

# 3

## ALONE AND IMPULSIVE

### Self-regulatory Capacity Mediates and Moderates the Implications of Exclusion

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#### Chapter Overview

Exclusion can be a painful and costly experience. For example, excluded individuals tend to experience greater stress (e.g., Cohen & Wills, 1985; DeLongis, Folkman, & Lazarus, 1988), are more likely to develop physical health problems (e.g., DeLongis, Folkman, & Lazarus, 1988; Hawkley & Cacioppo, 2003), have higher rates of mortality (e.g., Goodwin, Hunt, Key, & Samet, 1987; Lynch, 1979), are more likely to develop mental health problems (e.g., Bhatti, Derezotes, Kim, & Specht, 1989; Bloom, White, & Asher, 1979; Saylor et al., 2012), and are more likely to commit suicide (e.g., Wenz, 1977), compared to individuals who are more accepted by others. Excluded individuals also tend to have greater academic (e.g., Benner, 2011; Guay, Boivin, & Hodges, 1999), employment (e.g., Lauder, Sharkey, & Mummery, 2004; Robinson, O'Reilly, & Wang, 2013), financial (e.g., Page & Cole, 1991), and legal (e.g., Leary et al., 2003; Sampson & Laub, 1993) difficulties than do those who are more accepted.

Why do excluded individuals experience such negative outcomes? Self-regulatory failures may be a key to understanding this association. More specifically, achieving desirable outcomes in the aforementioned domains often requires individuals to have the ability to avoid behaviors that are immediately satisfying but prevent them from achieving their long-term goals. For example, people should be more likely to obtain a desired grade in a class to the extent that they can avoid temptations such as watching television or attending a party and instead engage in productive behaviors such as regularly attending class and studying. However, a developing line of research suggests that exclusion decreases the motivation to self-regulate behavior. Because of that reduction in self-regulation, excluded individuals should be more likely than accepted individuals

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to engage in impulsive, problematic behaviors. Further, there is evidence that such tendencies are most pronounced among those whose self-regulatory abilities are already impaired.

The goal of this chapter is to clarify the role of self-regulation in determining the implications of exclusion. In pursuit of this goal, the first section presents a general model of self-regulation and describes how self-regulatory failures can lead to impulsive behaviors that often lead to exclusion. The second section describes theory and research suggesting that self-regulatory capacity mediates the implications of exclusion. Specifically, exclusion impairs individuals' ability to regulate their behavior and thus causes them to engage in impulsive behaviors. The third section describes theory and research suggesting that preexisting self-regulatory capacity moderates the implications of exclusion, such that excluded individuals are most likely to engage in impulsive behaviors when their self-regulatory abilities have already been impaired. The final section describes evidence that the specific implications of self-regulatory failures depend on other factors associated with exclusion.

### Self-Regulatory Resource Model

Some of the most difficult choices people make are between behaviors that are initially satisfying but prevent them from meeting their long-term goals, and behaviors that are initially unsatisfying but allow them to meet their long-term goals (e.g., Mischel, Shoda, & Rodriguez, 1989; Tobin & Graziano, 2010). For example, people regularly have to choose between eating a delicious dessert and maintaining their diet in order to lose weight, or between expressing displeasure with a romantic partner and biting their tongue in order to maintain their relationship, or between having another drink of alcohol and abstaining in order to maintain their health, or even between playing an entertaining video game and writing a chapter in order to further their career. To maximize their well-being, people often have to resist these impulses by modifying their thoughts, feelings, or behaviors in a goal-directed manner, a process known as self-regulation (Baumeister, Heatherton, & Tice, 1993). Self-regulatory failures carry considerable costs, as they contribute to many of life's major problems, such as substance abuse, gambling, eating disorders, obesity, crime, unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, debt and credit abuse, and underachievement.

Self-regulation serves one of humankind's most basic needs—the need to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). As a result of hundreds of thousands of years of natural selection, humans instinctually promote their own well-being. Further, this instinctual tendency often prioritizes one's own well-being over the well-being of others. However, succumbing to these selfish impulses frequently makes people poor romantic partners, family members, co-workers, roommates, and members of society (e.g., Rusbult, Olsen, Davis, & Hannon, 2001). Securing and maintaining social bonds is essential for our survival (Axelrod & Hamilton, 1981; Bowlby, 1969;

Buss, 1990; Moreland, 1987). Thus, although the person's initial impulse may be to prioritize his or her self-interests over others', the person often benefits in the long term by behaving in a prosocial manner, even if that requires short-term sacrifices. Self-regulation, which helps people to resist these selfish impulses and instead engage in socially appropriate behavior, is essential for long-term well-being.

