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Keeping Friendships Alive: Self-monitoring and Maintenance Strategies

Nadia Nicol Flanigan
University of North Florida

KEEPING FRIENDSHIPS ALIVE:
SELF-MONITORING AND MAINTENANCE STRATEGIES

by

Nadia Nicol Flanigan

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL PAGE

The thesis of Nadia Nicol Flanigan is approved: (Date)

Signature Deleted

7/26/05

Christopher Leone, Ph.D., Chair of Committee

Signature Deleted

7/27/05

Lori Lange, Ph.D., ~~Co~~mmittee Member

Accepted for the Department:

Signature Deleted

7-27-05

Minor H. Chamblin, Ph.D., Chair of Department of Psychology

Accepted for the College:

Signature Deleted

8.4.05

Mark Workman, Ph.D., Dean of College of Arts and Science

Accepted for the ~~Univers~~ity

Signature Deleted

10-24-05

Thomas ~~Serwatka~~, ~~Ph.D.~~, Dean of Graduate Studies

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Abstract

The relationship between self-monitoring and use of maintenance strategies in friendships was examined. It was hypothesized that low self-monitors would engage in more idealization, report higher degrees of closeness, and report higher degrees of platonic love in their relationships with their best friends than would high self-monitors. Participants (81 females, 61 males) completed Snyder and Gangestad's (1986) revised Self-Monitoring Scale; Edmond's (1967) Marital Conventionalization Scale; Hendrick's (1988) Relationship Assessment Scale; the Diversity and Strength scales of Berscheid, Snyder, & Omoto's (1989) Relationship Closeness Inventory; Aron, Aron, and Allen's (1998) Desirability, Probability, Desirability of the State, and Intensity Scales; and Sternberg's (1988) Triangular Love Scale. Low self-monitors reported engaging in a wider variety of activities with their best friends than did high self-monitors ($p < .05$), and low self-monitors reported slightly greater levels of satisfaction in their relationships with their best friends than did high self-monitors ($p < .07$). Plausible alternative explanations for these findings and suggestions for further research are discussed.

Keeping Friendships Alive: Self-Monitoring and Maintenance Strategies

People's close relationships with other people can be very influential in their lives. Friendships in particular can be relatively close relationships. Fehr (1996) describes friendship as a "voluntary, personal relationship, typically providing intimacy and assistance, in which the two parties like one another and seek each other's company" (p. 7). Some people have intimate relationships with their friends. These people may have a small network of friends with whom they interact and prefer to spend the majority of their time. Other people have distant relationships with their friends. These people may have a large network of friends with whom they interact and prefer to spend their time. The construct of self-monitoring is one variable that may be helpful in accounting for individual differences in how people maintain their friendships.

Self-monitoring is the degree to which people try to control their self-presentation, verbal and nonverbal, in order to appear to behave socially appropriate in the presence of others (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000; Snyder, 1974, 1979, 1987). There are five conceptual dimensions in the self-monitoring construct. The first dimension is motivation to make one's self-presentation fit a particular social context. The second dimension is attention to a social context for cues as to how one should behave. The third and fourth dimensions are ability to modify one's behavior to fit a social context and use of that ability to actually modify one's self-presentation and behavior according to a social context. The fifth dimension is situational specificity of behavior.

Individuals differ in their propensities to engage in self-monitoring (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000; Snyder, 1974, 1979, 1987). Prototypical high self-monitors are individuals who closely attend to the behavior and expressions of other people in social situations

because they are concerned with the situational and interpersonal appropriateness of their own behavior. High self-monitors have a high ability to control their nonverbal and expressive behavior to meet situational demands and use their ability to control their behavior in various situations to present themselves in a manner that is appropriate for a situation. High self-monitors tend to display a great deal of variability in their behavior across situations. On the other hand, prototypical low self-monitors are individuals who closely attend to their inner states (e.g., attitudes and feelings) in social situations because they are concerned with being themselves in social situations. Low self-monitors have a low ability to control their nonverbal and expressive behavior to meet situational demands. Low self-monitors, however, do select their words carefully in various situations in order to present an accurate image of themselves. Low self-monitors tend to display a great deal of consistency in their behavior across situations.

High and low self-monitors differ in their conceptions of self. High self-monitors have "a repertoire of selves" (Snyder, 1987, p. 47). That is, high self-monitors possess a flexible sense of self. High self-monitors define themselves and explain their behavior according to social situations (Snyder, 1979). High self-monitors view themselves as pragmatic individuals who vary their behavior according to the roles of a situation (Snyder, 1987). High self-monitors report more variability across situations in their own behavior than in other people's behavior (Snyder & Monson, 1975). High self-monitors are more knowledgeable about how prototypic people of various trait dimensions behave in particular social situations than they are about how they themselves behave (Snyder & Cantor, 1980). In the context of a social gathering, for example, high self-monitors would be able to construct a mental image of how the prototypical extravert would act in that

situation.

Low self-monitors have a single, well-defined self (Snyder, 1987). That is, low self-monitors possess a stable sense of self. Low self-monitors define themselves and explain their behavior according to stable characteristics (Snyder, 1979). Low self-monitors view themselves as principled individuals who vary their behavior according to their attitudes and inner states (Snyder, 1987). Low self-monitors report more consistency across situations in their own behavior than in other people's behavior (Snyder & Monson, 1975). Low self-monitors are more knowledgeable about how they behave with respect to various trait dimensions in particular social situations than they are about how prototypic people behave (Snyder & Cantor, 1980). In the context of a social gathering, for example, low self-monitors would be able to construct a mental image of how they would typically act in that situation.

High and low self-monitors also differ in their orientations to their social worlds. High self-monitors choose their activity partners based on how skilled their potential partner is at a particular activity (Snyder, Gangestad, & Simpson, 1983). If, for example, high self-monitors wanted to play a game of basketball, they would choose to play that game with people who were good basketball players. High self-monitors would choose good basketball players even if those basketball players were not their close friends. Similarly, when given a choice to participate in an activity with either their current dating partner or a friend of the opposite sex who is skilled at that activity, high self-monitors are more likely to choose a friend of the opposite sex who is skilled at that activity than to choose their current dating partner (Snyder & Simpson, 1984). High self-monitors engage in audience segregation and prefer differentiated social worlds in which they can behave

differently depending on the situation they are in and whom they are around (Snyder, 1987; Snyder et al., 1983). On the other hand, low self-monitors choose their activity partners based on shared interests (Snyder et al., 1983). If, for example, low self-monitors wanted to play a game of basketball, they would choose to play that game with their closest friends. Low self-monitors would choose their closest friends even if those close friends were not good basketball players. Similarly, when given a choice to participate in an activity with either their current dating partner or a friend of the opposite sex who is skilled at that activity, low self-monitors are more likely to choose their current dating partner than to choose a friend of the opposite sex who is skilled at that activity (Snyder & Simpson, 1984). Low self-monitors engage in audience homogenization and prefer undifferentiated social worlds in which they can be themselves regardless of the situation they are in and whom they are around (Snyder, 1987; Snyder et al., 1983).

In addition to the differences between high and low self-monitors in their orientations to social worlds, high and low self-monitors differ in their conceptions of romantic relationships. When initiating dating relationships, high self-monitors tend to focus on external appearances of potential dating partners whereas low self-monitors tend to focus on internal qualities of potential dating partners (Snyder, 1987; Snyder, Berscheid, & Glick, 1985). In their dating relationships, high self-monitors tend to be less committed than are low self-monitors (Snyder & Simpson, 1984). Snyder and Simpson found that high self-monitors tended to have more dating partners than did low self-monitors, had relationships that did not last as long as those of low self-monitors, were more willing than low self-monitors to end a relationship with a current partner in order to date someone else, and had lower levels of intimacy in their relationships than did low

self-monitors. In their sexual relationships, high self-monitors tend to adopt an unrestricted orientation whereas low self-monitors tend to adopt a restricted orientation (Snyder, Simpson, & Gangestad, 1986). Snyder et al. (1986) found that high self-monitors indicated having had more sexual partners than did low self-monitors in the past year and, overall, high self-monitors reported being more sexually experienced than did low self-monitors. In their marital relationships, high self-monitors tend to be less satisfied than low self-monitors with their marriages, and high self-monitors are more likely than low self-monitors to have had at least one marriage end in divorce (Leone & Hall, 2003).

High and low self-monitors not only differ in their conceptions of romantic relationships, but high and low self-monitors also differ in their conceptions of friendship (Snyder & Smith, 1986). High self-monitors have an activity-based orientation toward their friendships. That is, high self-monitors' friendships are based on situations and activities. When initiating friendships and forming initial impressions of friends, high self-monitors place more importance on activity preference similarity than on attitude similarity (Jamieson, Lydon, & Zanna, 1987). When high self-monitors choose friends to participate in activities with them, high self-monitors choose friends who have some expertise at a particular activity (Snyder et al., 1983). Consequently, high self-monitors tend to choose different friends for different activities. If high self-monitors wanted to play a card game, for example, they would choose to play that game with a person who was skilled at playing cards rather than a close friend with whom they shared interests. If high self-monitors wanted to go out and see a movie, for example, they might choose a different friend for that activity. To a high self-monitor, a friend is someone who is a

skilled activity partner. Because high self-monitors engage in different activities with different people, their friendship worlds tend to be compartmentalized and consist of a large network of people.

Low self-monitors have an affect-based orientation toward their friendships (Snyder & Smith, 1986). That is, low self-monitors' friendships are based on personal compatibility. When initiating friendships and forming initial impressions of friends, low self-monitors place more importance on attitude similarity than on activity preference similarity (Jamieson et al., 1987). When low self-monitors choose friends to participate in activities with them, low self-monitors choose friends with whom they share interests (Snyder et al., 1983). Consequently, low self-monitors tend to choose the same friends for different activities. If low self-monitors wanted to play a card game, for example, they would choose to play that game with a close friend with whom they shared interests rather than a person who was skilled at playing cards. If low self-monitors wanted to go out and see a movie, for example, they would choose to see that movie with that same friend. To a low self-monitor, a friend is someone who is personally compatible. Because low self-monitors engage in different activities with the same people, their friendship worlds tend to be undifferentiated and consist of a small network of people.

