certainty and objectivity (e.g., Goodwin & Darley, 2008, 2012) in ways that are distinct from strong, but non-moral attitudes and beliefs (Skitka, Bauman, and Sargis, 2005). Thus, there is reason to believe that the moral orientations investigated in this dissertation may be less amenable to the types of subtle primes and manipulations that trigger shifts in regulatory focus in other domains (e.g., academic performance).

Another issue was that three different variations of the moral motivational orientation measure was implemented across the five studies. The measure used in Study 1 required dropping a few items, the measure used in Study 2 added new items while also requiring some items to be dropped, and the measure used in Studies 3-5 used entirely new (though closely related) items and heavy-handed instructions. Thus, a couple of questions need to be sorted out.

First, did the measures differ in fundamental ways that would affect the interpretation of the results and findings? The main difference was that the moral orientation measures used in Studies 1 and 2 likely tapped a general moral drive or moral

identity-like component in addition to the ought and ideal components, whereas Study 3 likely did not. For example, over half of the items used in Study 1 included wording like, “Doing the right thing is important to who I am...”, “As a central part of who I am...”, and “It’s important to me to help others because...”, and the majority of the items in Study 2 began with, “Doing morally good things and helping others is important to who I am...”. This might have been part of the reason why the measures used in Studies 1 and 2 were somewhat messy or inconsistent in loading onto the predicted ought and ideal orientation components, however, the question at hand is whether this potential difference changes our interpretation of the findings. It seems unlikely that this potential difference significantly alters the interpretation of the results given that controlling for general MID in Study 1 (for all the major analyses)<sup>17</sup> led to the same pattern of results as the initial analyses. Furthermore, the results across all five studies suggest a very consistent pattern, with ought and ideal moral orientation scores predicting similar outcomes despite being measured by different items (e.g., ideal, but not ought orientation scores, significantly predicted prosocial behavior in Studies 1, 3, and 4). This would suggest that the three measures of moral orientation, while different, captured the same or similar ought and ideal moral orientation constructs.

The second, and related question, is whether the heavy-handed instructions used in the moral orientation measure for Studies 3-5 render the results somewhat inaccurate due to overly polarizing or misrepresenting people’s natural moral orientation? This is

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<sup>17</sup> I controlled for MID in two ways. In the most straightforward way, I included the general MID measure alongside ought and ideal moral orientation in the regression analyses. The other way I controlled for MID was by using the average of both ought and ideal items as a proxy for overall MID or moral drive, and including that score alongside a difference score between ought and ideal orientation (i.e., I subtracted ought orientation from ideal orientation scores). Both ways of controlling for MID led to the same overall pattern, which was very similar to the pattern of results found without controlling for MID.

certainly a valid concern, however I would suggest that the data from these studies indicate that the instructions are likely not problematic. For example, ought and ideal moral orientation scores significantly and distinctly predicted various DVs in Studies 3-5 (e.g., prosocial ad ratings, donation behavior, # of prosocial websites viewed, time spent viewing prosocial websites, and perceived threat of prosocial solicitation), suggesting that the moral motivational measure was tapping into real (vs. artificial) differences. That is to say, if the instructions inflated or overly polarized participant's moral orientation scores (such that the scores did not accurately reflect their actual moral orientation), then their ought and ideal scores should not have distinctly predicted the DVs that they did in Studies 3-5 (some of which bolstered or matched the results from Studies 1 and 2). One possible explanation would be that the polarizing instructions temporarily changed or altered participants' moral motivational orientation, such that their ought and ideal orientation scores (while more polarized than usual) accurately reflected their current moral orientation. However, I'm not sure how likely this explanation is given that the results from Study 4 seem to suggest that a person's moral orientation is not easily manipulated or altered. Lastly, while the difference score for moral orientation (ideal minus ought orientation) was pretty low for Study 1 ( $M_{diff} = 0.39, SD = 1.55$ ), the difference score for Study 2 ( $M_{diff} = 1.27, SD = 1.59$ ) was similar to those of Study 3 ( $M_{diff} = 1.35, SD = 1.95$ ), Study 4 ( $M_{diff} = 1.58, SD = 2.11$ ), and Study 5 ( $M_{diff} = 1.55, SD = 2.09$ ), suggesting that the moral orientation instructions in Studies 3-5 did not overly polarize participants (at least in comparison to Study 2).