Research is consistent with the idea that self-regulation is essential for securing social acceptance. First, those who are better able to regulate their behavior are more likely to engage in behaviors that facilitate, and avoid behaviors that harm, social relationships (for review, see Fitzsimons & Finkel, 2011). For example, those with greater self-control are more likely to forgive interpersonal transgressions than are those with less self-control (Pronk, Karremans, Overbeek, Vermulst, & Wigboldus, 2010). Similarly, individuals with stronger self-regulatory capabilities are better at hiding their discomfort in social situations than are those with weaker self-regulatory capabilities (von Hippel & Gonsalkorale, 2005). Individuals whose self-regulatory capacities are taxed are also less generous and trusting of others than are those whose self-regulatory capacities are not taxed (Ainsworth, Baumeister, Ariely, & Vohs, 2014). Second, people with stronger self-regulatory abilities are more likely to engage in behaviors that increase their social status over time. For example, those with greater self-control tend to exert more effort in the classroom (Dermitzaki & Kiosseoglou, 2004) and workplace (Barkley & Fischer, 2011), avoid addictive drugs and alcohol (Sayette & Griffin, 2011), and avoid unnecessary spending (Faber & Vohs, 2011). Although each of these behaviors may not yield immediate social benefits, over time they should increase one's relational value and thus lead to greater acceptance. Given that self-regulation promotes prosocial behavior and increases social status, it should not be surprising that those with stronger self-regulatory abilities tend to have more satisfying relationships (Halford, Wilson, Lizzio, & Moore, 2002; Wilson, Charker, Lizzio, Halford, & Kimlin, 2005), are perceived as being more socially competent (Ford, 1982; Patrick, 1997), and are liked more by their peers (Gross & John, 2003) than are those with weaker self-regulatory abilities.

Although most people have a goal of securing acceptance from others and thus strive to behave in a socially appropriate manner, it is not uncommon for people to act in a manner that is selfish, aggressive, rude, or violates other social norms. Why are such self-regulatory failures so common? The limited resource model of self-control (Baumeister, Vohs, & Tice, 2007) posits that self-regulation operates in a manner similar to a muscle; just as muscles become tired and inefficient shortly after being used, self-regulation becomes increasingly difficult immediately following another act of self-regulation (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Muraven, & Tice, 1998; Baumeister, Gailliot, DeWall, & Oaten, 2006; Gailliot et al., 2007; Muraven, Shmueli, & Burkley, 2006; Muraven, Tice, & Baumeister, 1998). For example, in a series of studies, Baumeister and colleagues (1998) demonstrated that those who engaged in tasks that required greater self-regulation, such as eating unpleasant rather than pleasant food and suppressing rather than expressing emotions, exhibited

less self-control in future tasks, such as persisting with unsolvable puzzles and watching a boring movie, than did those who did not first engage in such tasks. Thus, although people may not want to behave in a socially unacceptable manner, they should find it more difficult to resist such impulses if their self-regulatory capabilities are depleted (DeBono, Shmueli, & Muraven, 2011). It is for this reason that socially unacceptable behavior is more likely after a stressful day at work (e.g., Repetti, 1989), while dieting (e.g., Werner & Crick, 1999), while ill (e.g., Mangelli et al., 2006), while trying to avoid spending money (e.g., Spears, 2011), or after trying to impress others (e.g., Vohs, Baumeister, & Ciarocco, 2005).

Nevertheless, there is also evidence that repeated self-regulatory acts can increase one's self-regulatory abilities in the long run (for review, see Baumeister et al., 2006). For example, Oaten and Cheng (2007) demonstrated that regular self-regulation led to increases in self-regulatory abilities. Specifically, they demonstrated that participants who were trained to regularly monitor their finances and inhibit their spending impulses saved more money than did participants who did not receive such training. Importantly though, the participants who received financial self-regulatory training and thus regularly inhibited their impulse to spend money, demonstrated greater increases in their ability to regulate their behavior in an unrelated domain (i.e., paying attention to a boring visual target despite a humorous distractor) than did the individuals who were not regularly inhibiting such impulses.

