Hard-Working in General but Lazy at Home? Generalized Big Five Traits and Relationship-Specific Traits in Romantic Couples Over Time

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Abstract

To acknowledge the significance of contexts for personality, this study focused on personality in romantic relationships and the concept of relationship-specific traits. Specifically, we were interested in how relationship-specific traits (i.e., how people report to be in their relationship) relate to generalized Big Five traits, and whether both constructs codevelop over time. We computed dyadic bivariate latent growth curve models, using data from 551 couples (M_{age} = 32.23 years) over 1 year. The findings indicated that generalized traits and relationship-specific traits were positively correlated in their intercepts but did not codevelop over time. Furthermore, baseline relationship satisfaction explained variance in traits, particularly in relationship-specific traits. These findings have implications for how to study personality development in the romantic relationship context.

Keywords: personality development; romantic couples; dyadic bivariate latent growth curve models; Big Five personality traits

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People have general tendencies in how they think, feel, and behave, which are known as Big Five traits (McCrae & Costa, 2008). At the same time, people have tendencies in how they think, feel, and behave in specific contexts, such as in their romantic relationships (Saucier, 1994). Yet, little is known about how both types of tendency relate to each other and codevelop over time, that is, whether changes in one construct are accompanied by changes in the other. To address this research gap, we assessed generalized traits and relationship-specific traits in romantic couples and examined both constructs' longitudinal (co)development over 1 year. Knowing how generalized traits and relationship-specific traits develop and codevelop within romantic dyads may increase understanding of the relevance of the romantic relationship context for personality development. This knowledge, in turn, may pave the way for future research assessing the behavioral and perceptual processes underlying personality development in couples.

1. The Significance of Contexts for Personality

Personality psychologists and laypeople alike would agree that people differ in their personality traits—for example, that one person is more assertive than another (e.g., McCrae & Costa, 2008). However, people differ not only from one another, but also vary across different situations or contexts. For example, a person can be quite assertive at work and in public, yet submissive at home—or vice versa. This difference might be due to the fact that people encode their contexts and situations differently, for instance because of a different set of goals or competencies (Allport, 1937; Mischel & Shoda, 1999; Rauthmann et al., 2015). Similarly, the expectations and norms associated with specific contexts or situations may be of importance for how people think, feel, and behave in a certain context (Burke & Tully, 1977; Stryker, 1989, 2007).

The significance of contexts has been highlighted in prominent frameworks on personality (e.g., Donahue et al., 1993; Heller et al., 2007; Roberts, 2007; Roberts & Donahue, 1994; Wood & Roberts, 2006; Wrzus & Roberts, 2017) and has been evidenced for several personality attributes, including personality traits (Saucier, 1994), personality states (Breil et al., 2019; Geukes et al., 2017), social roles (Donahue et al., 1993; Wood & Roberts, 2006), life goals (Bühler et al., 2019; Roberts & Robins, 2000), and narratives (Dunlop et al., 2017; Rathbone et al., 2008). Together, this emphasizes the need for a "contextualized approach to personality" (Dunlop, 2015, p. 310).

In this study, we were interested in the concept of relationship-specific traits, that is, how people think, feel, and behave specifically in the context of their romantic relationships. We further sought to examine whether these relationship-specific patterns are systematically linked to generalized patterns, that is, how people think, feel, and behave in general. We focused on the romantic relationship context for two reasons. First, romantic partners share dense interdependencies, such that the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of one partner closely relate to the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of the other partner, which may facilitate personality development in the romantic relationship context (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978). The role of romantic relationships in personality development has been supported by empirical findings (e.g., Asselmann & Specht, 2020; Bühler, Weidmann, Wünsche, et al., 2020; Finn et al., 2015; Jonkmann et al., 2014; Lehnart et al., 2010; Mund & Neyer, 2014; Neyer & Asendorpf, 2001; Neyer & Lehnart, 2007; Pusch et al., 2019; Specht et al., 2011; Wagner et al., 2015). Moreover, the quality of a romantic relationship has been found to be important for personal growth, suggesting that people are more likely to develop in a satisfying and supportive relationship environment (e.g., Drigotas et al., 1999; Rusbult et al., 2005). Second, romantic relationships are one of the most important and close relationships experienced across adulthood (e.g., Mund & Neyer, 2014), and have beneficial impacts on well-being and health: People who are more satisfied with their romantic relationships are more satisfied with

their lives as a whole (Be et al., 2013; Headey et al., 1991; Proulx et al., 2007), report better health (e.g., Bookwala, 2005; Kiecolt-Glaser & Newton, 2001; Kiecolt-Glaser & Wilson, 2017; Proulx et al., 2007; Robles et al., 2014; Umberson et al., 2006), and live longer (e.g., Sbarra et al., 2011; Whisman et al., 2018) than people who are in less satisfying relationships. Thus, the romantic relationship context can be considered a key context in people's lives.

1.1 Two Constructs: Generalized Traits and Relationship-Specific Traits

In this study, we focused on two concepts: generalized traits and relationship-specific traits. *Generalized traits* are fairly stable, decontextualized, and dispositional patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that can be structured along the five broad factors of neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience, known as the Big Five traits (Cattell, 1957; John et al., 2008; John & Srivastava, 1999; McCrae & Costa, 2008). *Relationship-specific traits* reflect the Big Five traits in the context of a romantic relationship and are thus more contextualized patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (e.g., Goldberg, 1992; McNulty, 2013; Saucier, 1994). Hence, relationship-specific traits serve as relationship-specific markers of generalized traits, indicating how people think, feel, and behave specifically within their romantic relationship and with their romantic partner (McNulty, 2013). The assessment of relationship-specific traits is often based on the Big-Five Mini-Markers (Goldberg, 1992; Saucier, 1994), which have been proven valid in terms of factor structure and internal consistency (Dwight et al., 1998).[1]

Generalized traits and relationship-specific traits are nested within each other and differ in their degrees of contextualization, stability, and breadth (Dunlop, 2015; Roberts & Wood, 2006). Relationship-specific traits are likely more malleable than generalized traits