Future research would also greatly benefit from using more substantial prosocial behaviors as dependent variables. It is one thing for a person to donate 10 cents (or even

less) online with the click of a button, but actually having a person go out and do volunteer work with their hands would be a much more compelling test. More specifically, self-reported time spent volunteering was used in the current studies because Reed, Aquino, & Levy (2007) suggested that volunteering one's time is a better prosocial measure than donating, given that volunteering is more self-expressive and effortful. However, self-reported volunteering should be taken with a large grain of salt, given the obvious social desirability effects that could be at play. Thus, being able to incorporate actual volunteer service into a test of ought vs. ideal orientations would be a great addition to this line of research.

On the flip side, I think it would be interesting and informative to start looking at the effects of the two moral orientations on *antisocial* behaviors (e.g., cheating or lying). The current research has, thus far, largely focused on how the hypothesized moral motivational orientations affect prosocial behaviors. The current studies showed that an ideal moral orientation was a stronger predictor of prosocial behaviors than an ought moral orientation. However, I would predict that a moral ought orientation would better deter individuals from engaging in immoral behaviors, given that these would more likely be construed as a failure to uphold moral obligations and responsibilities. The results of Study 2 from the current dissertation are consistent with this prediction, since prescriptive moral failures seemed to be construed more in terms of failed obligations (resulting in increased negative feelings) for those with greater ought orientation scores. However, it would be nice to take it to the next step and move from affective reports to actual behaviors. In contrast, to the extent that ideal-oriented individuals see more flexibility in

moral adherence (e.g., that it would be good to donate or not cheat, but it isn't necessary), I would predict that they would be less deterred from morally questionable behaviors.

Lastly, while I believe that bringing a moral ideal orientation into focus helps us understand more of the moral spectrum and adds to the moral literature, I certainly do not believe that ought and ideal orientations are *the* moral orientations. That is to say, it is entirely possible that there are additional types of moral orientations, with wholly unique underlying moral motivations.

### **Conclusion**

The current research investigated the underlying motivations and effects of two potential moral orientations. In particular, a moral *ought orientation* was hypothesized to be associated with self-maintenance motives and with an emphasis on avoiding the failure of moral obligations. In contrast, a moral *ideal orientation* was hypothesized to be associated with moral self-improvement motives and with an emphasis on achieving moral aspirations. Across five studies, compelling support was found for a distinction between these ought and ideal orientations and their unique effects – although support for some of the more specific predictions regarding the anticipated consequences and effects was less robust.

The results of the current studies clearly suggest that moral self-improvement motives exist in the normal population, and that they have distinct consequences on moral thoughts and behaviors from a moral self-consistency motives. Thus, the current dissertation has identified an area in the moral psychology literature that has, for the most part, been neglected. By gaining a better understanding of different moral motivations and their downstream effects, not only do we expand our understanding of the moral

mind, but we also enhance our chances of putting that knowledge to use in the hope of fostering greater prosociality.

## Appendix A (Study 1)

### General Moral Identity (Aquino & Reed, 2002)

(1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*)

Listed below are some characteristics that might describe a person:

Caring, Compassionate, Fair, Friendly, Generous, Helpful, Hardworking, Honest, Kind

The person with these characteristics could be you or it could be someone else. For a moment, visualize in your mind the kind of person who has these characteristics. Imagine how that person would think, feel, and act. When you have a clear image of what this person would be like, answer the following questions.