### Self-Regulatory Capacity Mediates the Impact of Exclusion

As discussed in the beginning of this chapter, people who are frequently excluded tend to have greater social, academic, occupational, financial, legal, and mental and physical health difficulties than do those who are more accepted. Some of these difficulties may be due to excluded individuals behaving in ways that create problems in their lives. For example, after being excluded, people are more likely to behave aggressively not only toward strangers (e.g., Twenge, Baumeister, Tice, & Stucke, 2001), but also toward important people in their lives, such as their peers, friends, and family (e.g., Leary, Kowalski, Smith, & Phillips, 2003; Leary & Springer, 2000; Leary, Springer, Negel, Ansell, & Evans, 1998; Mabel, 1994; Newcomb, Bukowski, & Pattee, 1993). Similarly, being excluded decreases the likelihood that someone will behave in a cooperative or helping manner (e.g., Twenge, Baumeister, DeWall, Ciarocco, 2007). Excluded individuals are also more likely to engage in other self-defeating behaviors, such as making riskier financial decisions, eating less healthy food, avoiding exercise, and avoiding preparing for upcoming tests, than are those who are accepted (e.g., Twenge, Catanese, & Baumeister, 2002). Finally, a consistent body of research has also demonstrated that individuals with close relationships, who are thus accepted to some degree, tend to engage in less impulsive behaviors than do those without such close relationships. For example, those who are single are more likely to

commit crimes (Sampson & Laub, 1993), drive recklessly (Harrington & McBride, 1970), and abuse alcohol and other substances (Williams, Takeuchi, & Adair, 1992), than are those who are married. Such problematic behaviors likely contribute to the numerous difficulties that excluded individuals face.

Why would excluded individuals add to the difficulties they already face as a result of their exclusion (e.g., loneliness, lack of support) by behaving in ways that create additional problems in their lives? There is reason to believe that excluded individuals may engage in such problematic behaviors because exclusion decreases their motivation to regulate their own behavior (for review, see Baumeister, Brewer, Tice, & Twenge, 2007; Baumeister & DeWall, 2005). As previously noted, self-regulation is often needed to prevent oneself from behaving in a selfish manner and instead behave in a manner that brings acceptance from others. Although there are costs to restricting such selfish impulses, the overall benefits of being accepted by others outweigh such costs. Nevertheless, exclusion signals to a person that he or she is no longer accepted by others and should no longer expect to receive the benefits of acceptance. Given that the excluded person should not expect to benefit from sacrificing for others, he or she should thus be more motivated to behave in a selfish manner. Thus, although one function of self-regulation may be to prevent exclusion, exclusion paradoxically may prevent people from engaging in selfless behaviors that reduce the likelihood of future exclusion. Of course, exclusion may promote selfless behavior if the exclusion appears to be temporary and not permanent (see later section on Contextual Moderators of Exclusion Effects).

Thus, the link between social acceptance and self-regulation can be thought of as an implicit bargain. For modern society to function, people regularly must prioritize their group's well-being over their own individual well-being. For example, a thriving society requires individuals to pay taxes, cooperate with and help one another, obey laws, and not harm one another. Although people may impulsively want to behave in a more selfish manner, people regularly control these automatic selfish impulses in order to make themselves act in ways that yield social acceptance. However, this is costly, given that self-regulation not only consumes resources but also is often used to forego selfish benefits and pleasures (e.g., Baker, McNulty, Overall, Lambert, & Fincham, 2013). But those acts of self-control help one achieve social acceptance and belongingness, and the benefits of belongingness outweigh the costs of exerting self-control. However, this bargain can break down on either side. When people fail at self-control, others exclude them, such as by romantic breakup, job termination, and even imprisonment. Conversely, when people are excluded, they may cease to bother exerting self-control in these ways.

Research findings support the idea that excluded people are less motivated to regulate their behavior (Baumeister, DeWall, Ciarocco, & Twenge, 2005; DeWall, Baumeister, & Vohs, 2008; Inzlicht, McKay, & Aronson, 2006; Oaten, Williams, Jones, & Zadro, 2008). Baumeister and colleagues (2005), for example,

demonstrated with six studies that those who were excluded were less likely to engage in, or persisted less while engaging in, behaviors that require self-regulation. The various studies employed two manipulations of exclusion. In one, participants received bogus feedback indicating that they would end up alone in life (vs. feedback indicating that they would have many rewarding relationships). In the other, they were excluded in a group task because no one chose them as a partner (vs. everyone in the group chose them as a partner). Following exclusion (or acceptance), participants were asked to engage in different behaviors that require self-regulation, such as drinking a healthy but unpleasant beverage, avoiding pleasant but unhealthy food, persisting with unsolvable puzzles, and paying attention during a frustrating listening task. Across each of these studies, those who were excluded performed worse on the tasks that required self-regulation than did those who were accepted. Importantly, Study 5 provided evidence that participants demonstrated self-regulatory failures because they were unmotivated, rather than unable, to self-regulate. Specifically, when provided with an alternative source of motivation (i.e., money), excluded participants were able to self-regulate just as effectively as those participants who were accepted.