[1] We note that other researchers have suggested other contextualized constructs, such as context-dependent habits or role-dependent behavior patterns (Kandler et al., 2014), all of which refer to people's behavioral tendencies in contexts, situations, and/or social roles. In this study, we were interested in how people tended to think, feel, and behave in their romantic relationships and thus the concept of relationship-specific Mini-Markers, or relationship-specific traits, was most suitable (McNulty, 2013).

given that relationship situations and partner interactions change over the course of a relationship (Anderson et al., 2010; VanLaningham et al., 2001; Wilcox & Dew, 2012; Zuo, 1992), which may also affect how people think, feel, and behave in their relationship. For instance, relationship maintenance behaviors, including positive interactions and open communication, often decline over the course of a relationship (Weigel & Ballard-Reisch, 1999). This, in turn, might alter how warm and cooperative (relationship-specific agreeableness) or how talkative (relationship-specific extraversion) people perceive themselves to be with their partner. Generalized traits, on the other hand, draw from different situations and interactions and thus reflect a broader, more aggregated pattern of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors across contexts (e.g., Dunlop, 2015; Fleeson & Gallagher, 2009; Quintus et al., 2020). Such an aggregated pattern, in turn, is likely more stable than a pattern that draws from a singular, changing context. Yet, we are not aware of any studies of generalized traits and relationship-specific traits in romantic couples that specifically tested the development and codevelopment of both constructs over time.

1.2 (Co)development of Generalized Traits and Relationship-Specific Traits

Personality traits change over time, which is reflected in their mean-level changes (Bleidorn et al., 2010; Caspi et al., 2005; Lucas & Donnellan, 2011; Roberts et al., 2006; Specht et al., 2011). A central finding from previous research is that people, on average, become more emotionally stable, conscientious, socially dominant, and agreeable as they go through life, which has been termed the maturity principle of personality development (Roberts et al., 2008), and is supported by empirical findings (Bleidorn et al., 2009; Caspi et al., 2005; Lucas & Donnellan, 2011; Roberts et al., 2006; Specht et al., 2011).

Particularly relevant for the present study, however, is not only development within the same construct but codevelopment across constructs—for example, whether increases in relationship-specific agreeableness go hand in hand with increases in generalized agreeableness. Taking a closer look at these across-construct associations is consistent with

theorizing in personality research suggesting meaningful associations between generalized personality attributes and contextualized personality attributes: According to the integrative framework for studying people (McAdams, 1995, 2013; McAdams & Pals, 2006), personality is represented as a pattern of three conceptual levels that differ in their function, stability, and level of contextualization. Although distinct in some respects, empirical evidence supports associations between personality attributes across the three levels (e.g., Bühler, Weidmann, & Grob, 2020; Manczak et al., 2014). Similarly, according to the TESSERA framework (Wrzus & Roberts, 2017), long-term development in generalized traits is thought to unfold as a repeating sequence of contextualized short-term thoughts, feelings, and behaviors such as with a romantic partner. The associations between long-term development in generalized traits and contextualized short-term patterns have recently been evidenced with longitudinal data (Quintus et al., 2020), which further supports interconnections between generalized personality attributes and contextualized personality attributes. Finally, while generalized traits and relationship-specific traits have been introduced as being nested, this imposed hierarchy does not imply unidirectional effects of one construct on the other (Dunlop, 2015). Rather, following the personality and role identity structural model (PRISM), self-representations with different degrees of contextualization are likely bidirectionally linked to each other (e.g., Wood, 2007; Wood & Roberts, 2006). Thus, in line with tenets of prominent personality frameworks, pursuing a contextualized approach to personality is important. It requires not only the assessment of personality constructs at different degrees of contextualization but it also calls for the study of interrelated associations between these constructs over time.

2. The Present Study

This research advances the study of personality development in three ways: First, to better understand personality in contexts, we studied one of the most important contexts that people encounter across adulthood: their romantic relationships. Second, to provide insights

into how people's generalized traits and relationship-specific traits relate to each other and change over time, we studied their longitudinal development and codevelopment. Third, to address the role of relationship satisfaction in personality development, we tested whether baseline relationship satisfaction related to the initial levels and changes in generalized traits and relationship-specific traits. Together, this knowledge may stimulate future research to more effectively study the processes, or "puzzle pieces" (Wrzus & Roberts, 2017, p. 254), that underlie development and codevelopment of generalized traits and relationship-specific traits in romantic couples.

3. Method

3.1 Procedure

The data came from the *Processes in Romantic Relationships and Their Impact on Relationship and Personal Outcomes (CouPers)* study, a multi-wave longitudinal online study of romantic couples conducted at the University of [blinded], between 2016 and 2018.[2] Ethical approval for the study was granted by the ethics committee of the Department of Psychology at the University of [blinded]. The primary purpose of the CouPers study was to investigate the associations among different personality attributes, daily relationship processes, and relationship outcomes in couples. Participants who reported being in a relationship were recruited from the student population, the local community, and via Facebook advertisements targeted at residents of Germany, Switzerland, and Austria who had set their relationship status to "partnered." Eligibility to participate was dependent on being over 18 years old, having a partner over 18 years old who was also willing to participate, a relationship duration of at least a month, and competence with the German language.

[2] At the time of submission, four papers using data from the CouPers study had been published or accepted for publication and three other papers that used data from the CouPers study had been under review for publication. None of these papers used data from participants' relationship-specific traits.

The CouPers study consisted of four measurement occasions, with the first three separated by an interval of 4 to 6 months and the last two by an interval of 10 to 12 months. At each measurement occasion, couple members participated in a 14-day survey, which was preceded and followed by a longer survey (for an overview of all study variables, see https://osf.io/m5bwj/). If participants completed at least seven of the 14 diary surveys and both longer surveys, they were compensated with a shopping or cinema voucher in the value of 20 EUR/CHF per measurement occasion and could request personalized feedback on a measure that was pre-selected by the research team. For the present study, we used data from the first three measurement occasions, which we refer to as Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3.[3] At each measurement occasion, participants reported on their generalized traits and relationship-specific traits.