1. It would make me feel good to be a person who has these characteristics.
2. Being someone who has these characteristics is an important part of who I am.
3. I often wear clothes that identify me as having these characteristics.
4. I would be ashamed to be a person who had these characteristics. (R)
5. The types of things I do in my spare time (e.g., hobbies) clearly identify me as having these characteristics.
6. The kinds of books and magazines that I read identify me as having these characteristics.
7. Having these characteristics is not really important to me. (R)
8. The fact that I have these characteristics is communicated to others by my membership in certain organizations.
9. I am actively involved in activities that communicate to others that I have these characteristics.
10. I strongly desire to have these characteristics.

## Appendix B (Study 1)

### Ought/Ideal Moral Identity

(1 = not me at all, 9 = completely me)

Your task is to indicate to what degree each statement represents you and your thoughts.

**1) Doing the right thing is important to who I am, primarily because it...**

- keeps me from becoming a worse person
- makes me a better person

**2) In order to...**

- remain a good person, I feel like I must help others
- become a better person, I strive to help others

**3) As a central part of who I am, I...**

- have a responsibility to do good deeds
- make a personal choice to do good deeds

**4) Doing the right thing is mostly driven by my desire to...**

- meet my self-standards
- reach for my self-potential

**5) It's important to me to help others because not doing so would...**

- go against who I am
- prevent me from becoming who I want to be

Now that you have rated each item, please choose which of the two statements (for each pair) best represents you and your thoughts

## Appendix C (Study 1 & 3)

### Promotion/Prevention (Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda, 2002)

(1 = Not at all true of me, 9 = Very true of me)

1. In general, I am focused on preventing negative events in my life.
2. I am anxious that I will fall short of my responsibilities and obligations.
3. I frequently imagine how I will achieve my hopes and aspirations.
4. I often think about the person I am afraid I might become in the future.
5. I often think about the person I would ideally like to be in the future.
6. I typically focus on the success I hope to achieve in the future.
7. I often worry that I will fail to accomplish my moral goals.
8. I often think about how I will achieve moral success.
9. I often imagine myself experiencing bad things that I fear might happen to me.
10. I frequently think about how I can prevent failures in my life.
11. I am more oriented toward preventing losses than I am toward achieving gains.
12. My major goal in life right now is to achieve my moral ambitions.
13. My major goal in life right now is to avoid becoming a moral failure.
14. I see myself as someone who is primarily striving to reach my “ideal self”—to fulfill my hopes, wishes, and aspirations.
15. I see myself as someone who is primarily striving to become the self I “ought” to be—to fulfill my duties, responsibilities, and obligations.
16. In general, I am focused on achieving positive outcomes in my life.
17. I often imagine myself experiencing good things that I hope will happen to me.
18. Overall, I am more oriented toward achieving success than preventing failure.

## Appendix D (Study 2)

### Self-Motive: Self-Improvement vs. Self-Maintenance

(1 = Not at all true of me, 9 = Very true of me)

#### *Self-Improvement:*

- I am primarily concerned about improving who I am
- Constantly growing as a person is what I desire the most
- Making progress, as a person, is the most important thing to me
- I am always looking for ways to get better at the things I find most important
- When I decide whether or not to do something, I am most concerned about whether it improves (or doesn't improve) who I am
- If I am currently meeting my expectations at something, my primary motivation is to improve my performance

#### *Self-Maintenance:*

- I am primarily concerned about maintaining who I am
- Being consistent with my sense of self is what I desire the most
- Not regressing, as a person, is the most important thing to me
- I am always looking for ways to keep myself from getting worse at the things that I find most important
- When I decide whether or not to do something, I am most concerned about whether it aligns with (or goes against) who I am
- If I am currently meeting my expectations at something, my primary motivation is to sustain my performance

## Appendix E (Studies 1 and 3)

### Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Motivation (adapted from Mullan et al., 1997)

(1 = *Strongly disagree*, 9 = *Strongly agree*)

