

Departmental Seminar

The Jigsaw Puzzle of Self: Self-concept Clarity Lays Foundation for Self-continuity

3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. | August 5, 2019 (Monday)

Rm 814, 8/F, The Jockey Club Tower | Centennial Campus | The University of Hong Kong



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Abstract

The metaphor of the jigsaw puzzle of self concerns the relations among self-concept clarity, autobiographic memory, and self-continuity. It was hypothesized, and tested in seven studies, that low self-concept clarity would disrupt self-continuity, but resorting to autobiographic memory would counter this disruption, thus restoring self-continuity. In Studies 1-2, low or threatened self-concept clarity was associated with decreased, or led to a decrease of, self-continuity. In Study 3, participants low (vs. high) in self-concept clarity manifested a stronger preference for an autobiographical memory task (but not for a control task). In Study 4, a suppressed mediational model of autobiographical memory received empirical backing: Threatened self-concept clarity decreased self-continuity, but also increased the propensity to evoke autobiographical memory, which fostered self-continuity. By manipulating autobiographical memory in different ways, Studies 5-7 provided additional direct evidence for the capacity of autobiographical memory to restore self-continuity. Taken together, the results converge in support of the hypothesis.

~All are Welcome~