

# Remembering important episodic memories: The impact of need satisfaction in memories on mood and well-being.

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## Introduction

- Important **episodic memories** are mostly memories for significant and affectively charged past events, and are repeatedly recalled (Tulving, 2012; Philippe et al., 2012). When recalled, they can **affect situational mood and well-being over time**, depending on diverse memory components (Josephson et al., 1996; Philippe et al., 2012).
- We argue that episodic memories can alter mood when recalled in part through **the level of satisfaction of the three psychological needs** postulated by the Self-determination theory experienced when the event of the memory occurred (Philippe et al., 2012).
- As memories are repeatedly recalled, the repetitive impacts of a memory need satisfaction on mood change should lead to **consolidation and stable changes in well-being over time** (Adler et al, 2016). Thus, memory need satisfaction should be associated with changes in well-being over time, as function of the mood change engendered upon the memory recall: memories with **the greatest impact on mood** when recalled should have **the greatest impact on well-being over time**.

## Method

### Participants:

116 students (93 women, 23 men), Mean age: 29.72 years old

### Measures:

#### Phase 1:

1. Pre-description positive mood
2. General well-being, Phase 1
3. Positive **OR** negative self-defining memory description, depending on **randomly assigned conditions**
4. Memory valence
5. Memory need-satisfaction
6. Post-description positive mood

#### Phase 2: 3 months later:

1. General well-being, Phase 2

$$\text{Mood change} = \text{Post-description mood} - \text{Pre-description mood}$$

## Hypotheses

- H1:** Greater **need satisfaction** characterizing a memory should predict, in both conditions, **increases in positive mood**.
- H2:** **Need satisfaction** should predict **increases in well-being over a 3-month period**, independently of condition assignment at Phase 1. However, only memories characterized by need satisfaction that led to a **significant increase in positive mood** at Phase 1 should predict **increases in well-being**.

## Results

### H1

	Mood post-description		
	Model R <sup>2</sup>	β	t
Step 1	.50		
<b>Mood pre-description</b>		.71	<b>10.66**</b>
Step 2	.74		
<b>Conditions (pos = 1; neg = 0)</b>		.50	<b>10.22**</b>
Step 3	.76		
<b>Memory need satisfaction</b>		.25	<b>2.92**</b>
Step 4	.76		
Memory Need Satisfaction X condition		.11	1.10

### H2

	General well-being, Phase 2		
	Model R <sup>2</sup>	β	t
Step 1	.62		
<b>General well-being, Phase 1</b>		.79	<b>13.20**</b>
Conditions (pos = 1; neg = 0)		.02	0.39
Step 2	.63		
<b>Memory need satisfaction</b>		.24	<b>2.23*</b>
Step 3	.63		
Mood change		.04	0.51
Step 4	.66		
<b>Memory need satisfaction X mood change</b>		.18	<b>3.05**</b>

## Discussion

- The **level of need satisfaction** characterizing the initial event of a memory can predict an **increase in mood** after the memory recall, even in negative memory. Thus, need satisfaction seems to be a **fundamental memory component** that can influence people in the here and now.
- Moreover, memories that led to significant increases in mood when recalled, through their level of need satisfaction, are the ones that, in turn, led to the greatest enduring changes in well-being over time. In this sense, our study is the first to **investigate the process through which need satisfaction in episodic memories can influence well-being over time**, by proposing that it is through the repetitive situational changes in mood that need satisfaction can greatly influence well-being over time.

## References

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## Interaction Graph