#### External regulation:

- I [donate] because other people say I should
- I take part in [donating] because my friends/family/spouse say I should
- I [donate] because others will not be pleased with me if I don't
- I feel under pressure from my friends/family to [donate]

#### Intrinsic regulation

- I [donate] because it feels great
- I enjoy the times when I [donate]
- I find [donating] a pleasurable experience
- I get pleasure and satisfaction from [donating]

## Appendix F (Study 1)

### Feelings toward Behaviors

(1 = not at all, 9 = completely)

#### *Positive Feelings for Success:*

Thinking about the times that you have already volunteered for or donated to charities and organizations, to what extent did it/does it make you feel the following?

- Praiseworthy
- Alive and vitalized
- Full of energy and spirit
- Energized
- Enjoyment
- Pleasure
- Satisfied
- At ease
- Content

#### *Negative Feelings for Failure:*

Thinking about the times that you **decided not to** volunteer for or donate to charities and organizations, to what extent did it/does it make you feel the following?

- Blameworthy
- Awful and terrible
- Anxious and uneasy
- Shameful
- Frustrated
- Sad
- Displeased
- Disappointed
- Guilty

## Appendix G (Study 2)

### Ought/Ideal Moral Orientation – Revision 1

(1 = Not at all true of me, 9 = Completely true of me)

#### Items from original measure:

##### Ought:

- In order to remain a good person, I feel like I must help others
- For me, being a good person is mainly about fulfilling my moral duties and responsibilities

##### Ideal:

- \*As a central part of who I am, I have aspirations to do good deeds
- \*For me, being a good person is mainly about living up to my moral ideals and aspirations

#### Items from pilot study:

*“Doing morally good things and helping others is important to who I am...”*

##### Ought:

- \*Mostly because it keeps me from becoming a worse person
- \*Mostly because doing so helps me fulfill my moral obligations (i.e., what I must do)
- \*Because I am primarily concerned with meeting my moral duties and responsibilities
- \*Primarily because of my desire to meet my minimal moral standards and expectations

##### Ideal:

- \*Mostly because it helps me to become an even better person
- \*Mostly because doing so helps me achieve my moral hopes and dreams (i.e., what I aspire to do)
- Because I am primarily concerned with ‘going above and beyond’ to reach my moral aspirations
- Primarily because of my desire to improve my moral potential and exceed myself

#### New Items:

##### Ought:

- When I help another person, I feel like I am just doing what I should be doing anyway
- When I don’t help someone, I often think about whether it was wrong for me to not help
- I worry whenever I neglect to help someone, because it reflect poorly on who I am

- Whenever I choose not to help someone, I primarily see that as a failure to do what is right

Ideal:

- When I help another person, I feel like I am doing something above and beyond what is necessary
- When I don't help someone, I often think about how nice it would have been for me to help
- I don't worry too much when I neglect to help someone, because there are always other opportunities to help people
- Whenever I choose not to help someone, I primarily see that as a missed opportunity to do something good

\* Starred items were the items used in the cut version (i.e., the 8-item measure used in the analyses for Study 2)

## Appendix H (Study 2)

### Feelings toward Moral Behaviors

(1 = Not at all, 9 = Completely)

To what extent would engaging in [refraining from doing] this behavior make you feel the following:

#### *Positive*

- I would feel Praiseworthy
- It would make me feel Alive and vitalized
- I would be Full of energy and spirit
- I would be Energized
- I would feel Satisfied with myself
- I would feel At ease
- It would make me feel content

#### *Negative*

- I would feel Blameworthy
- It would make me feel Awful and terrible
- I would be Anxious and uneasy
- I would feel Shameful
- I would be Displeased with myself
- I would feel Disappointed
- It would make me feel Guilty

## Appendix I (Studies 3-5)

### Ought/Ideal Moral Orientation – Revision 2

We are now going to ask you some questions specifically about goals you have regarding moral behavior. There are different ways that people typically think about their moral goals.