As a result of their different conceptions of and orientations toward friendship, high self-monitors' friendships tend not to be as close as low self-monitors' friendships (Snyder & Smith, 1986). High self-monitors' friendships are characterized by low levels of nurturance and intimacy. High self-monitors' friendships tend to be relatively short-term and exist based on current situations. In contrast, low self-monitors' friendships are characterized by high levels of nurturance and intimacy. Low self-monitors' friendships

tend to be relatively long-term and endure beyond current situations.

For adults, high self-monitors' close friends tend to be high self-monitors, and low self-monitors' close friends tend to be low self-monitors (Snyder, Simpson, & Smith, 1984, as cited in Snyder & Smith, 1986). For preadolescents, however, researchers have not found a relationship between preadolescents' self-monitoring orientations and preadolescents' close friends' self-monitoring orientations. Preadolescents who are high self-monitors are no more likely to have high self-monitors as close friends as they are to have low self-monitors as close friends (Broderick & Beltz, 1996). Similarly, preadolescents who are low self-monitors are no more likely to have low self-monitors as close friends as they are to have high self-monitors as close friends. In line with the idea that low self-monitors have an affect-based orientation toward their friendships, however, Broderick and Beltz found that preadolescent girls who were low self-monitors expected their close friendships to have high levels of dispositional support, dispositional intimacy, and dispositional affection.

In sum, researchers have found differences in how high and low self-monitors perceive and initiate their friendships. Few researchers, however, have attempted to find out if high and low self-monitors differ in the strategies that they use to maintain their friendships.

Several definitions of relational maintenance exist. Dindia and Canary (1993) first provided a basic definition of relational maintenance defined in terms of relational continuity. They defined relational maintenance as continuing a relationship and not terminating it. If relationship partners are continuing their relationship and not terminating their relationship, then they are maintaining their relationship. Whether a

relationship changes or remains stable over time, relationship partners are maintaining that relationship as long as they do not terminate it.

Dindia and Canary (1993) provided a second definition of relational maintenance defined in terms of relational stability. They defined relational maintenance as keeping characteristics of particular dimensions of a relationship (e.g., intimacy) at a stable level. In terms of intimacy, for example, relationship partners could sustain either a high level of intimacy or a low level of intimacy.

Dindia and Canary (1993) provided a third definition of relational maintenance defined in terms of relational satisfaction. They defined relational maintenance as sustaining satisfaction in a relationship. Researchers most often use this definition as an operational definition of relational maintenance (Dindia, 2000).

Finally, Dindia and Canary (1993) provided a fourth definition of relational maintenance defined in terms of relational repair. They defined relational maintenance as keeping a relationship in good condition and preventing relational de-escalation (i.e., relational decay). Relational repair can be a condition that is a result of maintenance. Relational repair can also be strategies that relationship partners use to restore their relationship after their relationship has been damaged.

Dindia (2000) attempted to combine these four definitions into one definition. She defined relational maintenance as "all the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dynamics involved in maintaining a relationship" (p. 288). This definition of relational maintenance is utilized in this study.

According to Dindia (2000), relationship partners have to consciously and purposely do things to keep their relationships from de-escalating. In other words,

relationship partners have to engage in relational maintenance strategies. Several researchers have developed typologies of relational maintenance strategies (e.g., Ayres, 1983; Dindia & Baxter, 1987; Stafford & Canary, 1991). Stafford and Canary created a list of relational maintenance strategies based on previous literature and on results of a study in which they asked married and dating couples to describe the maintenance strategies used in their relationships. Stafford and Canary came up with five general relational maintenance strategies: positivity, openness, assurances, network, and sharing tasks. Positivity is being positive and enthusiastic about one's relationship. Openness is engaging in self-disclosure and openly discussing a relationship. Assurances are behaviors showing commitment to a relationship. Networking is spending time with friends of both relationship partners and common affiliations. Sharing tasks is sharing household activities. Stafford and Canary's typology of relational maintenance strategies is the most popular typology of relational maintenance strategies because of its close-ended nature and its use of a definition of relational maintenance related to maintaining relational satisfaction (Dindia, 2000).

Several factors are related to people's usage of relational maintenance strategies (Dindia, 2000). One factor is what type of relationship people are maintaining. Canary, Stafford, Hause, and Wallace (1993) examined possible differences in usage of relational maintenance strategies among romantic partners, family members, and friends. Using Stafford and Canary's (1991) typology, Canary et al. (1993) found that people engage in relational maintenance strategies more often in their romantic and family relationships than in their friendships. However, other researchers have not found an effect of relationship type on people's usage of relational maintenance strategies (e.g., Ayres, 1983;

Shea & Pearson, 1986).

In this study, three specific relational maintenance strategies are examined in a context of relationships between best friends: idealization, closeness, and platonic love. Idealization is creating positive illusions about one's relationship partner and seeing one's relationship partner and one's relationship in idealized ways (Murray, Holmes, & Griffin, 1996). Murray et al. (1996) studied idealization in dating couples and found that idealizing one's partner was more beneficial to relationships than seeing one's partner in realistic ways. Dating couples who initially engaged in idealization were more likely than dating couples who did not engage in idealization to have relationships that persisted despite conflict, became more satisfying over time, and were stable. Overall, dating couples that idealized their partners were happier than dating couples that did not idealize their partners.

Similar to those dating couples in Murray et al.'s (1996) study who engaged in idealization, low self-monitors tend to be more satisfied than high self-monitors in their romantic relationships (Leone & Hall, 2003). Similar to those dating couples' relationships in Murray et al.'s study, low self-monitors' relationships tend to be relatively stable (Leone & Hall, 2003). That is, low self-monitors have longer-lasting relationships with their romantic partners than do high self-monitors (Snyder & Simpson, 1984), and low self-monitors also have longer-lasting friendships than do high self-monitors (Snyder & Smith, 1986). Although Murray et al. found idealization to be beneficial to dating couples, it is predicted that idealization also will be beneficial in relationships between best friends. Therefore, it is hypothesized that low self-monitors will engage in more idealization in their relationships with their best friends than will

high self-monitors.

A second possible maintenance strategy that best friends could engage in is closeness. Kelley et al. (1983) defined closeness as "a high degree of interdependence between two people" (p. 13). Interdependence is revealed in people's daily activities in four ways. Relationship partners who demonstrate closeness in their relationship have frequent contact with their relationship partner, have a strong impact on each other, engage in a variety of activities with their relationship partner, and demonstrate these three characteristics for a long time. The strength of impact that partners have on each other and the diversity of activities that partners engage in together are the two aspects of closeness that are a focus in this study.

Berscheid, Snyder, and Omoto (1989) developed the Relationship Closeness Inventory and examined closeness in terms of frequency in which relationship partners spent time together during waking hours, diversity of activities that relationship partners engaged in together, and how much relationship partners believed their partners impacted their decisions and behavior in several life domains (e.g., career, vacation plans). Participants chose their closest relationships and characterized their relationships in terms of frequency, diversity, and strength. Berscheid et al. (1989) created an overall closeness index based on reported frequency of contact, diversity of activities, and strength of impact of these participants' relationships. Berscheid et al. found that romantic relationships were closer than friendships and family relationships, and friendships and family relationships were equal in closeness. Additionally, Berscheid et al. found that short-term friendships tended to be closer than long-term friendships.

Because low self-monitors, unlike high self-monitors, engage in different

activities with the same people and tend to have a small network of people with whom they spend their time (Snyder et al., 1983), low self-monitors should report engaging in a wider variety of activities with their best friends than should high self-monitors. Additionally, because low self-monitors, unlike high self-monitors, have an affect-based orientation towards their friendships and choose their friends based on personal compatibility (Snyder & Smith, 1986), low self-monitors should report being more impacted by their best friends than should high self-monitors. Therefore, it is hypothesized that low self-monitors will report higher degrees of closeness in their relationships with their best friends than will high self-monitors. That is, low self-monitors should report engaging in a wider variety of activities with their best friends than should high self-monitors, and low self-monitors should report that their best friends have a stronger impact on low self-monitors' decisions and behavior than should high self-monitors.

A third possible maintenance strategy that best friends could engage in is platonic love. Sternberg (1986) described a triangular theory of love consisting of three components: intimacy, passion, and decision/commitment. The intimacy component is composed of feelings of emotional closeness and connectedness to one's partner. Intimacy is derived mostly from emotional investment in a relationship. The passion component is composed of those expressions of needs and desires that are related to psychological and physical arousal. Sexual needs may be predominant in experiencing passion in some close relationships, but other needs (e.g., needs for self-esteem, nurturance, and affiliation) may be predominant in experiencing passion in other close relationships. Passion is derived mostly from motivational involvement in a relationship.

The decision/commitment component is deciding that one loves another person and plans to continue his/her love for that person. Decision/commitment is derived mostly from cognitive decision and commitment to a relationship. These three components may differ in properties such as stability and commonality across relationship types. Levels of intimacy and commitment, for example, may be stable in close relationships whereas levels of passion may be unstable in close relationships. Intimacy tends to be common across many types of relationships, but passion and commitment tend to be variable across different types of relationships. All three components, however, are interrelated and are components of close relationships.