Such self-regulatory failures may explain why excluded individuals engage in behaviors that cause problems in their lives. Specifically, similar to studies that have examined the problematic behavior of excluded individuals, studies on self-regulation have revealed that self-regulatory failures often lead people to engage in interpersonally destructive behavior (Burnette et al., 2014; DeWall, Baumeister, Stillman, & Gailliot, 2007; Eisenberg, Fabes, Guthrie, & Reiser, 2000; Finkel, DeWall, Slotter, McNulty, Pond, & Atkins, 2012; Finkel, DeWall, Slotter, Oaten, & Foshee, 2009). For example, impaired self-regulatory abilities are not only associated with aggression in the laboratory among strangers, but also outside of the laboratory among individuals in established relationships (Finkel, DeWall, Slotter, McNulty, Pond, & Atkins, 2012; Finkel, DeWall, Slotter, Oaten, & Foshee, 2009; for review, see Denson, DeWall, & Finkel, 2012; DeWall, Finkel, & Denson, 2011). Further, impaired self-regulatory abilities are also associated with avoiding prosocial behaviors that require resisting selfish impulses. For example, after conducting a meta-analysis of 40 studies, Burnette and colleagues (2014) revealed a small to moderate association between self-regulation and forgiveness, a behavior that requires resisting the impulse to retaliate. Similarly, Eisenberg and colleagues (2000) found that children with greater behavioral self-control, as assessed by parents' and teachers' reports as well as children's persistence with a puzzle task, were rated as engaging in more socially appropriate behaviors by both the children's teachers and their peers than were children with poorer self-control. Finally, Rusbult and colleagues' (Rusbult, Olsen, Davis, & Hannon, 2001) interdependence model of relationship maintenance suggests that maintaining close relationships requires the motivation to inhibit selfish impulses and instead engage in relationship maintenance behaviors, such as sacrificing for a partner, accommodating a partner's unpleasant behavior, and forgiving a partner.

Self-regulatory failures often lead people to engage in intrapersonally destructive behavior as well. First, an extensive line of research has implicated self-regulatory failures in the avoidance of health-related behaviors. For example, numerous studies (Herman & Mack, 1975; Hofmann, Rauch, & Gawronski, 2007; Polivy, 1976; for review, see Herman & Polivy, 2011) have demonstrated that people are more likely to abandon their diet and eat high-calorie foods after engaging in behaviors that taxed their self-regulatory capacities. Self-regulatory strength is also associated with greater adherence to a physical exercise program (Hall, 2012; Hall, Fong, Epp, & Elias, 2008). In a similar vein, self-regulatory impairments are associated with relapse among those addicted to cigarettes, alcohol, and other drugs (for review, see Hull & Slone, 2004; Sayette & Griffin, 2011). Second, self-regulatory failures have also been implicated in contributing to poor financial decisions (for review, see Faber & Vohs, 2011). For example, Vohs and Faber (2007) demonstrated that individuals whose self-regulatory capacities were first taxed by having to avoid looking at a stimulus were more willing to engage in impulsive buying and to spend more money on items than were those whose self-regulatory capacities were not taxed. Finally, poor self-regulation has been linked to criminal behavior (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Longshore, 1998; McGuire & Broomfield, 1994; Wright, Caspi, Moffitt, & Silva, 2001). For example, Wright and colleagues (2001) demonstrated that poor self-regulatory ability in childhood predicted criminal offences later in life.

In sum, given that exclusion decreases the motivation to regulate behavior, and given that regulatory failures are associated with a host of problematic behaviors, it is likely that self-regulatory failures mediate the association between exclusion and problematic behavior and outcomes. Nevertheless, although many of the studies that we previously reviewed have demonstrated that exclusion is associated with problematic behaviors, we are aware of only one study that has directly tested the possibility that self-regulatory failures mediate this association. In particular, DeWall and colleagues (2012) demonstrated that poor self-control mediated the association between exclusion and depressive symptoms. Specifically, in two samples of adolescents, chronically excluded individuals reported poorer self-control than did included individuals, and this led to greater depressive symptoms. The authors interpreted these results to suggest that excluded individuals were likely engaging in behaviors that contributed to their depressive symptoms because of self-regulatory failures. Future research would benefit by further testing whether self-regulatory capacity mediates the association between exclusion and other problematic behaviors and outcomes.