Some people are primarily concerned with making sure that they are **meeting their moral obligations** (i.e., things they feel they must do) **for fear of falling below their moral standards or responsibilities**.

Other people are primarily focused on **striving toward their moral ideals** (i.e., things they feel are not required, but would be good to do) **to go above and beyond as a moral being**.

The following questions will assess which way you tend to think about your moral goals.

(1 = Not at all true of me, 9 = Completely true of me)

Ought:

- I often feel like my moral goals are things I *have to* do
- I am often anxious about falling short of my moral responsibilities
- A major goal in my life is to avoid moral failures
- I often think about how I might fail to be a morally good person
- I worry about becoming a worse person morally

Ideal:

- Morally, I see myself as someone who is striving to reach my *ideals* – to fulfill my moral hopes and aspirations
- I often feel like my moral goals go beyond what is simply required
- Achieving my moral goals is a personal choice, not simply a duty
- I generally focus on how I will achieve my moral aspirations
- Going beyond what is minimally required to be a moral person is very important to me
- A major goal in my life right now is to achieve my moral ambitions
- I focus on how I can become a better person morally

## Appendix J (Study 3)

### Empathic Concern

(1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*)

- I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me
- Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems
- When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards them
- Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal
- When I see someone being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them
- I am often quite touched by things that I see happen
- I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person

## Appendix K (Study 3)

### Ad Ratings

*(1 = strongly disagree, 9 = strongly agree)*

- I found the ad very appealing
- I think the ad is very persuasive
- It motivates me to donate
- I think the ad is very effective
- The ad makes me feel inspired
- The ad makes me want to help others

## Appendix L (Study 4)

### Moral Ought vs. Ideal Orientation Manipulation

Ought Instructions:

“For this task, please take a few minutes to describe some of your moral obligations and responsibilities (i.e., things you feel that you *must* do).

What sorts of good things do you try to do for others because you believe that you are morally required to do them?”

“How can meeting these obligations help you to prevent or avoid negative things in your life and the lives of others?”

Ideal Instructions:

“For this task, please take a few minutes to describe some of your moral aspirations and ideals (i.e., things that you feel you don't have to do, but would be good to do).

What sorts of good things do you try to do for others because you believe that they are worth striving for?”

“How can achieving these aspirations help you to promote or achieve positive things in your life and the lives of others?”

## Appendix M (Study 4)

### List of Organizations and Companies

“Below is the list of companies and their websites that you can browse. Please **view and rate 3 of the websites**. You will be able to choose which 3 you want to see.”

Prosocial list:

Reading Is Fundamental

(delivers free books and literacy resources to children and families who need them most)

The Marine Mammal Center

(rescues and rehabilitates sick or injured marine mammals)

Meals on Wheels

(delivers meals to individuals who are unable to purchase or prepare their own meals)

Non-prosocial list:

Turner Construction

(designs, plans, and coordinates large construction projects)

B. Braun Medical Inc.

(develops and manufactures medical and pharmaceutical devices and other health care products)

Double Negative Visual Effects

(creates visual and special effects for movies and TV shows)

## Appendix N (Study 5)

### Compassion (to measure the collapse of compassion)



\*Either a single child (chosen randomly) was shown, or all 8 children were shown simultaneously

(1 = not at all, 9 = extremely)

- How sympathetic do you feel toward the child/children?
- How warm do you feel toward the child/children?
- How compassionate do you feel toward the child/children?
- How touched were you by the child/children?
- How urgent do the needs of the child/children seem?
- To what extent do you feel that it is appropriate to give money to aid the child/children?
- How much do you value the welfare of the child/children?
- How important is it to you that this child/these children be happy?
- How important is it to you that this child/these children not suffer?