Snyder and Smith (1986) found that low self-monitors had relatively high levels of nurturance and intimacy in their friendships, and Snyder and Simpson (1984) found that low self-monitors' romantic relationships were characterized by high levels of intimacy. Low self-monitors tend to be more committed to their relationships than do high self-monitors (Snyder & Simpson, 1984), and low self-monitors report being more satisfied with their relationships than do high self-monitors (Leone & Hall, 2003). Therefore, it is hypothesized that low self-monitors will report higher degrees of platonic love in their relationships with their best friends than will high self-monitors. That is, low self-monitors should report higher levels of intimacy, passion, and commitment in their relationships with their best friends than should high self-monitors.

Overall, it is hypothesized that low self-monitors will be more likely than high self-monitors to use maintenance strategies in their relationships with their best friends. Low self-monitors' social worlds are composed of a small network of close friends. Therefore, low self-monitors should feel that they have more invested in their friendships

than should high self-monitors. Consequently, low self-monitors should be motivated to maintain their friendships. A relationship with a best friend can be a particularly close relationship (Fehr, 1996); therefore, low self-monitors should be particularly motivated to maintain their relationships with their best friends. In their relationships with their best friends, low self-monitors should engage in more idealization, report higher degrees of closeness, and report higher degrees of platonic love than should high self-monitors.

Method

Participants

A total of 144 undergraduate students enrolled in psychology classes at the University of North Florida volunteered to participate in a study entitled *Individual Differences in Friendship Styles*. Participants received class credit for their participation. Participation was limited to individuals who were at least 18 years old.

This sample was composed of 81 females and 63 males. Most of the participants (74%) were Caucasian. The majority of the participants were between the ages of 18 and 22 (74%).

Informed consent was obtained in writing from all participants. All participants were treated according to the "Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct" (American Psychological Association, 2002). Approval from the Institutional Review Board at the University of North Florida was obtained prior to data collection.

Materials

Self-monitoring. Individual differences in self-monitoring were assessed using the revised Self-Monitoring Scale (Snyder & Gangestad, 1986). The Self-Monitoring Scale is a set of 18 self-descriptive statements with a true-false answer format that were written to

assess (a) motivation to make one's expressive behavior be appropriate to a situation (e.g., "At parties and social gatherings, I do not attempt to do or say things that others will like"), (b) attention to a social situation for social cues as to how to behave (e.g., "I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations"), (c) ability to monitor behavior (e.g., "I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people"), (d) use of ability to monitor behavior (e.g., "I guess I put on a show to impress or entertain others"), and (e) consistency of behavior across situations (e.g., "In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons"). Eight statements (e.g., "In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons") were worded such that an answer of true indicated high self-monitoring, and 10 statements (e.g., "I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations") were worded such that an answer of false indicated high self-monitoring.

Responses to statements for which an answer of false indicated a high self-monitoring tendency were reverse scored. Responses to all statements were scored such that higher scores indicated a higher self-monitoring tendency. Scores for answers to individual statements were added such that a higher total score indicated a higher self-monitoring tendency. For missing data, the grand mean for all participants was used. The range of possible scores was from 18 to 36. Participants were categorized as high or low self-monitors based on a median split of the full range of scores on the Self-Monitoring Scale.

Researchers have found internal consistency for scores on the Self-Monitoring Scale. Snyder and Gangestad (1986) found a Cronbach's alpha of .70 for scores on the 18-item

scale. Gangestad and Snyder (1985) found a Kuder-Richardson 20 reliability coefficient of .66 for scores on the original 25-item Self-Monitoring Scale. In a meta-analysis, Day, Schleicher, Unckless, and Hiller (2002) found that scores on the 18-item scale were internally consistent ($\alpha = .73$) across 27 samples. Researchers have also found evidence for the temporal stability of scores on the Self-Monitoring Scale. Snyder (1974) found a test-retest correlation of .83 for scores on the 25-item scale over a 1-month interval. In this sample, an alpha of .76 was obtained for scores on the 18-item Self-Monitoring Scale.

Researchers have found scores on the Self-Monitoring Scale to be correlated with scores on measures of expressive control (e.g., Snyder, 1974) and uncorrelated with scores on measures of need for approval, Machiavellianism, and extraversion (e.g., Snyder, 1974; Snyder & Monson, 1975; see Snyder, 1987, for a review of convergent and discriminant validity information). Snyder (1974) found that professional stage actors, who should be skilled at expressive control, had higher scores on the Self-Monitoring Scale than did a sample of university students. Snyder also found that hospitalized psychiatric patients, whose behavior is more consistent across situations than is the behavior of normal people (Moos, 1968), had lower scores on the Self-Monitoring Scale than did the sample of university students. Researchers have found that high self-monitors attend closely to information in social situations, such as the behavior of other people, that might help high self-monitors to determine which type of behavior is appropriate for that situation (e.g., Snyder, 1974). Individual differences in self-monitoring propensities have been found to be related to differences in the importance given to physical attractiveness to evaluate people (Snyder et al., 1985), orientations toward interpersonal relationships (e.g., Snyder et al., 1983; Snyder & Simpson, 1984),

job performance (e.g., Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1982; Day et al., 2002), and differences in consumer behavior (DeBono & Snyder, 1989).

Marital conventionalization. Individual differences in use of conventionalization in one's relationship with one's best friend were assessed using Edmonds's (1967) short-form Marital Conventionalization Scale. This scale was used as a measure of idealization. The short-form Marital Conventionalization Scale is a set of 15 statements with a true-false answer format that were written to assess one's relationship with a marital partner. For this study, selected statements were modified to apply to one's relationship with a best friend (e.g., "My mate has all of the qualities I've always wanted in a mate" was changed to "My best friend has all of the qualities I've always wanted in a best friend"). Participants were instructed to think about their relationship with either a current or former best friend and respond to these statements. Ten statements (e.g., "We are as well adjusted as any two persons in this world can be") were worded such that an answer of true indicated a high tendency to give conventionalized responses, and five statements (e.g., "There are times when my best friend does things that make me unhappy") were worded such that an answer of false indicated a high tendency to give conventionalized responses.

Responses to statements for which an answer of false indicated a high tendency to give conventionalized responses were reverse scored. Responses to all statements were scored such that higher scores indicated a higher tendency to give conventionalized responses. Scores for answers to individual statements were added such that a higher total score indicated a higher tendency to give conventionalized responses. For missing data, the grand mean for all participants was used. The range of possible scores was from 15 to

30.

Schumm, Bollman, and Jurich (1981) obtained alphas of .72, .59, .85, and .70 for scores on the 15-item short-form Marital Conventionalization Scale. Hansen (1981) obtained alphas of .83 and .90 for the true-false format and a forced-choice format of the short-form Marital Conventionalization Scale, respectively. In this sample, an alpha of .80 was obtained for scores on the short-form Marital Conventionalization Scale.

Edmonds (1967) found that scores on the 15-item weighted Marital Conventionalization Scale were highly correlated with scores on the longer 34-item weighted scale (r = .99), and scores on both scales correlated .63 with scores on the Locke-Wallace (1959) short-form Marital Adjustment Scale (as cited in Edmonds, 1967). Edmonds obtained a correlation of .39 between scores on the 15-item Marital Conventionalization Scale and scores on the MMPI Lie Scale.

Relationship assessment. Individual differences in satisfaction with one's relationship with one's best friend were assessed using the Relationship Assessment Scale (Hendrick, 1988). This scale was also used as a measure of idealization. The Relationship Assessment Scale is a set of seven statements that were written to assess relationship satisfaction. For this study, the phrase *best friend* was substituted for the word *partner*, and the word *friendship* was substituted for the word *relationship*. Participants were instructed to think about their relationship with either a current or former best friend and respond to these statements. Participants responded to each statement using a 5-point scale with response options labeled *not at all, somewhat, moderately, quite a bit*, and *extremely*. Five statements (e.g., "How well does your best friend meet your needs?") were worded such that an answer of extremely indicated high

satisfaction, and two statements (e.g., "How often do you wish you hadn't gotten into this friendship?") were worded such that an answer of not at all indicated high satisfaction.

Responses to statements for which an answer of not at all indicated high satisfaction were reverse scored. Responses to all statements were scored such that higher scores indicated greater relationship satisfaction, and scores for answers to individual statements were added such that a higher total score indicated greater relationship satisfaction. For missing data, the grand mean for all participants was used. The range of possible scores was from 7 to 35.

Hendrick (1988) found that scores on the Relationship Assessment Scale were internally consistent. Hendrick reported item-total correlations ranging from .57 to .76, a mean inter-item correlation of .49, and an alpha of .87 for scores on the Relationship Assessment Scale. Aron, Norman, Aron, McKenna, and Heyman (2000) also obtained evidence of internal consistency for scores on the scale (α = .88 and .89). In this sample, an alpha of .80 was obtained for scores on the Relationship Assessment Scale.

Hendrick (1988) found that scores on the Relationship Assessment Scale correlated .80 with scores on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976) and also correlated with scores on measures of love, self-esteem, and commitment. Additionally, scores on the Relationship Assessment Scale helped Hendrick to discriminate couples who stayed together and couples who did not stay together over the course of a semester.

Relationship closeness. Individual differences in closeness of one's relationship with one's best friend were assessed using the Relationship Closeness Inventory (Berscheid et al., 1989). The Relationship Closeness Inventory is composed of three subscales: a Frequency scale, a Diversity scale, and a Strength scale. Only the Diversity and Strength

scales were used for this study. The Diversity scale, which was used to assess diversity of shared activities, is a list of 38 activities that people could potentially engage in together during a week's time period (e.g., did laundry, went to a restaurant). One item, "engaged in sexual relations," was changed to "discussed sexual relations" to make the list of activities appropriate for best friends. Participants were instructed to think about their relationship with either a current or former best friend and respond to these items. Participants responded with an answer of *yes* to an item if they had done an activity alone with their current best friend at any time during that past week. Participants responded with an answer of *no* to an item if they had not done an activity alone with their current best friend at any time during that past week. If participants' chose to think of a former best friend or if participants did not see their best friend during that past week, then they responded with an answer of yes if participants would have done an activity alone with their best friend at any time during a typical week and responded with an answer of no if participants would not have done an activity alone with their best friend at any time during a typical week. Participants received one point for each answer of yes. Scores for answers to individual items were summed such that higher total scores indicated that participants had engaged in more activities with their current best friend during that past week or that participants would have engaged in more activities with their current or former best friend in a typical week. For missing data, the grand mean for all participants was used. The range of possible scores was from 0 to 38.

