ADOLESCENTS AS
ACTIVE MANAGERS
OF THEIR OWN PSYCHOLOGICAL NEEDS

A longitudinal study and intervention study about the role of need-crafting in adolescence

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INTRODUCTION
Emotional instability

- Limited capacities of emotion regulation
- Heightened sensitivity to negative emotions
- So: More mental health problems and problem behavior in adolescence

**NEED FOR PREVENTION!**

- Increased agency & mastery of their own lives
- Development of identity and values
- Development of a peer network
- So: Rebels with a cause
So, prevention ... what's important?

1. Strength-based working
2. Transdiagnostic prevention
3. Universal prevention
1. Strength-based working

2. Transdiagnostic prevention

3. Universal prevention

A framework for prevention

Self-Determination Theory
(Ryan, & Deci, (2017))
A framework for prevention

**AUTONOMY**
- Well-being
- Vitality
- Life-satisfaction
- Energy
- Less ill-being

**RELATEDNESS**
- Depression
- Drug abuse
- Self-harm
- Suicidal ideations
- Less well-being

**COMPETENCE**
- Need-satisfaction
- Need-frustration

Worksheet with images:
- Shrimp with autonomy
- Fish school
- Penguin flying

*When I grow up, I want to be a penguin.*
*Do you also have such WOW-feeling?*
*I can do it!"*
A framework for prevention
Need-crafting

- Actively maximize and create the chances to experience need-satisfaction & decrease the odds of need-frustration

- 2 components
  1. Awareness
  2. Action
Need-crafting scale

- 18 items (Cronbach α = .83)
- CFA: good intern validity!
- Example competence crafting
  1) Action component
     - I try to do as many things as possible at which I am good at
     - When I do not succeed in certain things, I still try to learn from it.
     - I deliberately choose activities in which I am good at.
  2) Awareness component
     - I know well in which activities I am good at.
     - It is clear to me in which activities I can use my capacities well.
     - I do not know well for myself in which activities I am good.
What's the predictive role of adolescents' capacity for need-crafting on their need-experiences and well-being?

What's the predictive value of adolescents' capacity for need-crafting on their need-experiences over and above the role of parenting?

What are the effects of a micro-intervention targeting need-crafting?
LONGITUDINAL STUDY
## Method

**February 2019**  
\[ N = 436 \]

**March 2019**  
\[ N = 398 \]

**June 2019 (high stress)**  
\[ N = 345 \]

### WAVE 1
- Gender: 65.8% girls ⇔ 34.2% boys
- Age: \( M = 16.33 \) years
- General (64.7%), technical (24.3%) & professional (11.0%) education
- Origin: 93.3% Belgian ⇔ 6.7% other
Method

Measurements

- Need-crafting
- Need-satisfaction & -frustration
- Well-being
  - life-satisfaction
  - Vitality
  - Positive affect
- Ill-being
  - Stress
  - Depressive symptoms
  - Tiredness
  - Negative affect
- Parenting

Data-analysis

- Multi-level structural equation modeling in mplus
- Linear regression in SPSS
Results

Between-person level

- Need-crafting has an effect on need-satisfaction 3 months later, over and above the effects of parenting and the stability of need-satisfaction.
Results

Between-person differences

Lucy → Kate

Mean difference between adolescents

Within-person differences

Lucy → Lucy

One moment is not the other

Mean difference between adolescents

Lucy

Kate

February March Wave 3

0 1 2 3 4 5

Lucy → Kate

Lucy

Kate

0 1 2 3 4 5

February March Wave 3

Lucy → Kate

Lucy

Kate
Results

- Variations in all constructs
  - Although there was substantial between-person variance in need-crafting (ICC = .64), there was also within-person variance
  - need-crafting is dynamic and can change! → Room for change
Results

Within-person level

need-crafting

- .34*** → need-satisfaction
- .60*** → life-satisfaction
- .28*** → vitality
- .33*** → positive affect
- -.15* → need-frustration
- -.17** → stress
- -.30*** → depressive symptoms
- -.16* → tiredness
- ns → negative affect

Note: *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001
Coefficients shown are unstandardized coefficients.
Results

Within-person level

- Relation between need-crafting and the positive outcomes is partially mediated by need-satisfaction (except for vitality: full mediation)

- An example:

![Diagram](image)

Note. *p<.05, **p < .01, ***p<.001
Coefficient shown are standardized coefficients (except indirect pathway).
Results

Within-person level

- Relation between need-crafting and the negative outcomes is fully mediated by need-frustration (except for depressive symptoms: partial mediation)

- An example:

\[ \text{need-crafting} \rightarrow \text{need-frustration} \rightarrow \text{stress} \]

\[ \text{Indirect pathway} \rightarrow -0.07^* \]

\[ \text{Coefficients shown are standardized coefficients (except indirect pathway).} \]

Note. *p<.05, **p < .01, ***p<.001
PREVENTION STUDY
method

4th wk February
2nd week March
3rd week March
4th week March
April & May
4th week May
1st & 2nd wk June

Workshop 1
- Rationale
- Psycho-education
- Awareness & self-knowledge
- Making personal plan

Workshop 2
- Evaluation personal plan
- Tips & tricks of peers
- Optimizing personal plan
- Letter to myself

Boosters
- 2 text messages
- Letter to myself
method

- Experimental group & Control group
- 1-to-1 matching
- Different schools (no spill-over effect)

### Experimental group

- $N_{\text{pre}} = 112$
- $N_{\text{post}} = 107$
- $N_{\text{fu}} = 104$

### Control group

- $N_{\text{pre}} = 112$
- $N_{\text{post}} = 104$
- $N_{\text{fu}} = 86$

### Pre-measurement

- Gender: 60.7% girls $\leftrightarrow$ 39.3% boys
- Age: $M = 16.44$ years
- General (51.8%), technical (17.0%), & professional (31.3%)
- Origin: 83.0% Belgian origin $\leftrightarrow$ 17.0% other origins

- Gender: 60.7% girls $\leftrightarrow$ 39.3% boys
- Age: $M = 16.44$ years
- General (51.8%), technical (22.3%), & professional (25.9%)
- Origin: 86.6% Belgian origin $\leftrightarrow$ 13.4% other origins
Method

Measurements

- Need-crafting
- Need-satisfaction & -frustration
- Well-being
  - life-satisfaction
  - Vitality
  - Positive affect
- Ill-being
  - Stress
  - Depressive symptoms
  - Tiredness
  - Negative affect
- Involvement in workshops

Data-analysis

- Repeated Measures Analyses in SPSS
Results

- Control condition vs intervention condition
- Small effects on need-satisfaction & life-satisfaction
- No significant effects on other variables
Conclusion
Conclusion

- Prevention in adolescence needs both (1) coaching of the environment AND (2) increasing self-management of themselves.

- Room for change (need-crafting is dynamic).

- Need-crafting predicts more well-being and less ill-being over a period of 3 months.

- No systematic effects of our micro-intervention:
  - Too much constraints in adolescents' life to changes need-crafting?
  - Different method is necessary?
  - 1-1 counseling?

- Involvement in the workshops is necessary to get results.
Thank you for your attention!

Questions?

thank you, guys!
Results

- Control condition ⇔ high involvement ⇔ low involvement
- Small effects on need-satisfaction, life-satisfaction, & stress
- Low involvement: first a dip, then recovery