Introduction

- Romantic love has a nearly 100% prevalence rate\(^1\) and is linked to life satisfaction and well-being\(^2\).
- Heartbreak is a risk factor for depression\(^3\) and the leading cause of adolescent depression\(^4\).
- Decreasing love feelings would be helpful to many, but has not been studied.
- Question 1: How effective are regulation strategies for decreasing love feelings? (Fig. 1, 2)
- Question 2: How do regulation strategies affect how positive or negative people feel? (Fig. 1, 2)

Results

- Love ratings: Negative reappraisal < view < distraction = love reappraisal (Fig. 4)
- Valence ratings: Negative reappraisal < view < love regulation < distraction (Fig. 5)
- LPP: Negative reappraisal = distraction = love reappraisal < view (Fig. 6)

Discussion

- All three strategies decreased LPP amplitude.
- Negative reappraisal best at subjectively decreasing love, but makes people feel bad.
- Active, positive distraction best at making people feel better, but did not change subjective love.
- Love regulation strategies decrease love and change how positive/negative people feel.
- Future study: For how long do these strategies decrease love?

Methods

- Five heartbroken participants (18-40 yrs, 1 male).
- Regulation task using 28 photos of ex-partner.
- Regulation instructions precede photos.
- Love and valence ratings after each trial (Fig. 3).
- 32-channel EEG registration (Biosemi).
- Measure LPP amplitude for objective regulation success.

Instructions

- **How in love do you feel?**
  - 0% — 100%
- **How negative or positive?**
  - +

Fig. 1: Regulation strategies

Expected Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regulation Strategy</th>
<th>LPP and Love Ratings</th>
<th>Valence Ratings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative Reappraisal</td>
<td>Decrease = Successful</td>
<td>Decrease = Less Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Positive Distraction</td>
<td>No Change = Unsuccessful</td>
<td>Increase = More Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love Reappraisal</td>
<td>Decrease = Successful</td>
<td>No Change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Fig. 2: Hypotheses

Fig. 3: Trial overview

Fig. 4: Love ratings

Fig. 5: Valence ratings

Fig. 6: LPP amplitude for regulation strategies and view condition