3.2 Sample

At the beginning of the CouPers study, 1,313 couples consented to participate. During the study, 10 new partners began participating. Three participants asked that their data be deleted, and a further 437 participants asked to withdraw (e.g., because they separated as a couple and did not continue their participation as singles). For the present study, we focused on those participants who (a) participated as a couple at Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3; (b) provided data on their generalized traits and relationship-specific traits at these occasions; and (c) were in a female-male relationship (this condition was necessary for the structural equation approach used in the analyses and led to an exclusion of $N = 18$ female-female and male-male couples). Applying this procedure resulted in a final sample of 551 female-male couples.

At Time 1, the mean age of female participants was 31.24 years ($SD = 12.96$) with a range of 18 to 78 years and the mean age of male participants was 33.26 years ($SD = 13.65$)

[3] We did not use data from Time 4 because relationship-specific traits were not assessed at this measurement occasion.

with a range of 18 to 81 years. The mean relationship duration was 8.62 years (*SD* = 10.14) with a range of 2 months to 52 years. Participants' marital status was as follows: Never married participants ("ledig") constituted 62% of the sample, married participants constituted 34%, and divorced participants that had a new partner constituted 3%. Participants that were separated or widowed and had a new partner, or that were in a registered partnership constituted 1% of the sample. Almost a third of the participants had children (27%), 71% lived with their partner, with their children, or with both their partner and children, 10% lived with their parent(s) (and sibling[s]), 8% lived alone, 10% lived in shared accommodation, and 1% reported different living arrangements. Participants reported residing in Germany (63%), Switzerland (25%), or Austria (12%).[4]

3.3 Measures

3.3.1 Generalized Traits

Generalized traits were assessed with the Big Five Inventory (John & Srivastava, 1999) in its German version (Rammstedt & Danner, 2016). Items were introduced with the prompt, "The following questions refer to you as a person. Here are a number of characteristics that may or may not apply to you. Please indicate the extent to which you

[4] There was heterogeneity in participants' sample characteristics, of which heterogeneity in marital status and presence of children might have been particularly relevant to the present research question (e.g., Asselmann & Specht, 2000; Costa et al., 2000; Specht et al., 2011; van Scheppingen et al., 2016). We addressed this heterogeneity in two ways. First, we controlled for age in the main analyses (see Section 3.4.1). Given that age significantly predicted whether people were married (B_{women} = 0.23; $p < .001$; B_{men} = 0.23, $p < .001$; 0 = not married, 1 = married) and had children (B_{women} = −0.14; $p < .001$; B_{men} = −0.13, $p < .001$; 0 = at least one child, 1 = no children), controlling for age was a first proxy to control for sample differences in marital status and presence of children. Second, we conducted sensitivity analyses, in which we included marital status and presence of children as covariates in the models. The model fit indices are provided in Table S1, indicating good model fits. The results are reported in Tables S2 and S3, suggesting that the findings that did control for sample characteristics were very similar to the findings reported in the main analyses. We also inspected the associations between the covariates and the intercepts and slopes of the constructs (Tables S4 and S5). Except for a negative effect of women's marital status on their slope in relationship-specific extraversion, none of the sample characteristics had a statistically significant effect. Hence, the findings from the supplemental analyses suggested that it was not necessary to control for marital status and presence of children in the main analyses.

agree or disagree with each of the statements. Please think about how you usually are. How would you describe yourself?" For each of the 45 items, participants rated the extent to which they agreed with brief statements ascribed to themselves in general, for example, "I see myself as someone who worries a lot." Participants rated items from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Across traits, the omega reliabilities for women ranged from .73 to .88 at Time 1, from .78 to .88 at Time 2, and from .80 to .88 at Time 3, and for men from .74 to .87 at Time 1, from .78 to .89 at Time 2, and from .79 to .90 at Time 3.

3.3.2 Relationship-Specific Traits

Relationship-specific traits were measured with the Big-Five Mini Markers (Saucier, 1994) adapted to romantic relationships (McNulty, 2013). The items and instructions were translated into German by the research team. A full list of the English and German items is provided in the Supplemental Material (Table S6). Items were introduced with the question, "How would you describe yourself in your romantic relationship? I am _." For each of the 40 items, participants rated the extent to which they agreed with an adjective ascribed to themselves in their present romantic relationship, for example, "moody." Items were rated from 1 (*extremely inaccurate*) to 9 (*extremely accurate*). Across traits, the omega reliabilities for women ranged from .68 to .85 at Time 1, from .74 to .87 at Time 2, and from .73 to .87 at Time 3, and for men from .68 to .82 at Time 1, from .72 to .84 at Time 2, and from .71 to .86 at Time 3.

3.3.4 Relationship Satisfaction

Relationship satisfaction was measured with the Relationship Assessment Scale (Hendrick, 1988) in its German version (Sander & Böcker, 1993). Participants rated seven items from 1 (*low satisfaction*) to 5 (*high satisfaction*), for example, "In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?" For the present analyses, we used baseline relationship satisfaction assessed at Time 1. The descriptives were $M = 4.36$ and $SD = 0.52$ for women and

M = 4.33 and *SD* = 0.53 for men, and the omega reliabilities were .85 for women and .86 for men.