Berscheid et al. (1989) obtained an alpha of .87 for scores on the Diversity scale across three types of close relationships (romantic, friend, family). These authors reported that scores within these three types of relationships were also internally consistent (αs

> .64). Berscheid et al. reported a test-retest correlation of .61 ($p < .001$) for scores on the Diversity scale across a 3- to 5-week time period. In this sample, an alpha of .89 was obtained for scores on the Diversity scale.

Berscheid et al. (1989) reported that scores on the Diversity scale were correlated with scores on the Strength scale ($r = .31, p < .05$) across three types of close relationships (romantic, friend, family). Scores on the Diversity scale between dating partners were also significantly correlated ($r = .43, p < .05$). Additionally, scores on the Diversity scale were helpful in discriminating between a relationship that participants identified as being close and a relationship that participants identified as not being close.

The Strength scale is a set of 34 statements that were written to assess amount of impact that relationship partners have on each other's thoughts, feelings, decisions, goals, and behavior. For this study, the phrase *best friend* was substituted for the word *partner*. Participants were instructed to think about their relationship with either a current or former best friend and respond to these statements. Participants responded to 27 statements using a 5-point scale with response options labeled *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *neutral*, *agree*, and *strongly agree*. Thirteen of these 27 statements (e.g., "My best friend will influence my future financial security") were worded such that an answer of strongly agree indicated a strong tendency to be impacted by one's best friend, and 14 of these statements (e.g., "My best friend does not influence my moods") were worded such that an answer of strongly agree indicated a weak tendency to be impacted by one's best friend. Participants responded to the remaining seven statements using a 5-point scale with response options labeled *not at all*, *somewhat*, *moderately*, *quite a bit*, and *extremely*. These seven statements were related to future plans and goals that one's best friend could

impact. Examples were *my vacation plans*, *my plans to have children*, and *my school-related plans*.

Responses to statements for which disagreement indicated a high degree of impact were reverse scored. Answers to all 34 statements were scored such that higher scores indicated a greater tendency to be impacted by one's best friend. Scores for answers to individual statements were summed such that higher total scores indicated a greater tendency to be impacted by one's best friend. For missing data, the grand mean for all participants was used. The range of scores was from 34 to 170.

Berscheid et al. (1989) obtained an alpha of .90 for scores on the Strength scale across three types of close relationships (romantic, friend, family). These authors reported that scores within these three types of relationships were also internally consistent (αs > .87). Berscheid et al. reported a test-retest correlation of .81 ($p < .001$) for scores on the Strength scale across a 3- to 5-week time period. In this sample, an alpha of .91 was obtained for scores on the Strength scale.

Berscheid et al. (1989) reported that scores on the Strength scale were correlated with scores on Rubin's (1973) Loving Scale ($r = .45, p < .01$). Scores on the Strength scale between dating partners were also significantly correlated ($r = .21, p < .05$). Additionally, scores on the Strength scale were helpful in discriminating between a relationship that participants identified as being close and a relationship that participants identified as not being close.

Berscheid et al. (1989) reported a test-retest correlation of .82 ($p < .001$) for scores on the overall Relationship Closeness Inventory across 3- to 5-week time period. These authors obtained an alpha of .62 for scores on the overall Relationship Closeness

Inventory. Berscheid et al. reported that scores on the overall Relationship Closeness Inventory correlated with scores on a Subjective Closeness Index and scores on an Affect for Partner Index. Scores on the Relationship Closeness Inventory between dating partners were also significantly correlated ($r = .43$, $p < .05$). Scores on the Relationship Closeness Inventory were uncorrelated with scores on an Emotional Tone Index. Additionally, scores on the Relationship Closeness Inventory were helpful in discriminating between a relationship that participants identified as being close and a relationship that participants identified as not being close.

Desirability. Individual differences in perceived value of having a close relationship with one's best friend were assessed using the Desirability Scale (Aron, Aron, & Allen, 1998). This scale was also used as a measure of idealization. The Desirability Scale is a set of six statements that were written to assess individuals' perceived potential value of having a close relationship with someone who does not love them. For this study, selected statements were modified to apply to reciprocated feelings of liking between friends (e.g., "How happy would you be if this person loved you?" was changed to "How happy are you that this person likes you?"). Participants were instructed to think about their relationship with either a current or former best friend and respond to these statements. Participants responded to each statement using a 5-point scale with response options labeled *not at all*, *somewhat*, *moderately*, *quite a bit*, and *extremely*. All statements were worded such that an answer of extremely indicated a high perceived value of having a close relationship with one's best friend.

Responses to all statements were scored such that higher scores indicated a higher perceived value of having a close relationship with one's best friend. Scores for answers

to individual statements were added such that a higher total score indicated a higher perceived value of having a close relationship with one's best friend. For missing data, the grand mean for all participants was used. The range of possible scores was from 6 to 30.

Aron et al. (1998) found that scores on the Desirability Scale were internally consistent. These authors reported alphas of .85 and .84 for scores on the Desirability Scale. In this sample, an alpha of .81 was obtained for scores on the Desirability Scale.

Aron et al. (1998) reported that scores on the Desirability Scale correlated ($r = .22, p < .001$) with scores on the Probability Scale. These authors reported that scores on the Desirability Scale correlated ($r = .30, p < .001$) with scores on the Desirability of the State Scale. Aron et al. also reported that scores on the Desirability Scale correlated ($r = .36, p < .001$) with scores on the Intensity Scale.

Probability. Individual differences in perceived probability of having a close relationship with one's best friend were assessed using the Probability Scale (Aron et al., 1998). This scale was also used as a measure of idealization. The Probability Scale is a set of three statements that were written to assess individuals' perceived probability of ever having a close relationship with someone who does not love them. For this study, selected statements were modified to apply to reciprocated feelings of liking between friends (e.g., "Even though you don't feel this person loves you as much as you would like, to what extent has this person done things that would make most people think he or she loves you?" was changed to "To what extent has this person done things that would make most people think he or she likes you?"). Participants were instructed to think about their relationship with either a current or former best friend and respond to these

statements. Participants responded to each statement using a 5-point scale with response options labeled *not at all*, *somewhat*, *moderately*, *quite a bit*, and *extremely*. All statements were worded such that an answer of extremely indicated a high perceived probability of having a close relationship with one's best friend.

Responses to all statements were scored such that higher scores indicated a higher perceived probability of having a close relationship with one's best friend. Scores for answers to individual statements were added such that a higher total score indicated a higher perceived probability of having a close relationship with one's best friend. For missing data, the grand mean for all participants was used. The range of possible scores was from 6 to 30.

Aron et al. (1998) found that scores on the Probability Scale were internally consistent. These authors reported alphas of .71 and .75 for scores on the Probability Scale. In this sample, an alpha of .77 was obtained for scores on the Probability Scale.

Aron et al. (1998) reported that scores on the Probability Scale correlated ($r = .28$, $p < .001$) with scores on the Desirability of the State Scale. Aron et al. also reported that scores on the Probability Scale correlated ($r = .21$, $p < .001$) with scores on the Intensity Scale.

Desirability of the state. Individual differences in perceived number of benefits of liking one's best friend were assessed using the Desirability of the State Scale (Aron et al., 1998). This scale was also used as a measure of idealization. The Desirability of the State Scale is a set of six statements that were written to assess individuals' perceived desirability of the state of being in love with someone who does not love them. For this study, selected statements were modified to apply to reciprocated feelings of liking

between friends (e.g., "How fulfilling is it to love this person even though it is unrequited?" was changed to "How fulfilling is it to like this person?"). Participants were instructed to think about their relationship with either a current or former best friend and respond to these statements. Participants responded to each statement using a 5-point scale with response options labeled *not at all*, *somewhat*, *moderately*, *quite a bit*, and *extremely*. All statements were worded such that an answer of extremely indicated a high perceived number of benefits of liking one's best friend.

Responses to all statements were scored such that higher scores indicated a higher perceived number of benefits of liking one's best friend. Scores for answers to individual statements were added such that a higher total score indicated a higher perceived number of benefits of liking one's best friend. For missing data, the grand mean for all participants was used. The range of possible scores was from 6 to 30.

Aron et al. (1998) found that scores on the Desirability of the State Scale were internally consistent. These authors reported alphas of .65 and .68 for scores on the Desirability of the State Scale. Aron et al. attributed the lower internal consistency of scores on this scale compared to scores on the Desirability Scale and Probability Scale to the fact that the statements of the Desirability of the State Scale were written to assess a variety of aspects of their concept of desirability of the state. In this sample, an alpha of .77 was obtained for scores on the Desirability of the State Scale. Aron et al. reported that scores on the Desirability of the State Scale correlated ($r = .29, p < .001$) with scores on the Intensity Scale.

Intensity. Individual differences in perceived intensity of one's relationship with one's best friend were assessed using the Intensity Scale (Aron et al., 1998). This scale

was also used as a measure of idealization. The Intensity Scale is a set of three statements that were written to assess intensity of an unreciprocated love experience. For this study, statements were modified to apply to reciprocated feelings of liking between friends (e.g., "How emotionally intense is this unrequited love experience?" was changed to "How emotionally intense is this friendship?"). Participants were instructed to think about their relationship with either a current or former best friend and respond to these statements. Participants responded to each statement using a 5-point scale with response options labeled *not at all*, *somewhat*, *moderately*, *quite a bit*, and *extremely*. All statements were worded such that an answer of extremely indicated a high level of perceived intensity in one's relationship with one's best friend.

