

TITLE (max 200 c.)

The role of receiving others' counterfactual thoughts in interpersonal conflict situations

PREFERRED PRESENTATION FORMAT

- Long empirical multi-study/multi paper talk
- Short empirical 1-2 study/single paper talk
- Short theoretical/research idea pitch talk including planned studies

ABSTRACT (max 1500 c., including spaces).

Thinking counterfactually after a negative event is a common response. Such thoughts serve various functions, from protecting one's self-image to guiding future behavior. However, the role of *receiving* counterfactuals generated by others has received little attention. Our project addresses this gap by examining how people react to counterfactual statements expressed by someone they are in conflict with. In interpersonal conflicts, both parties often see themselves as the main victim, which reduces their willingness to reconcile and fuels further escalation. Yet, when the other acknowledges their role in the conflict, by reflecting on what they could or should have done differently, it may increase the victim's willingness to reconcile. Building on this idea, we propose a series of studies to investigate the effects of receiving others' counterfactuals in conflict situations. We hypothesize that such expressions reduce individuals' need for power and, in turn, promote greater willingness to reconcile. Our studies will combine scenario-based tasks, personal recall, and interactive conflict paradigms using game-like settings. Beyond willingness to reconcile, we will examine emotional responses such as guilt and self-blame, emotions known to be shaped by counterfactual thinking and to strongly influence reparative intentions.

KEYWORDS (3-5, separated by comma)

interpersonal conflict, reconciliation, counterfactuals, emotions

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