3.4 Data–Analysis Approach

3.4.1 Dyadic Bivariate Latent Growth Curve Models

We computed dyadic bivariate latent growth curve models (DB–LGCMs; see Bollen & Curran, 2006; Olsen & Kenny, 2006) to examine the development and codevelopment of generalized traits and relationship-specific traits in couples. DB–LGCMs are well-suited to study within-person changes over time and between-person differences in those changes (Jackson & Allemand, 2014; Nestler et al., 2015). Specifically, the model provides within-person changes, which are reflected in the latent intercept and slope factors of each construct (i.e., fixed-effect parameters): The intercept reflects the mean value of a construct at Time 1 and the slope reflects the construct's average rate of change between assessments. Together, both estimates describe the mean trajectory of the construct over time. Furthermore, the model yields information on between-person differences, which are reflected in the variances of the intercepts and slopes (i.e., random-effect parameters). In addition, the model provides (a) estimates for within-construct associations, shown in covariances between each construct's intercept and slope, and (b) —particularly important for the present study— estimates for across-construct associations, shown in covariances between intercepts and slopes of both constructs. Finally, the model yields information on effects between partners, which are reflected in the covariances between both partners' intercepts and slopes.[5]

[5] We note that this paper focuses on codevelopment within one partner and thus reports the within-person estimates in the main document. Nevertheless, for reasons of completeness, we report the dyadic estimates in the Supplemental Material (Table S7). The findings indicated that there were two significant effects: First, the slopes of both partners' generalized conscientiousness were positively correlated with each other, suggesting interdependent changes among partners in their generalized conscientiousness. Second, the intercepts of both partners' generalized openness were positively correlated with each other, suggesting interdependent levels of generalized openness among partners at Time 1.

We computed the DB–LGCMs for each trait association separately, for instance for the association between generalized neuroticism and relationship-specific neuroticism (see Figure 1 for an example). The models were computed with the lavaan package (Rosseel, 2012) in R (R Development Core Team, 2020). To account for the heterogeneity of the sample, we controlled for age in the analyses. Including age as a covariate of the intercept and slope helped rule out the impact of potentially confounding effects, such as life circumstances or life-course related aspects.[6] Given the high intercorrelation between women's and men's ages (r = .96), we created a couple-age score, which reflected the average of women's and men's ages (M = 32.23 years, SD = 13.15 years). To deal with missing values, we used the full information maximum likelihood (FIML) estimation. Compared to conventional methods, such as listwise deletion or pairwise deletion, the FIML estimation fits the model directly to the raw data and thus yields more reliable findings (Schafer & Graham, 2002; Widaman, 2006). Finally, to test whether relationship satisfaction was associated with the constructs' initial levels and their rate of change, we computed conditional models with baseline relationship satisfaction as covariate of the intercepts and slopes.

3.4.2 Measurement Invariance

Before conducting the DB–LGCMs, we tested whether generalized traits and relationship-specific traits showed measurement invariance over time. Testing such equality constraints on the structural coefficients was appropriate given that measurement occasions were equidistant (i.e., 4−6 months) and no change was theoretically expected in the strength of the structural coefficients (Cole & Maxwell, 2003; Little et al., 2007). Following the procedure by Widaman et al. (2010), we assessed the fit of a respective model by the

[6] Because of the high correlation between age and relationship duration (r = .81 for women and r = .78 for men) and the associated issues of multicollinearity, we used age as a covariate and did not additionally control for relationship duration. We decided to control for age rather than relationship duration because age-related processes might be those of greater importance for personality development (e.g., processes associated with the maturity principle of personality development; Roberts et al., 2008).

comparative fit index (CFI), the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR). Following recommendations (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2005; Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003; van de Schoot et al., 2012), an adequate model fit is indicated by values equal to or greater than .90 for CFI and TLI, values equal to or less than .08 for RMSEA, and values equal to or less than .10 for SRMR. A good model fit is indicated by values equal to or greater than .95 for CFI and TLI and values equal to or less than .05 for RMSEA and SRMR.

To examine measurement invariance over time, we tested for configural invariance, metric invariance, and scalar invariance for each construct across Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3. That is, we constrained the loadings (i.e., metric invariance) and intercepts (i.e., scalar invariance) to be equal over time. The results are shown in Tables S8–S12, indicating that model fits were adequate but not good. Thus, we computed a second set of measurement-invariance models, in which we used latent factors with item parcels as indicators. The reason for using item parcels, compared to single items, was that item parcels usually result in more reliable latent variables (Little et al., 2002). To create these items, we applied the item-to-construct-balance method (Little et al., 2002) and used the same items per parcel at all assessments. Although these models showed better fit indices for measurement invariance over time, the DB–LGCMs did not provide reliable estimates, likely because of the models' complexity due to their second-order structure (Wänström, 2009). In fact, while second-order models have proven useful in previous research (e.g., Allemand et al., 2015; Jackson et al., 2012; Ludtke et al., 2011; Wagner et al., 2013), most studies do not model repeated assessments of the latent factors (Jackson & Allemand, 2014). Therefore, having shown that the assessed personality constructs yielded measurement invariance over time, and to reduce model complexity, we decided to rely on manifest personality variables in the final analyses. That is, we used single items to compute the constructs' manifest means and modeled them as indicators of the latent intercept and slope factors in the DB–LGCMs.

3.4.3 Adjusting the p-Level

We tested one model per trait combination (e.g., generalized neuroticism and relationship-specific neuroticism), which resulted in a total of 5 models. To reduce the probability of type I errors, we applied Bonferroni correction and adjusted the *p*-level to 0.01 (i.e., dividing the common *p*-level of 0.05 by the number of tests).

3.4.4 Power Analysis

In general, latent growth models require a sample size of $N > 200$ persons (Nestler et al., 2015), which was met in the present analyses. However, given that we expanded the models to the bivariate and dyadic case, we conducted a power analysis by using Monte Carlo simulations. Simulations were based on the size of the obtained parameters and the number of couples, using the simsem package (Pornprasertmanit et al., 2020) in R (see https://osf.io/q52p4/ for an example of the analysis model and the population model). The number of simulations was set to 1,000 and the *p*-level was adjusted to .01 (see Section 3.4.3).

In the present study, we were mainly interested in finding significant across-construct associations and thus inspected the power to detect these effects. The findings of the Monte Carlo simulations suggested that the power to detect intercept−intercept associations was high (above .99), the power to detect intercept−slope associations was low (not exceeding .25), and the power to detect slope−slope associations was low (not exceeding .15). We also ran two types of sensitivity analyses. First, we ran simulation models, in which we tripled ($N = 1,653$) or quintupled ($N = 2,755$) the sample size, which increased the power to detect some, but not all, of the slope effects. Thus, even with large samples, the power to detect slope effects in DB–LGCMs would be low, likely due to the often small effect sizes of slopes. Second, we ran simulation models, in which we used larger estimates for the slope effects in the population model. Specifically, we simulated the size of the fixed effects to be 0.7 (for slopes) and the size of the covariances with slopes to be between 0.02 and 0.1. The results of these models

indicated that, if larger effects occurred, the current sample size would be sufficiently powered to detect slope effects (> .80).