Responses to all statements were scored such that higher scores indicated a higher level of perceived intensity in the relationship with one's best friend. Scores for answers to individual statements were added such that a higher total score indicated a higher level of perceived intensity in one's relationship with one's best friend. For missing data, the grand mean for all participants was used. The range of possible scores was from 6 to 30.

Aron et al. (1998) found that scores on the Intensity Scale were internally consistent. These authors reported an alpha of .85 for scores on the Intensity Scale. In this sample, an alpha of .83 was obtained for scores on the Intensity Scale.

Triangular Love Scale. Individual differences in relationship intimacy, passion, and commitment were assessed using the Triangular Love Scale (Sternberg, 1988). The Triangular Love Scale is composed of three subscales: the Intimacy scale, the Passion scale, and the Commitment scale. The Intimacy scale is a set of 12 statements (e.g., "I feel emotionally close to ___") that were written to assess the level of intimacy in one's

relationship with another person. Participants were instructed to think about their relationship with either a current or former best friend and respond to these statements. Participants responded to these statements using a 5-point scale with response options labeled *not at all*, *somewhat*, *moderately*, *quite a bit*, and *extremely*. All statements were worded such that an answer of extremely indicated a high level of intimacy.

Responses to all statements were scored such that higher scores indicated a higher level of intimacy in one's relationship with one's best friend. Scores for answers to individual statements were added such that a higher total score indicated a higher level of intimacy in one's relationship with one's best friend. For missing data, the grand mean for all participants was used. The range of possible scores was from 12 to 60.

Sternberg (1997) reported that scores on the Intimacy scale were internally consistent (αs > .90). Acker and Davis (1992) also reported that scores on the Intimacy scale were internally consistent (αs > .90). Chojnacki and Walsh (1990) reported alphas above .90 and a test-retest correlation of .75 over a 2-week interval for scores on a revised 15-item version of the Intimacy scale. Hendrick and Hendrick (1989) also reported that scores on this revised version of the Intimacy scale were internally consistent (α > .93). In this sample, an alpha of .94 was obtained for scores on Intimacy scale.

Sternberg (1997) found that scores on the 12-item Intimacy scale correlated with scores on Rubin's (1970) Liking and Loving Scales (r = .68 and .74, respectively). Chojnacki and Walsh reported that scores on the revised Intimacy scale correlated (r = .62, p < .01) with scores on the Jourard Self-Disclosure Questionnaire (Jourard, 1963). Chojnacki and Walsh found that scores on the revised Intimacy scale were

significantly higher when participants responded to statements using a dating partner as the target than when participants responded to statements using their mother as the target. Hendrick and Hendrick (1989) found that scores on the revised Intimacy scale were positively correlated with scores on the Passionate Love Scale (Hatfield & Sprecher, 1986), positively correlated with scores on the Viability, Intimacy, Passion, Care, and Satisfaction subscales of the Relationship Rating Form (Davis & Todd, 1982, 1985), and negatively correlated with scores on the Conflict subscale of the Relationship Rating Form (Davis & Todd, 1982, 1985).

The Passion scale is a set of 12 statements (e.g., "Just seeing ___ is exciting for me") that were written to assess the level of passion in one's relationship with another person. For this study, selected statements were modified to apply to a relationship with a best friend (e.g., "My relationship with ___ is very romantic" was changed to "My relationship with ___ is very friendly"). Given these changes, these 12 statements were used to assess degree of positive affect (i.e., attraction) in one's relationship with one's best friend. Participants were instructed to think about their relationship with either a current or former best friend and respond to these statements. Participants responded to the statements using a 5-point scale with response options labeled *not at all*, *somewhat*, *moderately*, *quite a bit*, and *extremely*. All statements were worded such that an answer of extremely indicated a high level of passion (i.e., attraction).

Responses to all statements were scored such that higher scores indicated a higher level of passion (i.e., attraction) in one's relationship with one's best friend. Scores for answers to individual statements were added such that a higher total score indicated a higher level of passion (i.e., attraction) in one's relationship with one's best friend. For

missing data, the grand mean for all participants was used. The range of possible scores was from 12 to 60.

Sternberg (1997) reported that scores on the Passion scale were internally consistent (αs > .80). Acker and Davis (1992) also reported that scores on the Passion scale were internally consistent (αs > .80). Chojnacki and Walsh (1990) reported alphas above .90 and a test-retest correlation of .81 over a 2-week interval for scores on a revised 15-item version of the Passion scale. Hendrick and Hendrick (1989) also reported that scores on this revised version of the scale were internally consistent (α > .93). In this sample, an alpha of .93 was obtained for scores on the Passion scale.

Sternberg (1997) found that scores on the 12-item Passion scale correlated with scores on Rubin's (1970) Liking and Loving Scales (r = .66 and .79, respectively). Chojnacki and Walsh reported that scores on the revised Passion scale correlated (r = .44, p < .01) with scores on the Jourard Self-Disclosure Questionnaire (Jourard, 1963). Chojnacki and Walsh found that scores on the revised Passion scale were significantly higher when participants responded to statements using a dating partner as the target than when participants responded to statements using their mother as the target. Hendrick and Hendrick (1989) found that scores on the revised Passion scale were positively correlated with scores on the Passionate Love Scale (Hatfield & Sprecher, 1986), positively correlated with scores on the Viability, Intimacy, Passion, Care, and Satisfaction subscales of the Relationship Rating Form (Davis & Todd, 1982, 1985), and negatively correlated with scores on the Conflict subscale of the Relationship Rating Form (Davis & Todd, 1982, 1985).

The Commitment scale is a set of 12 statements (e.g., "I have confidence in the

Chojnacki and Walsh reported that scores on the revised Commitment scale correlated ($r = .57, p < .01$) with scores on the Jourard Self-Disclosure Questionnaire (Jourard, 1963), length of involvement in relationships between dating partners ($r = .29, p < .01$), and dating exclusivity ($r = .26, p < .01$). Chojnacki and Walsh found that scores on the revised Commitment scale were significantly higher when participants responded to statements using a dating partner as the target than when participants responded to statements using their mother as the target. Hendrick and Hendrick (1989) found that scores on the revised Commitment scale were positively correlated with scores on the Passionate Love Scale (Hatfield & Sprecher, 1986), positively correlated with scores on the Viability, Intimacy, Passion, Care, and Satisfaction subscales of the Relationship Rating Form (Davis & Todd, 1982, 1985), and negatively correlated with scores on the Conflict subscale of the Relationship Rating Form (Davis & Todd, 1982, 1985).

Demographic Information. Participants reported their sex by selecting one of two answer options: *male* or *female.* Participants reported their age by selecting one of five category ranges: *18-22, 23-27, 28-32, 33-37,* or *38 or older.* Participants reported their racial/ethnic background by selecting one of five answer options: *African American/ Black, Caucasian/White, Latino/Hispanic, Asian,* or *Other.* Participants reported their best friend's sex by selecting one of two answer options: *male* or *female.* Participants reported whom they had thought of as their best friend by selecting one of four answer options: *current female best friend, current male best friend, former female best friend,* or *former male best friend.* Participants reported the type of person they had thought of as their best friend by selecting one of three answer options: *marital partner, romantic partner,* or *other.* Participants reported whom they had thought of as their best friend by

selecting one of five answer options: *friend who became a romantic partner, romantic partner who became a friend, friend who became a marital partner, marital partner who became a friend,* or *none of the above.* Participants reported the length of their relationship with their best friend by selecting one of five category ranges: *less than 1 year, 1-2 years, 3-4 years, 5-7 years,* or *8 years or more.* Participants reported whether or not they expected their relationship with their best friend to be permanent by selecting one of two answer options: *yes* or *no.* Participants reported the number of best friends that they had had before their current or former best friend by selecting one of five answer options: *0, 1, 2, 3,* or *4.* Participants reported the general length of their relationships with former best friends by selecting one of five category ranges: *1-5 months, 6-11 months, 1-2 years, 2-3 years,* or *more than 3 years.* Additionally, participants reported the number friends that they considered to be close friends and the number of friends that they considered to be casual friends by selecting one of five answer options for each: *0, 1, 2, 3,* or *4 or more.*

Procedure

Participants were surveyed in small groups of up to eight participants. Participants arrived for the study at their scheduled times. The researcher introduced herself and thanked the participants for volunteering to participate in the study. The researcher explained the importance of friendship in people's lives and told them that the purpose of the study was to see if there was a relationship between ways people think about themselves and what people do to maintain their friendships. The researcher asked participants to respond to all statements in the survey with their relationship with a current or former best friend in mind. The researcher obtained informed consent in

writing and emphasized confidentiality as well as anonymity of responses. The researcher informed participants of their right to withdraw from the study without penalty.

Participants then received the survey, which was composed of the following scales in the order specified: Marital Conventionalization Scale, Intimacy scale, Passion scale, Commitment scale, Relationship Assessment Scale, Desirability Scale, Probability Scale, Desirability of the State Scale, Intensity Scale, Strength scale, Diversity scale, and Self-Monitoring Scale. Participants reported demographic information after completing the survey. The researcher initialed and stamped the participants' forms for receiving extra credit when they had completed the survey.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Self-monitoring and sex of participant were not manipulated variables; therefore, it was possible that participants' self-monitoring orientations were confounded with their sex. Indeed, several researchers (e.g., Day et al., 2002) have found that self-monitoring and sex were confounded. Given this potential confound, it is possible that any potential effects of self-monitoring on usage of maintenance strategies could actually be effects of participants' sex. In order to determine if self-monitoring and sex were confounded, a chi-square test was conducted using self-monitoring (low vs. high) and sex of participant (female vs. male) as variables. Self-monitoring and sex of participant were statistically related, $\chi^2(1, N = 144) = 10.19, p < .01$. Females were more likely to be low self-monitors than high self-monitors, and males were more likely to be high self-monitors than low self-monitors.

