

Introduction

- Love can be weaker than desired, sometimes leading to divorces and break-ups
- Increasing communication with partner does not always increase relationship satisfaction (1)
- Relationship satisfaction can be increased without changing partner's behavior by repeatedly viewing pictures of the spouse paired with pleasant stimuli (2)
- Cognitive reappraisal involves reinterpreting the situation to up- and down-regulate love feelings and emotions (3,4)
- Motivated attention is measured by a Late Positive Potential (LPP) (5)
- LPP increases as people up-regulate love and emotions (4)
- **Research Question:** Does love and/ or positive emotion up-regulation increase infatuation, attachment, marital satisfaction, and motivated attention?
- **Hypothesis:** Love up-regulation will result in higher infatuation, attachment, marital satisfaction, and motivated attention than positive emotion-up-regulation

Methods

- 12 married participants (3 men, 25 – 51 years)
- 32-channel EEG registration (Biosemi)
- Motivated attention measured via LPP (400 -1000 ms)
- Viewed 25 neutral, pleasant, and spouse pictures (Fig 1)
- Up-regulation of 25 pleasant pictures (Fig 1)
- Up-regulation of 25 spouse pictures (Fig 1)
- Ratings: Infatuation, Attachment, Marital Satisfaction

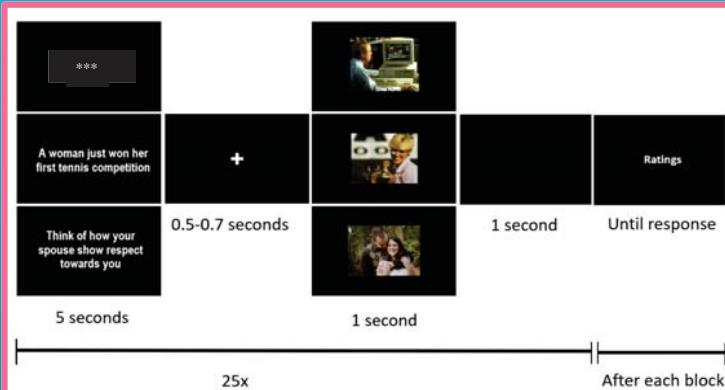


Fig 1: Trial Overview

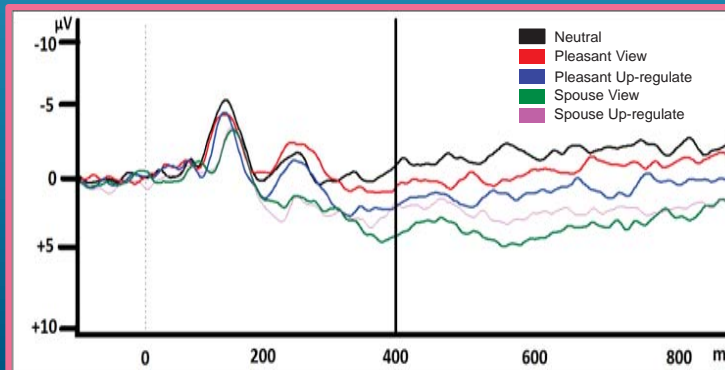


Fig 2: LPP Amplitude for View and Regulation conditions

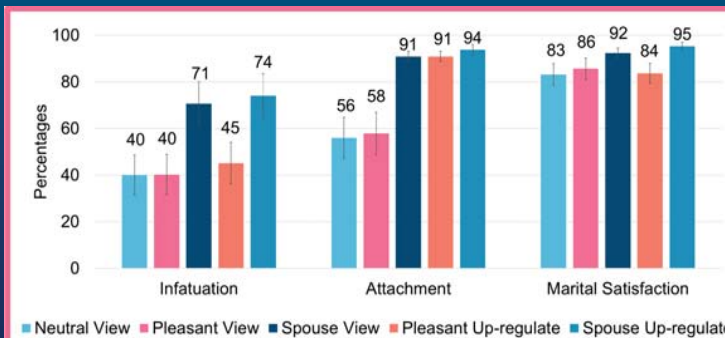


Fig 3: Love and marital satisfaction ratings

Results

- LPP: Higher motivated attention for passively viewed spouse pictures than pleasant and neutral pictures (Fig 2)
- LPP: Neither love nor positive emotion up-regulation increased motivated attention significantly (Fig 2)
- Ratings: Love up-regulation increased infatuation, attachment, and marital satisfaction
- Ratings: Positive emotion up-regulation increased infatuation and attachment (Fig 3)

Discussion

- LPP showed highest motivated attention for spouse
- Up-regulation did not increase motivated attention for spouse, but more participants needed
- Both love and positive emotion up-regulation increased infatuation and attachment
- Only love up-regulation increased marital satisfaction
- Love feelings and marital satisfaction can be increased independent from spouse
- Future study: Longitudinal love and emotion up-regulation comparison

References:

- (1) Kelley et al. (2003) *Close Relationships*
- (2) McNulty et al. (2017) *Psychological Science*
- (3) Gross (2002) *Review of General Psychology*
- (4) Langeslag & van Strien (2016) *PLOS ONE*
- (5) Hajcak & Foti (2009) *Clinical Neurophysiology*