3.4.5 Open Science

The research questions for the present investigation were not preregistered. The data-analysis script is shared on the Open Science Framework (accessible through https://osf.io/q52p4/), and the data set will be uploaded to FORSbase (the Swiss Center for Expertise in the Social Science; https://forsbase.unil.ch) upon publication. On FORSbase, researchers can register and request access to the data. This approach allows us to manage the delicate undertaking of sharing couple data without compromising the confidentiality of our participants (see also Finkel et al., 2015; Joel et al., 2020).

4. Results

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics (i.e., means, standard deviations, mean-level changes, and rank-order stabilities) of the study variables are shown in Table 1 for women and in Table 2 for men. In terms of mean-level changes, significant changes were observed in generalized traits and relationship-specific traits. These changes only occurred in neuroticism and agreeableness, and we observed more mean-level changes in relationship-specific traits (i.e., eight significant mean-level changes) than in generalized traits (i.e., two significant mean-level changes). As regards rank-order stabilities, all were statistically significant and tended to be more pronounced for generalized traits than for relationship-specific traits. To test whether rank-order stabilities of generalized traits were significantly different from rank-order stabilities of relationship-specific traits, we conducted tests of significance between dependent correlations. For women, the findings indicated that rank-order stabilities of generalized traits were significantly larger than rank-order stabilities of relationship-specific traits ($p < .01$), except for the rank-order stability of agreeableness between Times 1 and 2 ($p = .02$). For men,

the findings also indicated that rank-order stabilities of all generalized traits were significantly larger than those of relationship-specific traits ($p < .01$).

Pearson correlations between generalized traits and relationship-specific traits are provided in Table S13 for women and in Table S14 for men. All correlations were statistically significant and the size of the correlation coefficients ranged from .38 to .71, indicating effects of moderate to large size (Cohen, 1988). The correlations between the traits and baseline relationship satisfaction are provided in Table S15. As regards generalized traits, neuroticism, extraversion, and agreeableness were significantly correlated with relationship satisfaction, while conscientiousness and openness were not related to relationship satisfaction. The size of the significant coefficients ranged from |.11| to |.25|, indicating small effect sizes (Cohen, 1988). As regards relationship-specific traits, all were significantly correlated with baseline relationship satisfaction, except for relationship-specific openness among women. The size of the significant correlation coefficients ranged from |.16| to |.45|, indicating small to moderate effect sizes (Cohen, 1988). To address whether the correlations between generalized traits and relationship satisfaction were significantly different from the correlations between relationship-specific traits and relationship satisfaction, we conducted tests of significance between dependent correlations. The results indicated that, among women, the correlations between generalized traits and relationship satisfaction were significantly different from the correlations between relationship-specific traits and relationship satisfaction ($p < .01$), with the exception of conscientiousness. Specifically, we observed more correlations between relationship-specific traits and relationship satisfaction, compared to correlations between generalized traits and relationship satisfaction, and the sizes of their correlation coefficients were larger. Among men, the correlations between generalized traits and relationship satisfaction were also significantly different from the correlations between relationship-specific traits and relationship satisfaction ($p < .01$), with the exception of neuroticism and openness to experience. Again, we observed more

correlations between relationship-specific traits and relationship satisfaction and the sizes of their correlation coefficients were larger.

4.2 Estimates of Dyadic Bivariate Latent Growth Curve Models

Table 3 shows the model fit indices of the DB–LGCMs, indicating a good fit for all models.[7] The estimates of the DB–LGCMs are provided in Table 4 for women and in Table 5 for men.

As regards fixed effects, we observed significant intercepts for generalized traits and relationship-specific traits but only one significant slope effect, indicating that men's relationship-specific agreeableness decreased over time. As regards random effects, the intercepts of all generalized traits and relationship-specific traits indicated significant variance. In addition, the slopes of women's relationship-specific conscientiousness and men's generalized openness showed significant variance. This means that the initial level of all traits showed substantial variability as did women's average rate of change in relationship-specific conscientiousness and men's average rate of change in generalized openness.

In terms of within-construct associations, the intercepts and slopes of women's relationship-specific conscientiousness were negatively related to each other, indicating that the initial level of relationship-specific conscientiousness was significantly related to change in relationship-specific conscientiousness. In terms of across-construct associations, all intercepts of generalized traits were positively correlated with intercepts of relationship-specific traits. This means, for example, that the more extraverted people saw themselves in general, the more extraverted they saw themselves with their partner. However, neither intercept−slope associations nor slope−slope associations were statistically significant. That

[7] In each model, except for the models with agreeableness and conscientiousness, the variance of a latent slope factor was negative and thus fixed to zero (for details, see https://osf.io/q52p4/). The covariance matrix of the latent factors was still negative in some cases, which might speak to the matter of a Heywood case (Heywood, 1931, see also Kolenikov & Bollen, 2012) and might have resulted from the correlation between the indicator variables.

is, neither did the initial level of a generalized trait or relationship-specific trait predict change in the other domain nor did changes in generalized traits co-occur with changes in relationships-specific traits.

4.3 Conditional Models: Baseline Relationship Satisfaction as Covariate

As conditional models, we tested whether baseline relationship satisfaction explained variance in the constructs' intercepts and slopes. The results are reported in Table 6. Overall, the findings indicated that relationship satisfaction was significantly linked to intercepts, but not to slopes, and that linkages appeared differently for generalized traits and relationship-specific traits.