Because self-monitoring and sex of participant were confounded in this sample,

females and males were categorized separately as either low or high self-monitors based on a median split of the full range of scores for their sex on the Self-Monitoring Scale. After participants were categorized as low or high self-monitors according to their sex, 43 females and 29 males were categorized as low self-monitors and 38 females and 34 males were categorized as high self-monitors. A follow-up chi-square test was then conducted using self-monitoring (low vs. high) and sex of participant (female vs. male) as variables. Self-monitoring and sex of participant were no longer statistically related, $\chi^2(1, N = 144) < 1.00, p = .40$. Thus, self-monitoring and sex of participant were no longer confounded.

In order to determine if participants thought of same-sex best friends or opposite-sex best friends, a chi-square test was conducted using sex of participant (female vs. male) and sex of best friend (female vs. male) as variables. Sex of participant and sex of best friend were statistically related, $\chi^2(1, N = 144) = 41.26, p < .001$. Most females (79%) thought of females as their best friends, and most males (75%) thought of males as their best friends. As far as the type of friend (current or past best friend) of whom participants thought, 90% thought of a current best friend.

Main Analyses

It was hypothesized that low self-monitors would be more likely than high self-monitors to use several maintenance strategies in their relationships with their best friends. Specifically, it was hypothesized that low self-monitors would engage in more idealization, report higher degrees of closeness, and report higher degrees of platonic love in their relationships with their best friends than would high self-monitors.

Idealization. Six measures of idealization were utilized in this study: the short-form Marital Conventionalization Scale, Relationship Assessment Scale, Desirability Scale,

Probability Scale, Desirability of the State Scale, and Intensity Scale. The first hypothesis was that low self-monitors would engage in more idealization in their relationships with their best friends than would high self-monitors. This hypothesis was examined using a series of one-tailed *t*-tests.

The short-form Marital Conventionalization Scale was the first measure of idealization. The mean scores on this scale were 22.46 (SD = 3.39) for low self-monitors and 21.92 (SD = 3.44) for high self-monitors. A *t*-test involving these means was not significant, $t(142) < 1.00$, $p = .17$. At least in terms of use of conventionalization, low self-monitors did not report engaging in any more idealization in their relationships with their best friends than did high self-monitors.

The Relationship Assessment Scale was the second measure of idealization. The mean scores on this scale were 30.08 (SD = 4.13) for low self-monitors and 29.06 (SD = 4.01) for high self-monitors. A *t*-test involving these means was marginally significant, $t(142) = 1.51$, $p < .07$. As expected, low self-monitors did report slightly greater levels of relationship satisfaction in their relationships with their best friends than did high self-monitors.

The Desirability Scale was the third measure of idealization. The mean scores on this scale were 23.82 (SD = 4.21) for low self-monitors and 23.58 (SD = 3.87) for high self-monitors. A *t*-test involving these means was not significant, $t(142) < 1.00$, $p = .36$. At least in terms of perceived value of having close relationships with their best friends, low self-monitors did not report engaging in any more idealization in their relationships with their best friends than did high self-monitors.

The Probability Scale was the fourth measure of idealization. The mean scores on

this scale were 10.74 (SD = 3.14) for low self-monitors and 11.29 (SD = 2.83) for high self-monitors. A t-test involving these means was not significant, $t(142) = -1.12$, $p = .13$. At least in terms of perceived probability of having close relationships with their best friends, low self-monitors did not report engaging in any more idealization in their relationships with their best friends than did high self-monitors.

The Desirability of the State Scale was the fifth measure of idealization. The mean scores on this scale were 23.06 (SD = 4.20) for low self-monitors and 22.74 (SD = 4.38) for high self-monitors. A t-test involving these means was not significant, $t(142) < 1.00$, $p = .33$. At least in terms of perceived number of benefits of liking their best friends, low self-monitors did not report engaging in any more idealization in their relationships with their best friends than did high self-monitors.

The Intensity Scale was the sixth measure of idealization. The mean scores on this scale were 9.40 (SD = 3.10) for low self-monitors and 10.00 (SD = 2.65) for high self-monitors. A t-test involving these means was not significant, $t(142) = -1.24$, $p = .11$. At least in terms of perceived intensity in their relationships with their best friends, low self-monitors did not report engaging in any more idealization in their relationships with their best friends than did high self-monitors.

Closeness. Closeness was assessed using the Strength and Diversity subscales of the Relationship Closeness Inventory. The frequency aspect of closeness was not examined in this study. The second hypothesis was that low self-monitors would report higher degrees of closeness in their relationships with their best friends than would high self-monitors. That is, low self-monitors would report engaging in a wider variety of activities with their best friends than would high self-monitors, and low self-monitors would report

that their best friends had a stronger impact on their decisions and behaviors than would high self-monitors. These hypotheses were examined using two one-tailed *t*-tests.

Strength of impact, the first aspect of closeness, was assessed using the Strength scale of the Relationship Closeness Inventory. The mean scores on this scale were 86.46 ($SD = 20.80$) for low self-monitors and 87.19 ($SD = 20.33$) for high self-monitors. A *t*-test involving these means was not significant, $t(142) < 1.00$, $p = .42$. At least in terms of strength of impact, low self-monitors did not report any more closeness in their relationships with their best friends than did high self-monitors.

Diversity of activities, the second aspect of closeness, was assessed using the Diversity scale of the Relationship Closeness Inventory. The mean scores on this scale were 57.63 ($SD = 7.29$) for low self-monitors and 55.60 ($SD = 7.32$) for high self-monitors. A *t*-test involving these means was significant, $t(142) = 1.57$, $p < .05$. As expected, low self-monitors did report engaging in a wider variety of activities with their best friends than did high self-monitors.

Love. Platonic love was assessed using the Triangular Love Scale. The third hypothesis was that low self-monitors would report higher degrees of platonic love in their relationships with their best friends than would high self-monitors. That is, low self-monitors would report higher levels of intimacy, passion (i.e., attraction), and commitment in their relationships with their best friends than would high self-monitors. These hypotheses were examined using three one-tailed *t*-tests.

Intimacy, the first aspect of platonic love, was assessed using the Intimacy scale of the Triangular Love Scale. The mean scores on this scale were 51.89 ($SD = 8.50$) for low self-monitors and 52.01 ($SD = 7.90$) for high self-monitors. A *t*-test involving these

means was not significant, $t(142) < 1.00$, $p = .46$. At least in terms of intimacy, low self-monitors did not report higher degrees of platonic love in their relationships with their best friends than did high self-monitors.

Passion (i.e., attraction), the second aspect of platonic love, was assessed using the Passion scale of the Triangular Love Scale. The mean scores on this scale were 41.68 ($SD = 10.44$) for low self-monitors and 41.25 ($SD = 10.71$) for high self-monitors. A t-test involving these means was not significant, $t(142) < 1.00$, $p = .40$. At least in terms of passion (i.e., attraction), low self-monitors did not report higher degrees of platonic love in their relationships with their best friends than did high self-monitors.

Commitment, the third aspect of platonic love, was assessed using the Commitment scale of the Triangular Love Scale. The mean scores on this scale were 49.39 ($SD = 9.30$) for low self-monitors and 48.03 ($SD = 9.35$) for high self-monitors. A t-test involving these means was not significant, $t(142) < 1.00$, $p = .19$. At least in terms of commitment, low self-monitors did not report higher degrees of platonic love in their relationships with their best friends than did high self-monitors.

Exploratory Analyses

Sex of participant was not a primary focus in this study. However, given the prior confound between self-monitoring and sex of participant, it was possible that sex of participant would have its own effect on usage of maintenance strategies. Additionally, although self-monitoring and sex of participant were de-confounded in this sample, it was possible that effects of self-monitoring on usage of maintenance strategies were qualified by sex of participant.

Idealization. In order to determine if there was a main effect of sex on idealization

or a self-monitoring X sex interaction, six 2 (self-monitoring: low vs. high) X 2 (sex of participant: female vs. male) ANOVAs were conducted using each of the six measures of idealization as dependent variables. For conventionalization, the main effect of sex [$F(1,140) = 2.58, p = .11$], the main effect of self-monitoring [$F(1,140) < 1.00$], and the self-monitoring X sex interaction [$F(1,140) < 1.00$] were not significant. For relationship satisfaction, the main effect of sex [$F(1,140) = 1.57, p = .21$], the main effect of self-monitoring [$F(1,140) = 1.91, p = .17$], and the self-monitoring X sex interaction [$F(1,140) < 1.00$] were not significant.

For perceived value of having a close relationship with one's best friend, there was a significant main effect of sex, $F(1,140) = 4.40, p < .05$. Females ($M = 24.32$, $SD = 3.53$) reported higher perceived values of having close relationships with their best friends than did males ($M = 22.90$, $SD = 4.50$). Neither the main effect of self-monitoring nor the self-monitoring X sex interaction was significant (both Fs < 1.00).

For perceived probability of having a close relationship with one's best friend, there was a significant main effect of sex, $F(1,140) = 22.48, p < .001$. Females ($M = 11.95$, $SD = 2.37$) reported higher perceived probabilities of having close relationships with their best friends than did males ($M = 9.81$, $SD = 3.27$). There was also a marginally significant main effect of self-monitoring, $F(1,140) = 3.09, p < .08$. High self-monitors ($M = 11.29$, $SD = 2.83$) reported slightly higher perceived probabilities of having close relationships with their best friends than did low self-monitors ($M = 10.74$, $SD = 3.14$). These main effects were qualified by a marginally significant interaction between self-monitoring and sex, $F(1,140) = 3.53, p < .06$. Follow-up analyses of simple effects were then conducted for males and females. Males who were low self-monitors ($M = 8.90$,

SD = 3.27) reported slightly lower perceived probabilities of having close relationships with their best friends than did males who were high self-monitors (*M* = 10.59, *SD* = 3.12), $F(1,61) = 4.41$, $p < .05$. Females who were low self-monitors (*M* = 11.98, *SD* = 2.37) and females who were high self-monitors (*M* = 11.92, *SD* = 2.41) did not differ in their perceived probabilities of having close relationships with their best friends, $F(1,79) < 1.00$.