### **Self-Regulatory Capacity Moderates the Implications of Exclusion**

Not only does self-regulation mediate the association between exclusion and impulsive behavior, but it also moderates this association. More specifically, research has demonstrated that the undesirable effects of exclusion are strongest

when self-regulatory abilities are already impaired. To illustrate this idea, let us return to the muscle analogy. In the previous section, we described how exclusion taxes one's self-regulatory abilities much like running taxes the muscles in one's legs. To extend this analogy, if one's legs are rested and refreshed, they are more likely to remain relatively strong while running, but if they are already taxed, they are more likely to give out while running. Similarly, if one's self-regulatory abilities are untaxed prior to exclusion, they are more likely to resist impulsive desires, but if they are already taxed prior to exclusion, they are more likely to give in to such impulsive desires.

### ***Retaliatory Responses***

One line of research suggests that self-regulatory failures may cause excluded individuals to behave in an antisocial manner by retaliating against the source of the exclusion. In particular, both I<sup>3</sup> theory (Finkel, 2007, 2008; Slotter et al., 2012) and the General Aggression Model (Anderson & Bushman, 2002; DeWall & Anderson, 2011; DeWall, Anderson, & Bushman, 2011) posit that people's response to provocation, such as being excluded or rejected, depends on their self-regulatory capacities. Whereas people should be able to resist aggressive impulses if their self-regulatory abilities are not taxed, they should be unable to resist aggressive impulses if their self-regulatory abilities are taxed. Research is also consistent with this idea (Ayduk, Mendoza-Denton, Mischel, Downey, Peake, & Rodriguez, 2000; DeWall, Gilman, Sharif, Carboni, & Rice, 2012; Finkel & Campbell, 2001; Finkel, DeWall, Slotter, McNulty, Pond, & Atkins, 2012; Finkel, DeWall, Slotter, Oaten, & Foshee, 2009; Warburton, Williams, & Cairns, 2006). For example, Finkel and colleagues (2012) demonstrated that after being rejected by their romantic partners, people were more likely to abuse those partners if they either had weaker dispositional self-regulatory abilities (Study 3) or if their self-regulatory abilities were inhibited through the experience of chronic stress in their daily lives (Study 4), than if their self-regulatory abilities were not inhibited. Similarly, Warburton and colleagues (2006) demonstrated that although ostracized participants behaved more aggressively than did included participants when they did not have control over an unrelated task, ostracized participants did not behave more aggressively than did included participants when they had control over the unrelated task.

### ***Affiliative Responses***

To be sure, another line of research suggests that self-regulatory failures may cause some excluded individuals to behave in a prosocial manner by seeking out greater affiliation with others. Specifically, Murray and colleagues' risk-regulation model (2006) suggests that self-regulatory failures may inhibit the tendency to avoid intimacy and closeness among individuals with relational insecurities. In



particular, their model posits that although people normally are motivated to affiliate with others, a regulatory system inhibits this goal when rejection appears likely. This model also accounts for the tendency of those with relational insecurities to avoid intimacy and closeness in their relationships with others (Gaucher, Wood, Stinson, Forest, Holmes, & Logel, 2012; Murray, Derrick, Leder, & Holmes, 2008; Murray, Leder, MacGregor, Holmes, Pinkus, & Harris, 2009; see also Baker & McNulty, 2013), given that individuals with relational insecurities (e.g., those with low self-esteem) frequently expect to be rejected by others (Bellavia & Murray, 2003; Leary, Tambor, Terdal, & Downs, 1995). Nevertheless, they suggest that self-regulatory failures may inhibit this risk-regulation system, thus causing those with relational insecurities to seek out affiliation with others (Cavallo, Murray, & Holmes, 2013, 2014).