As regards generalized traits, we observed significant associations with two traits for men and with three traits for women: Higher relationship satisfaction was associated with lower generalized neuroticism and with higher generalized agreeableness among women and men, and, additionally, with higher generalized extraversion among women. As regards relationship-specific traits, significant associations emerged with four traits: Among women and men, higher relationship satisfaction was associated with lower relationship-specific neuroticism and with higher relationship-specific extraversion, relationship-specific agreeableness, and relationship-specific conscientiousness.[8]

5. Discussion

People's personality and their personality development are best understood in contexts (e.g., Dunlop, 2015; Roberts & Wood, 2006). In the present study, we focused on one of the closest contexts that people experience across adulthood, their romantic relationships, and

[8] For reasons of completeness, we also computed dyadic effects, examining the association between Partner A's baseline relationship satisfaction and Partner B's intercepts and slopes of generalized traits and relationship-specific traits. The findings are provided in Table S16, indicating significant associations with relationship-specific traits but not with generalized traits. Specifically, the more satisfied women and men were in their relationships, the lower was their partners' relationship-specific neuroticism. In addition, the more satisfied women were in their relationships, the higher was their partners' relationship-specific agreeableness. Hence, as regards dyadic effects, relationship satisfaction was more closely linked to relationship-specific traits than to generalized traits.

examined the longitudinal (co)development of generalized traits and relationship-specific traits in romantic couples. Before we discuss the results in detail, we briefly summarize the main findings: Both constructs showed significant mean-level changes over the course of 1 year, and we observed more changes in relationship-specific traits than in generalized traits. In addition, generalized traits and relationship-specific traits were initially related to each other but did not codevelop over time. Finally, generalized traits and relationship-specific traits showed substantial variance in their initial levels, which was partly explained by how satisfied people were in their relationship.

5.1 Development of Generalized and Relationship-Specific Traits Over Time

Generalized traits and relationship-specific traits indicated significant manifest mean-level changes over the course of 1 year. Moreover, we observed one significant slope effect in the DB–LGCMs. The reason that only one of the change effects emerged in the DB–LGCMs might be the lower power associated with detecting small slope effects in complex models. Also, it is possible that including both constructs of both partners in one model might have taken variance in the slopes. Thus, conclusions regarding slope effects obtained from latent growth curve models are not directly comparable to conclusions regarding manifest mean-level changes.

In general, we observed more mean-level changes for relationship-specific traits than for generalized traits, and rank-order stabilities were lower for relationship-specific traits than for generalized traits. Both aspects speak to the greater changeability of contextualized personality attributes compared to generalized personality attributes (e.g., McAdams, 2013; McAdams & Pals, 2006; Roberts & Wood, 2006; Wood, 2007; Wood & Roberts, 2006). Specifically, in romantic relationships, people likely experience different situations over the course of their relationship, such as more or less conflicts, which may feed back on how they perceive themselves interacting with their partner, such as being more or less cooperative (Anderson et al., 2010; VanLaningham et al., 2001; Wilcox & Dew, 2012; Zuo, 1992). Over

time, this might result in changes in relationship-specific thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and might account for the greater malleability of relationship-specific traits.

The observed mean-level changes mainly occurred in neuroticism and agreeableness—traits associated with the maturity principle (Roberts et al., 2008). However, while mean-level changes in generalized traits pointed in the direction of greater maturity (i.e., decrease in neuroticism and increase in agreeableness), mean-level changes in relationship-specific traits yielded a mixed pattern (i.e., decrease in neuroticism and decrease in agreeableness). Although counterintuitive at first glance, there are reasons why mean-level changes in both constructs may follow opposite directions, as found for agreeableness: People may refer to different comparison levels when they rate their agreeableness in general, compared to when they rate their agreeableness in their relationship (for judgment theories, see also Diener, 1984). Specifically, when assessing their generalized agreeableness, people might use a broader, more abstract level of reference (e.g., "Compared to others, how agreeable am I in general?"). When assessing their agreeableness in the relationship, conversely, they might use a narrower and more specific level of reference, such as themselves at previous times in the relationship (e.g., "Compared to the beginning of our relationship, how agreeable am I with my partner?"). Hence, the generalized level of reference might have indicated other reference values than the relationship-specific level of reference, which may explain why both constructs indicated mean-level changes in different directions and differences in rank-order stabilities. Both findings speak to generalized and relationship-specific traits being related, albeit distinct personality constructs. In a next step, we were interested in the associations between both constructs and in the role that relationship satisfaction plays for generalized traits and relationship-specific traits.

5.2 Hard-Working in General and at Home: Associations Between Generalized and Relationship-Specific Traits

Findings obtained from the DB–LGCMs provided a consistent picture insofar as a higher initial level in a generalized trait was associated with a higher initial level in the respective relationship-specific trait. This shows that, on average, how people tended to think, feel, and behave in general was meaningfully related to how people tended to think, feel, and behave in their romantic relationship. Thus, the generally hard-working person also tended to be more organized and more efficient in their relationship, while the generally lazy person also tended to be more disorganized in their relationship.

However, as regards the codevelopment of generalized traits and relationship-specific traits, we observed no meaningful codevelopment of generalized traits and relationship-specific traits over time, that is, neither intercept−slope nor slope−slope associations were statistically significant for any of the Big Five traits. There are at least three reasons for this finding.

First, it could be that generalized traits and relationship-specific traits do indeed not codevelop with each other. Thus, we were unable to identify significant intercept−slope or slope−slope associations because they do not exist for the trait representations investigated in this study. This, however, would speak against theoretical assumptions suggesting meaningful associations between generalized personality attributes and contextualized personality attributes (McAdams & Pals, 2006; Wood & Roberts, 2006; Wrzus & Roberts, 2017). Second, it is possible that generalized traits and relationship-specific traits do codevelop but that such codevelopment occurs only during distinct developmental stages of the relationship. Specifically, there is empirical evidence showing that life transitions in the romantic domain relate to changes in personality traits. Specifically, relationship transitions, such as marriage or moving in with a partner, have been found to relate to changes in personality traits (Asselmann & Specht, 2020; Costa et al., 2000; Jonkmann et al., 2014; Pusch et al., 2019; Specht et al., 2011). Thus, codevelopment between generalized traits and relationship-specific traits might be more likely to occur if couples were assessed during specific relationship

transitions. Third, it is reasonable that generalized traits and relationship-specific traits codevelop irrespective of relationship transitions but that these effects could not be detected in this study due to methodological limitations. The models that we computed were complex and the power needed to identify intercept−slope or slope−slope associations was substantially lower than the power to detect intercept−intercept associations (see Section 3.4.4). In addition, there might have been too little variance in the slope effects, as indicated by the non-significant variance in most slope effects, and thus the chance of finding significant covariances between slopes was small. Future studies with large dyadic samples, in which some participants are assessed during distinctive developmental stages, are needed to gain further insights into the codevelopment of generalized traits and relationship-specific traits in romantic couples.