For perceived number of benefits of liking one's best friend, there was a significant main effect of sex, $F(1, 140) = 9.49$, $p < .01$. Females (*M* = 23.84, *SD* = 4.07) reported higher perceived numbers of benefits of liking their best friends than did males (*M* = 21.68, *SD* = 4.26). Neither the main effect of self-monitoring [$F(1,140) < 1.00$] nor the self-monitoring X sex interaction [$F(1,140) = 1.37$, $p = .24$] was significant.

For perceived intensity in one's relationship with one's best friend, there was a significant main effect of sex, $F(1,140) = 22.76$, $p < .001$. Females (*M* = 10.60, *SD* = 2.33) reported higher levels of perceived intensity in their relationships with their best friends than did males (*M* = 8.54, *SD* = 3.13). There was also a significant main effect of self-monitoring, $F(1,140) = 3.75$, $p < .05$. High self-monitors (*M* = 10.00, *SD* = 2.65) reported higher levels of perceived intensity in their relationships with their best friends than did low self-monitors (*M* = 9.40, *SD* = 3.10). These main effects were qualified by a significant interaction between self-monitoring and sex, $F(1,140) = 4.65$, $p < .05$. Follow-up analyses of simple effects were then conducted for males and females. Males who were low self-monitors (*M* = 7.55, *SD* = 3.16) reported lower levels of perceived intensity in their relationships with their best friends than did males who were high self-monitors (*M* = 9.38, *SD* = 2.89), $F(1,61) = 5.76$, $p < .05$. Females who were low self-monitors (*M*

= 10.65, *SD* = 2.37) and females who were high self-monitors (*M* = 10.55, *SD* = 2.31) did not differ in their perceived levels of intensity in their relationships with their best friends, $F(1,79) < 1.00$.

Closeness. In order to determine if there was a main effect of sex on closeness or a self-monitoring X sex interaction, two 2 (self-monitoring: low vs. high) X 2 (sex of participant: female vs. male) ANOVAs were conducted using each of the two measures of closeness as dependent variables. For strength of impact, the sex and self-monitoring main effects and the self-monitoring X sex interaction were not significant (all Fs < 1.00). For diversity of shared activities, there was a marginally significant main effect of self-monitoring, $F(1,140) = 2.84$, $p < .09$. Low self-monitors (*M* = 57.63, *SD* = 7.29) reported engaging in a slightly wider variety of shared activities with their best friends than did high self-monitors (*M* = 55.60, *SD* = 7.32). Neither the main effect of sex nor the self-monitoring X sex interaction was significant (both Fs < 1.00).

Love. Of all the measures that were used in this study, the Triangular Love Scale was the only measure in which three subscales were composed of the same number of items. Each of these subscales was designed to measure different components of platonic love. Because participants responded to all three subscales, it was possible to examine whether participants reported higher levels for one component of platonic love than for another component of platonic love.

In order to determine if there were any effects of component or participants' sex or if there were any interactions between component, participants' sex, and self-monitoring, a 2 (self-monitoring: low vs. high) X 2 (sex of participant: female vs. male) X 3 (component: intimacy vs. passion vs. commitment) ANOVA was conducted using

reported levels of intimacy, passion (i.e., attraction), and commitment as dependent variables with repeated measures on the third factor. There was a significant main effect of component, $F(2,280) = 193.59, p < .001$. Participants reported significantly more intimacy ($M = 51.95$, $SD = 8.18$) in their relationships with their best friends than passion (i.e., attraction) ($M = 41.47$, $SD = 10.54$) or commitment ($M = 48.71$, $SD = 9.32$), and participants reported significantly more commitment in their relationships with their best friends than passion (i.e., attraction). There was also a main effect of sex of participant, $F(1,140) = 14.28, p < .001$. Overall, females reported higher levels of intimacy ($M = 54.20$, $SD = 6.43$), passion (i.e., attraction) ($M = 44.35$, $SD = 8.77$), and commitment ($M = 50.46$, $SD = 8.23$) in their relationships with their best friends than did males. Means (with standard deviations in parentheses) for males for intimacy, passion (i.e., attraction), and commitment were 49.06 (9.26), 37.76 (11.50), and 46.46 (10.18), respectively. These main effects of component and sex of participant were qualified by a significant interaction between component and sex of participant, $F(2, 280) = 2.97, p < .05$. Follow-up analyses of simple effects were then conducted for males and females. Differences between females and males were most pronounced within the passion (i.e., attraction) component, $F(1,142) = 15.19, p < .01$. Males ($M = 37.76$, $SD = 11.50$) reported particularly lower levels of passion (i.e., attraction) in their relationships with their best friends than did females ($M = 44.35$, $SD = 8.77$).

Discussion

It was hypothesized that the construct of self-monitoring would be helpful in accounting for individual differences in how people maintain their relationships with their best friends. Low self-monitors and high self-monitors differ in their perceptions of

friendship; therefore, low self-monitors and high self-monitors were expected to differ in ways that they maintain their friendships. Specifically, it was hypothesized that low self-monitors would be more likely than high self-monitors to use several maintenance strategies in their relationships with their best friends. Three maintenance strategies were examined in this study: idealization, closeness, and platonic love. Low self-monitors were expected to engage in more idealization, report higher degrees of closeness, and report higher degrees of platonic love in their relationships with their best friends than were high self-monitors.

In terms of idealization, the hypothesis that low self-monitors would engage in more idealization than high self-monitors was only partially supported. As expected, low self-monitors did report engaging in slightly more idealization in their relationships with their best friends than did high self-monitors in terms of relationship satisfaction. Low self-monitors reported slightly greater levels of satisfaction in their relationships with their best friends than did high self-monitors. Contrary to hypotheses, however, low self-monitors did not report engaging in any more idealization in their relationships with their best friends than did high self-monitors in terms of use of conventionalization, perceived value of having close relationships with their best friends, and perceived number of benefits of liking their best friends. Also contrary to hypotheses, when sex of participant was included in an analysis, high self-monitors actually reported engaging in more idealization than did low self-monitors in terms of perceived probability of having close relationships with their best friends and in terms of perceived intensity in their relationships with their best friends. These main effects of self-monitoring, however, were qualified by two-way interactions between self-monitoring and sex of participant. In

both instances, males who were low self-monitors reported engaging in less idealization in their relationships with their best friends than did males who were high self-monitors.

In terms of closeness, the hypothesis that low self-monitors would report higher degrees of closeness in their relationships with their best friends was only partially supported. Diversity of shared activities and strength of impact on one's decisions and behavior were two aspects of closeness examined in this study. As expected, low self-monitors did report higher degrees of closeness in their relationships with their best friends than did high self-monitors in terms of diversity of shared activities. That is, low self-monitors reported engaging in a wider variety of activities with their best friends than did high self-monitors. Contrary to hypotheses, however, low self-monitors did not report any more closeness in their relationships with their best friends than did high self-monitors in terms of strength of impact.

In terms of platonic love, the hypothesis that low self-monitors would report higher degrees of platonic love was not supported. Intimacy, passion (i.e., attraction), and commitment were the three aspects of platonic love examined. Contrary to hypotheses, low self-monitors did not report higher degrees of platonic love in their relationships with their best friends than did high self-monitors in terms of intimacy, passion (i.e., attraction), or commitment.

Although sex of participant was not a primary focus in this study, several unexpected sex effects were found for usage of maintenance strategies. In terms of perceived value of having close relationships with their best friends, perceived probability of having close relationships with their best friends, perceived number of benefits of liking their best friends, and perceived intensity in their relationships with

their best friends, females reported engaging in more idealization in their relationships with their best friends than did males. The effects of participants' sex on perceived probability of having a close relationship with one's best friend and on perceived intensity in one's relationship with one's best friend, however, were qualified by interactions between self-monitoring and sex of participant. An effect of participants' sex was also found for platonic love. Females reported higher levels of intimacy, passion (i.e., attraction), and commitment in their relationships with their best friends than did males. These effects of participants' sex were qualified by an interaction between sex and component of platonic love. Sex differences in reported platonic love were most pronounced within the passion (i.e., attraction) component.

Plausible Alternative Explanations

Why might low self-monitors have reported engaging in more idealization in their relationships with their best friends than high self-monitors only in terms of reported relationship satisfaction? Other researchers have also found differences in relationship satisfaction between low self-monitors and high self-monitors. Leone and Hall (2003) found that low self-monitors tend to be more satisfied with their marital relationships than do high self-monitors. Perhaps low self-monitors are more satisfied than high self-monitors with their relationships because they are more committed than high self-monitors to their relationships (Snyder & Simpson, 1984; Snyder & Smith, 1986). Indeed, Acker and Davis (1992) found that commitment is a strong predictor of relationship satisfaction in romantic relationships. Consistent with that finding, perhaps commitment to one's friendships is also a predictor of satisfaction with one's friendships.

Why did low self-monitors not report engaging in more idealization in their

relationships with their best friends than did high self-monitors in terms of conventionalization, perceived value of having a close relationship with one's best friend, perceived probability of having a close relationship with one's best friend, perceived number of benefits of liking one's best friend, or perceived intensity in one's relationship with one's best friend? This answer is unclear. Perhaps low self-monitors and high self-monitors would have reported differences in use of idealization if other general measures of idealization or measures of idealization specifically suited for friendships had been used. Additionally, maybe low self-monitors and high self-monitors do not differ in their uses of idealization in their relationships with their best friends but instead differ in their uses of idealization in other types of relationships such as romantic relationships. Friendships and romantic relationships are similar in many ways, but these two relationships are also distinct from each other in many ways (Davis & Todd, 1982; Fehr, 1996; Wright, 1985). Wright, for example, found that romantic relationships are more exclusive than are friendships and that individuals are more likely to openly express positive emotions and affection in romantic relationships than in friendships. Idealization is beneficial to romantic relationships (Murray et al., 1996), but perhaps idealization is not as beneficial in friendships.