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# Justin T. Aoki

## Education

- 2015      **PhD in Psychology**, Lehigh University; Bethlehem, PA  
Dissertation: *Seeking moral elevation vs. avoiding damnation: An examination of two moral motivational orientations*  
Advisor: Dominic J. Packer, Ph.D.
- 2012      **Masters of Science in Psychology**, Lehigh University; Bethlehem, PA  
Thesis: *Moral transgressions & aggression: Investigating the I in imperative*  
Advisor: Dominic J. Packer, Ph.D.
- 2009      **Bachelor of Arts in Psychology**, University of Wisconsin-Stout; Menomonie, WI  
Minors: Cognitive Neuroscience; Philosophy; Art

## Teaching Experience

- 2015      Graduate Teaching Assistant – Intro to Psychology, Lehigh University; Bethlehem, PA
- 2014      Instructor – Social Psychology (summer course), Lehigh University; Bethlehem, PA
- 2014      Graduate Teaching Assistant – Research Methods, Lehigh University; Bethlehem, PA
- 2013      Graduate Teaching Assistant – Social Psychology, Lehigh University; Bethlehem, PA
- 2013      Guest Lecture (*Self and identity: Who are you and who are we?*) – Social Psychology, Lehigh University; Bethlehem, PA
- 2012      Graduate Teaching Assistant – Intro to Psychology, Lehigh University; Bethlehem, PA
- 2011      Graduate Teaching Assistant – Personality, Lehigh University; Bethlehem, PA
- 2011      Guest Lecture (*Cultural variation in experience, behavior, and personality*) – Personality, Lehigh University; Bethlehem, PA
- 2011      Graduate Teaching Assistant – Research Methods, Lehigh University; Bethlehem, PA
- 2010      Graduate Teaching Assistant – Social Psychology, Lehigh University; Bethlehem, PA
- 2009      Guest Lecture (*The psychobiology of stress*) – Personality, Ball State University; Muncie, IN
- 2009      Guest Lecture (*Intelligence predicts health and longevity, but why?*) – Personality, Ball State University; Muncie, IN
- 2009      Guest Lecture (*Personality, strategic behavior, and daily-life problem solving*) – Personality, Ball State University; Muncie, IN
- 2007      Pre College Program – Provided hands on lab experience and lessons to middle school and high school students, University of Wisconsin-Stout

## Research Interests

I am interested in understanding the powerful dynamics that moral sentiments can add to social interactions (e.g., from inciting violence to motivating benevolence). My current research focuses on the different ways in which a person may be morally motivated, and how these different motivations can give rise to distinct responses (in terms of affect, judgments, and behaviors) to the same moral situations.

## Peer-Reviewed Publications

- Packer, D.J., Aoki, J.T., & Frazier, P.A. (2012). On the advantages and disadvantages of a low resolution snapshot. [Review of Blumberg, H., Kent, M. V., Hare, P. M., & Davies, M. F. (2012). Small group research: Implications of peace psychology and conflict resolution. New York: Springer]. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 18, 201-202.

## Conference Posters

- Aoki, J.T.** and Packer, D.J. (2014, February). *Put your money where your morals are: The importance of loss vs. gain in the moral domain.* Poster presentation at the 15<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Austin, TX.
- Aoki, J.T.** and Packer, D.J. (2013, January). *Punishment of perceived moral transgression is deterred by costs incurred: A disconfirmation of the moral imperative hypothesis.* Poster presentation at the 14<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, New Orleans, LA.
- Aoki, J.T.** and Packer, D.J. (2012, January). *Costly moral conflicts ignite aggression: When heated situations get even hotter.* Poster presentation at the 13<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, San Diego, CA.
- Aoki, J.T.** and Packer, D.J. (2011, May). *Moral mandates and aggression: If you are the weakest link, goodbye!* Poster presentation at the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual convention of the Association for Psychological Science, Washington, DC.
- Li, P., **Aoki, J.T.**, Wheeler, J. and Johnson, C. (2008, May). *The presence of racial minorities impairs people's ability to focus attention.* Poster presented at the 80<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.
- Li, P., Wheeler, J., **Aoki, J.T.** and Johnson, C. (2008, May). *The after-image of in-group faces are more distractive than out-group faces.* Poster presented at the 80<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.
- Budd, D., **Aoki, J.T.**, Harstad, L., Johnson, C., McCarthy, R. and Gajda, H. (2007, May). *Lasting memories: Emotional arousal and memory for specific details.* Poster presented at the annual meeting of the UW-Stout Research Day, Menomonie, WI.
- Tafalla, R., Jenks, M., **Aoki, J.T.**, Treiber, C. and Sweeney, V. (2007, March). *Desensitization to violence: Do violent video games have an effect?* Poster presented at the 4<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of Posters in the Rotunda, Madison, WI; Poster presented at the annual meeting of the UW-Stout Research Day, Menomonie, WI; Poster presented at the Inaugural meeting of the MidBrains Undergraduate Neuroscience Conference, Saint Paul, MN.