5.3 Relationship Satisfaction Matters

Findings from the conditional models indicated that baseline relationship satisfaction was associated with some generalized traits and with all relationship-specific traits except openness to experience. Specifically, among women and men, higher relationship satisfaction was associated with lower generalized neuroticism and higher generalized agreeableness, and, additionally among women, with higher generalized extraversion. These findings suggest that people who were more satisfied in their relationship had a tendency to be more mature in their generalized neuroticism and generalized agreeableness (e.g., Roberts et al., 2008). The same pattern of findings was supported for the relationship context insofar as people who were more satisfied were also less neurotic and more agreeable in their relationship. There were two additional, interesting findings for relationship-specific traits: Both women and men who were more satisfied in their relationship reported higher relationship-specific extraversion and higher relationship-specific conscientiousness. With reference to the items of the respective traits, this suggests that people who were more satisfied described themselves as more energetic and talkative (relationship-specific extraversion) and as more efficient and more

organized (relationship-specific conscientiousness) in their relationship. Thus, referring to the title of this study, these findings imply that the laziness at home is also linked to how satisfied people are in their relationship.

The pattern of results for relationship-specific extraversion and conscientiousness is all the more interesting, when considering that generalized extraversion and conscientiousness usually do not greatly contribute to relationship satisfaction. In fact, there have been inconsistent findings regarding the importance of both traits for relationship satisfaction (Soto, 2021; Weidmann et al., 2017). It might, however, be that relationship-specific extraversion and relationship-specific conscientiousness, compared to generalized extraversion and generalized conscientiousness, are of greater importance for romantic relationships. This is likely the case because relationship-specific traits, compared to generalized traits, more closely map on actual relationship-specific thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in the couple's daily life. For instance, being talkative in the romantic relationship, compared to being talkative in general, might be crucial for the romantic relationship because it may result in more communication with the partner. Communication with the partner, in turn, has been shown to be a key contributor to relationship well-being (e.g., Falconier et al., 2015; Joel et al., 2020; Johnson & Bradbury, 2015; Karney & Bradbury, 2020; Rusbult & Buunk, 1993). Hence, more research is needed that specifically addresses the role of relationship-specific traits in romantic relationships.

5.4 Strengths, Limitations, and Outlook

It is a strength of the present study that personality traits were assessed on a generalized level and on a contextualized, relationship-specific level. In addition, these trait representations were measured in both members of a romantic couple at three occasions over 1 year. This methodology allowed us to apply state-of-the-art statistical techniques to gain insights into personality (co)development in romantic relationships. In addition, the

recruitment and procedure of the study enabled us to reach participants from three countries, which strengthens the generalizability of the findings.

Yet, this study has limitations. First, we assessed personality traits via self-reports. Hence, we do not know whether people actually *were* less agreeable in their romantic relationship, *perceived* themselves as less agreeable, or both. Future research is needed that incorporates more objective measures, such as observational ratings or partner reports.

Second, it was beyond the scope of this research to model bidirectional processes and to investigate directions of change, that is, whether change in one construct predicts change in the other construct, or vice versa. Dyadic bivariate latent dual change score models, for example, would provide such insights but come with other caveats. Specifically, in the present study, a time lag of 4−6 months between assessments prevented us from applying such models because intervals were too short to obtain meaningful change−change effects. Future studies across longer time intervals are awaited to address directionality in codevelopment of generalized traits and relationship-specific traits.

Third, we considered the romantic relationship context as one class or one category (Rauthmann et al., 2015). Yet, within the very same context (i.e., the romantic relationship), people vary in the situations they experience and in the particular roles they occupy (e.g., Baird et al., 2006). These situations and roles, in turn, may alter how people perceive themselves in that context (e.g., Fournier et al., 2002). Research is needed that captures the situations and roles that people encounter in the romantic relationship context, such as via experience-sampling methods, to link these assessments to people's momentary thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in their romantic relationship.

Fourth, to control for life-course related aspects, we used age as a covariate in the analyses. The mean age of participants was 32.23 years and so the findings might not generalize to couple members in adolescence or in late adulthood. Similarly, although we assessed couples in three countries, all of these were Central European countries, which might

limit the generalizability of the findings to other countries. Future research is needed that replicates the findings in other age groups and across diverse cultural contexts.

Finally, this study focused on participants who remained in the same romantic relationship over time. Research on cross-partnership development suggests that people are fairly stable in individual (e.g., self-esteem) and relational (e.g., couple interaction) attributes across relationships (Johnson et al., 2017; Johnson et al., 2020; Park & MacDonald, 2019; Robins et al., 2002), but less is known about the stability of relationship-specific traits across different relationships. Therefore, it would be worthwhile for future research to test whether relationship-specific traits are tied to the context of a romantic relationship or to the current romantic partner. This would provide insights into whether a person thinks, feels, and behaves similarly in all their romantic relationships, or whether a person thinks, feels, and behaves in a particular way with a particular partner.