Why might low self-monitors have reported higher degrees of closeness than did high self-monitors in terms of diversity of shared activities but not in terms of strength of impact? Perhaps this finding regarding diversity of shared activities can be explained by differences in the sizes of low self-monitors' and high self-monitors' social networks. Low self-monitors tend to have a small network of friends whereas high self-monitors tend to have a large network of friends (Snyder et al., 1983). Low self-monitors tend to

participate in different activities with the same friends based on those friends' personal compatibility with low self-monitors. On the other hand, high self-monitors tend to participate in different activities with different friends based on those friends' skill levels at various activities. Low self-monitors' social worlds tend to be undifferentiated whereas high self-monitors' social worlds tend to be differentiated (Snyder, 1987; Snyder et al., 1983).

It is unclear why low self-monitors and high self-monitors did not differ in closeness in their relationships with their best friends in terms of strength of impact on decisions and behavior. Kilduff (1992) actually found that high self-monitors' organizational choices were more influenced by their friends' organizational choices than were low self-monitors' organizational choices. This finding regarding high self-monitors' organizational choices, however, could be due to the fact that high self-monitors tend to engage in social comparison. Perhaps low self-monitors would have differed from high self-monitors in overall closeness in their relationships with their best friends if the overall Relationship Closeness Inventory had been used instead of the Diversity and Strength subscales separately. The Frequency subscale of the Relationship Close Inventory was not used in this study. Additionally, perhaps low self-monitors and high self-monitors really do not differ in closeness in terms of strength of impact in their relationships with their best friends but instead differ in closeness in terms of strength of impact in romantic relationships. Using the overall Relationship Closeness Inventory, Berscheid et al. (1989) found that romantic relationships were closer than friendships. Because of low self-monitors' committed, restricted orientations to their romantic relationships (Snyder & Simpson, 1984; Snyder et al., 1986), low self-monitors may be

more likely than high self-monitors to report that their romantic partners have a strong impact on their decisions and behaviors.

Why did low self-monitors not report higher levels of platonic love in their relationships with their best friends in terms of intimacy, passion (i.e., attraction), or commitment? This finding is inconsistent with other findings. Snyder and Smith (1986), for example, found that low self-monitors' friendships were more intimate than high self-monitors' friendships and that low self-monitors had relatively long-term friendships (as opposed to high self-monitors' relatively short-term friendships). Perhaps this inconsistency in findings is due to differences in ways that intimacy and commitment were measured in this study as compared to Snyder and Smith's study. Snyder and Smith asked participants to write essays describing their relationships with their best friends, and then independent judges rated those participants' essays based on certain aspects of friendship. In this study participants rated their own friendships in terms of intimacy, passion (i.e., attraction), and commitment. Additionally, maybe low self-monitors and high self-monitors do not differ in platonic love in their relationships with their best friends but instead differ in love in other types of relationships such as romantic relationships. Sternberg (1997) found that relationships between romantic partners were higher in intimacy, passion, and commitment than were relationships between best friends. Because low self-monitors tend to be more committed to their romantic relationships than are high self-monitors and low self-monitors have more intimate relationships with their romantic partners than do high self-monitors (Snyder & Simpson, 1984), low self-monitors may be more likely than high self-monitors to report higher levels of intimacy, passion, and commitment in low self-monitors' romantic relationships.

Overall, why might low self-monitors and high self-monitors not have differed in their use of maintenance strategies in their relationships? One reason might be that all individuals use maintenance strategies to some degree in order to maintain their close relationships. Dindia (2000) states that relationship partners have to consciously and purposely do things to maintain their relationship. Perhaps both low self-monitors and high self-monitors have to use maintenance strategies to some degree in order to maintain their relationships with their best friends. Indeed, not all researchers have found differences between low self-monitors and high self-monitors in friendship processes. Malikiosi-Loizos and Anderson (1999), for example, found no relationship between participants' self-monitoring orientations and number of accessible friendships or inclusive friendships. In other words, low self-monitors and high self-monitors did not differ in the number of friends that they could contact if they needed a friend for a particular reason or in the number of friends who would contact and invite low self-monitors or high self-monitors to participate in given activities. This finding regarding accessible and inclusive friendships, however, could be due to differences in ways that self-monitoring was assessed in Malikiosi-Loizos and Anderson's study as compared to this study. Malikiosi-Loizos and Anderson used Lennox and Wolfe's (1984) Revised Self-Monitoring Scale. Snyder and Gangestad's (1986) revised Self-Monitoring Scale was used in this study.

A second reason why low self-monitors and high self-monitors might not have differed in their use of maintenance strategies is because individual differences in use of maintenance strategies may be more apparent in some relationships than in other relationships. For example, relationships between best friends differ from relationships

between close friends and relationships between casual friends (Fehr, 1996). Compared to relationships between casual friends and relationships between close friends, relationships between best friends are characterized by more intimacy, support, exclusiveness, and enjoyment (Davis & Todd, 1982). Fehr states that "progression from friend to close friend to best friend is characterized by increments in the qualities associated with friendship: intimacy, trust, support, loyalty, and so on" (p. 111). Rose and Serafica (1986) found that participants thought more proximity and less affection were needed in casual friendships than in close friendships or best friendships. Perhaps low self-monitors might report engaging in more maintenance strategies in their casual friendships than might high self-monitors.

As mentioned earlier, low self-monitors may have reported using more maintenance strategies than high self-monitors in romantic relationships compared to friendships. Canary et al. (1993) examined usage of maintenance strategies among romantic partners, family members, and friends. These authors found that people engage in maintenance strategies more often in their romantic and family relationships than in their friendships. Neither Ayres (1983) nor Shea and Pearson (1986), however, found an effect of relationship type on people's usage of maintenance strategies.

A third reason why low self-monitors and high self-monitors might not have differed in their use of maintenance strategies in their relationships with their best friends is because of the specific maintenance strategies and the specific measures of those maintenance strategies examined in this study. Several researchers have developed and used other measures of maintenance strategies (e.g., Ayres, 1983; Dindia & Baxter, 1987; Stafford & Canary, 1991). Additionally, there are many other maintenance strategies in

which people could engage in their relationships with their best friends besides idealization, closeness, and platonic love.

Advantages and Strengths

In this study some support was found for differences between low self-monitors and high self-monitors in usage of maintenance strategies for their friendships. Several researchers have found differences between low self-monitors and high self-monitors in friendship choice (e.g., Jamieson et al., 1987; Snyder et al., 1983). Other researchers have also found differences between low and high self-monitors in other friendship processes. Gaines, Work, Johnson, Youn, and Lai (2000) found that the other-directedness aspect of self-monitoring was negatively related to constructive, active responses (i.e., voice) to accommodative dilemmas in friendships and positively related to constructive, passive responses (i.e., loyalty) and to destructive, passive responses (i.e., neglect) to accommodative dilemmas in friendships. Both Clinton and Anderson (1999) and Malikiosi-Loizos and Anderson (1999) found that high self-monitors were less likely than low self-monitors to report social loneliness. Until now, few researchers have tried to examine any possible differences between low self-monitors and high self-monitors in usage of maintenance strategies.

Limitations

There were several limitations in this study that should be mentioned. First, because self-monitoring is an individual difference variable and therefore cannot be manipulated, no causal inferences can be made between self-monitoring and maintenance strategies. Although some support was found for effects of self-monitoring on two specific maintenance strategies, it cannot be inferred that individuals' self-monitoring orientations

caused them to use more or less maintenance strategies. Second, self-report measures were used in this study. Participants were instructed to think of a relationship with either a current or former best friend when responding to survey statements. With self-report measures, participants could have reported their relationships in socially desirable ways or engaged in acquiescent responding. It is also uncertain as to whether participants actually thought of the same best friend when answering all questions. Additionally, participants could have had problems with recalling past information about their relationships. Relationships with past best friends may have been particularly difficult for participants to recall. Third, the majority of the participants in this sample were college students between the ages of 18 and 22, and this sample was disproportionately female. It is unknown whether researchers can generalize these results to non-college students and to males.

Future Directions

In future studies of self-monitoring and maintenance strategies in friendship, researchers might examine other types of maintenance strategies or use other measures of maintenance strategies. Researchers could conduct open-ended interviews and allow participants to describe their own maintenance strategies in their friendships. Researchers could have participants bring in their best friend so that both relationship partners could report their use of maintenance strategies. In addition, researchers might try to observe participants' maintenance strategies using observational methods. Individual differences in use of maintenance strategies might be more apparent during interactions between best friends.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL:

Born: Nadia Nicol Flanigan
Date of Birth:
Place of Birth:

EDUCATION:

2005 –	Florida State University Tallahassee, FL Ph.D. candidate (Family Relations)
2003 – 2005	University of North Florida Jacksonville, FL M.A. General Psychology (August, 2005)
1999 – 2003	Wake Forest University Winston-Salem, NC B.A. Psychology (May, 2003)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

2004 – 2005	Research Methods Lab Instructor University of North Florida Jacksonville, FL

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS
AND ACTIVITIES:

Society for Personality and Social Psychology (Student Member), Psi Chi National Honor Society, Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society

RESEARCH:

2005	Supervised research project with Dr. Christopher Leone. Self-monitoring, dating, and maintenance strategies.
2004	Supervised research project with Dr. Christopher Leone. Self-monitoring, marriage, and maintenance strategies.