## Scientific Presentations

- Aoki, J.T.** (March, 2014). *Clarifying morality: When right is wrong and wrong is right.* Talk presented at Psychology Department Brownbag Meeting, Lehigh University
- Aoki, J.T.** (March, 2014). *Moral identity is more than self-consistency: The impact of ideal vs ought orientations on prosocial behaviors & motivation.* Talk presented at Social Cognition Area Meeting, Lehigh University
- Aoki, J.T.** (October, 2013). *Self and Identity.* Guest lecture for Social Psychology course at Lehigh University
- Aoki, J.T.** (March, 2013). *Merging the moral and non-moral domains: The effects of loss & gain in the moral domain.* Symposium talk at the 2013 annual meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association, New York, NY
- Aoki, J.T.** (February, 2013). *Put your money where your morals are: The importance of cost and gain in the moral domain.* Talk presented at Psychology Department Brownbag Meeting, Lehigh University
- Aoki, J.T.** (December, 2012). *How much are your moral beliefs worth? The importance of costs vs. gains in the moral domain.* Talk presented at Social Cognition Area Meeting, Lehigh University
- Aoki, J.T.** (March, 2012). *Overlooking the I in imperative: Revisiting an assumption in the moral literature.* Talk presented at Psychology Department Brownbag Meeting, Lehigh University
- Aoki, J.T.** (April, 2011). *Moral transgressions and aggression: Exploring the role of deterrence.* Talk presented at Psychology Department Brownbag Meeting, Lehigh University
- Packer, D.J. and **Aoki, J.T.** (March, 2011). *Developing a typology of intergroup aggression.* Talk presented at Social Cognition Area Meeting, Lehigh University

Boemio, A. and \*Aoki, J.T. (August, 2008). *The effect of signal manipulations on intelligibility: Speech perception viewed as a problem in auditory pattern recognition*. Talk presented at Neuroscience and Cognitive Science meeting, University of Maryland-College Park

## Other Experience

2012-2013,	Psychology Participant Pool Coordinator – Organized, ran, and maintained the psychology
2014-2015	department participant pool of 300+ undergraduate students
2012	Invited Reviewer - Journal of Applied Social Psychology
2011-2012	Summer research assistant for Group Processes Lab – Collected data, designed study materials, and supervised undergraduate RAs
2010-2011	Teacher Development Series – Attended biweekly seminar on cultivating teaching skills
2008	Neuroscience and Cognitive Science summer research internship, University of Maryland-College Park
2006	Paid research assistant for Suspicious Behavior Detection Study designed by Primetime Medical Software
2005-2008	Cognitive-Neuroscience Education and Research Values Experience, NSF-funded research program, University of Wisconsin-Stout

## Awards

2013	College of Arts & Sciences Summer Research Fellowship
2007	1 <sup>st</sup> place award for “Best Poster Presentation” (monetary award) at the annual meeting of the UW-Stout Research Day, Menomonie, WI.
2005-2009	6 Chancellor’s Awards for Academic Excellence