Some evidence supports the idea that self-regulatory failures impair the tendency to avoid affiliation among those with relational insecurities when the risk of rejection is salient (e.g., Murray, Derrick, Leder, & Holmes, 2008; Cavallo, Holmes, Fitzsimons, Murray, & Wood, 2012). For example, Cavallo and colleagues (2012) primed participants with the threat of rejection by having participants read an article suggesting that people often overestimate the quality of their relationship. Following this prime, participants were randomly assigned to learn and remember either a long string of digits, which would tax their self-regulatory resources, or a short string of digits, which would not tax their self-regulatory resources. Last, participants reported how much intimacy they desired from their romantic relationships. Among those whose self-regulatory resources were not taxed, low self-esteem individuals desired less intimacy than did those with high self-esteem. However, among those whose self-regulatory resources were taxed, low self-esteem individuals desired as much intimacy as did high self-esteem individuals. In sum, this research suggests that self-regulatory failures may surprisingly benefit some people, as such failures may free those with relational insecurities to seek out greater affiliation with others.

### Contextual Moderators of Exclusion Effects

Taken together, the previous two sections present a seemingly inconsistent message. Self-regulatory failures can sometimes cause people to respond to exclusion with retaliation and other interpersonally problematic behaviors—yet other times they respond by seeking affiliation. For example, as previously discussed, the way in which people with relational insecurities respond to exclusion is very different from the way in which people without such insecurities respond to exclusion. Considering other contextual factors, such as the type of exclusion and the likelihood of reconnection, may help to further understand how people respond to exclusion. The remainder of this section describes several studies that demonstrate that these factors determine the behavioral implications of exclusion. Nevertheless, it should be noted that some of these studies did not

examine the role of self-regulatory processes. Thus, future research would benefit by addressing whether the effects reported in these studies are stronger among those experiencing self-regulatory failures.

First, how individuals respond to exclusion depends on the specific way in which they are excluded. For example, Molden and colleagues (2009) demonstrated that whether participants were actively excluded (i.e., rejected) or merely passively excluded (i.e., ignored) influenced participants' behavior. Specifically, across four studies they demonstrated that although participants who were actively excluded were more likely to avoid further social interaction, participants who were passively excluded were more likely to attempt to reconnect with those who excluded them. Similarly, Sinclair and colleagues (2011) examined the effects of different rejection messages for engaging in stalking-related aggressive behaviors. Specifically, participants who read messages that contained internal explanations for rejection (e.g., "There is nothing I find appealing about you") reported being more likely to engage in stalking behavior than were participants who read messages that contained external explanations for rejection (e.g., "School and work do not allow me to have time for a relationship"). Further, this effect was strongest among participants whose self-regulatory capacities were depleted.

Second, people should be motivated to repair social relationships following exclusion when the exclusion appears to be temporary but unmotivated when exclusion appears to be permanent (see DeWall & Richman, 2011). As previously discussed, one reason why exclusion leads to impaired self-regulatory performance is because excluded individuals lose their motivation to self-regulate (because such efforts are mainly rewarded by the benefits of belonging). Nevertheless, if excluded individuals are made to believe that they can reclaim others' acceptance, they should remain motivated to restrict their impulsive behavior. A series of seven studies by DeWall and colleagues (2008) provided evidence for this idea. As expected, excluded participants performed worse than accepted participants on self-regulatory tasks when they were told the tasks were diagnostic of their non-social abilities. However, when participants were told the tasks were diagnostic of their social abilities, and thus higher scores would indicate a greater likelihood of reconnection with others, excluded participants performed just as well on the same self-regulatory tasks as the accepted participants. These studies provide further evidence that exclusion does not necessarily impair the ability to self-regulate; rather, it decreases motivation to do so. Nevertheless, contextual factors, such as the type of exclusion and whether or not the exclusion appears to be permanent, may keep excluded individuals motivated to self-regulate their behavior.

## Conclusion

People are motivated to secure acceptance from others. What happens when this goal is thwarted? Extensive research has demonstrated that excluded individuals experience poorer social, academic, occupational, financial, legal, and mental and

physical health outcomes than do people who are included. The current chapter reviewed evidence suggesting that self-regulatory failures may be one reason why excluded individuals experience such poor outcomes. Specifically, excluded individuals are less motivated to inhibit their selfish impulses, which frequently leads them to engage in problematic behaviors. Further, this tendency to engage in problematic behaviors appears to be strongest when excluded individuals' self-regulatory capacities are already limited. Interpersonally, however, the implications of exclusion appear to depend on the possibility of future acceptance. Specifically, people are more likely to seek social connection after being excluded if they believe they can attain acceptance in the future but are more likely to behave aggressively if they believe they will be unable to attain acceptance in the future. Future research would benefit by continuing to identify the conditions that lead excluded people to engage in prosocial, rather than antisocial, behaviors.

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