6. Conclusions

In the present study, we assessed generalized traits and relationship-specific traits in romantic couples and tested the (co)development of both constructs over the course of 1 year. We found significant mean-level changes in both constructs, and observed more mean-level changes for relationship-specific traits than for generalized traits. Similarly, rank-order changes were stronger for relationship-specific compared to generalized traits. These findings speak to a greater malleability of relationship-specific traits, potentially due to a greater likelihood of changing situations and altering partner interactions in the romantic relationship context over time. Both findings also speak to generalized traits and relationship-specific traits being related, albeit distinct personality constructs. In addition, the findings of the latent growth curve models indicated that while generalized traits and relationship-specific traits were positively correlated initially, they did not codevelop over time. A potential reason might be that codevelopment is more likely to occur during distinct developmental stages of the relationship—such as marriage or moving in with a partner. Thus, future studies are

needed to test the codevelopment of both constructs among couples undergoing key relationship transitions. Finally, higher baseline relationship satisfaction was associated with greater maturity in some of the respective generalized traits, but with greater maturity in all of the respective relationship-specific traits and with higher relationship-specific extraversion. This alludes to meaningful associations between relationship satisfaction and relationship-specific traits worth investigating in future studies.

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Contribution

Each Author's Contribution: Janina Larissa Bühler conceptualized the study, conducted the analyses, and wrote the manuscript. Cornelia Wrzus provided feedback on the manuscript. Rebekka Weidmann collected data and provided feedback on the data-analysis script and on the manuscript. Jenna Wünsche collected data and provided feedback on the data-analysis script and on the manuscript. Robert P. Burriss collected data and provided feedback on the manuscript. Alexander Grob is the principal investigator of the CouPers study and provided feedback on the manuscript.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables for Women

Variable	Mean			*SD*			Mean-level change			Rank-order stability[a]		
	T1	T2	T3	T1	T2	T3	T1 → T2	T2 → T3	T1 → T3	r_{12}	r_{23}	r_{13}
Generalized traits												
Neuroticism	3.13	3.11	3.07	0.74	0.75	0.78	−.05	−.08	**−.13**	**.82**	**.83**	**.81**
Extraversion	3.62	3.61	3.62	0.75	0.75	0.75	−.03	.02	−.01	**.88**	**.90**	**.86**
Agreeableness	3.66	3.70	3.71	0.54	0.55	0.56	.10	.03	**.13**	**.81**	**.83**	**.82**
Conscientiousness	3.75	3.73	3.75	0.65	0.66	0.62	−.05	.05	−.004	**.85**	**.85**	**.86**
Openness	3.68	3.64	3.66	0.65	0.63	0.63	−.10	.07	−.04	**.85**	**.87**	**.85**
Relationship-specific traits												
Neuroticism	4.58	4.47	4.33	1.30	1.23	1.22	**−.13**	**−.17**	**−.28**	**.75**	**.76**	**.74**
Extraversion	6.64	6.68	6.68	1.00	1.03	1.01	.06	−.001	.05	**.72**	**.76**	**.69**
Agreeableness	7.71	7.63	7.61	0.98	1.01	1.06	**−.12**	−.03	**−.13**	**.76**	**.77**	**.71**
Conscientiousness	6.95	6.95	6.96	1.06	1.02	1.01	.002	.01	.01	**.72**	**.74**	**.67**
Openness to experience	6.69	6.68	6.63	1.06	1.07	1.05	−.02	−.07	−.08	**.75**	**.76**	**.73**

Note. Range for generalized traits = 1–5; Range for relationship-specific traits = 1–9; Mean-level change indicates Cohen's *d* and rank-order stability indicates test-retest correlations. Coefficients in bold are significant at $p < .01$.

[a] Subscripts refer to measurement occasions: 1 = Time 1, 2 = Time 2, 3 = Time 3.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables for Men

Variable	Mean			*SD*			Mean-level change			Rank-order stability[a]		
	T1	T2	T3	T1	T2	T3	T1 → T2	T2 → T3	T1 → T3	r_{12}	r_{23}	r_{13}
Generalized traits												
Neuroticism	2.55	2.54	2.52	0.69	0.71	0.71	−.02	−.04	−.06	**.77**	**.81**	**.78**
Extraversion	3.35	3.38	3.39	0.78	0.74	0.77	.07	.002	.08	**.85**	**.86**	**.86**
Agreeableness	3.62	3.64	3.64	0.55	0.54	0.57	.04	.01	.05	**.79**	**.82**	**.78**
Conscientiousness	3.57	3.57	3.58	0.62	0.62	0.61	−.01	.03	.02	**.83**	**.84**	**.81**
Openness	3.53	3.50	3.51	0.65	0.66	0.64	−.09	.03	−.06	**.85**	**.85**	**.82**
Relationship-specific traits												
Neuroticism	3.84	3.73	3.67	1.20	1.22	1.18	**−.12**	−.07	**−.18**	**.70**	**.71**	**.68**
Extraversion	5.96	5.96	5.99	1.05	1.04	1.03	.003	.03	.04	**.73**	**.72**	**.71**
Agreeableness	7.45	7.40	7.35	1.00	0.99	1.03	−.07	−.06	**−.11**	**.70**	**.70**	**.60**
Conscientiousness	6.55	6.56	6.58	1.10	1.13	1.14	.001	.03	.03	**.70**	**.73**	**.69**
Openness to experience	6.10	6.07	6.06	1.19	1.20	1.19	−.03	−.02	−.05	**.70**	**.73**	**.71**

Note. Range for generalized traits = 1–5; Range for relationship-specific traits = 1–9; Mean-level change indicates Cohen's *d* and rank-order stability indicates test-retest correlations. Coefficients in bold are significant at $p < .01$.

[a] Subscripts refer to measurement occasions: 1 = Time 1, 2 = Time 2, 3 = Time 3.

Table 3

Model Fit Indices for Dyadic Bivariate Latent Growth Curve Models

Model	χ^2	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
Neuroticism	33.102	0.999	0.997	0.020	0.014
Extraversion	29.932	1.000	0.999	0.014	0.015
Agreeableness	30.400	0.999	0.997	0.018	0.014
Conscientiousness	30.394	0.999	0.998	0.018	0.012
Openness to experience	35.425	0.999	0.996	0.024	0.016
Conditional models with baseline relationship satisfaction as covariate					
Neuroticism	48.864	0.997	0.991	0.028	0.014
Extraversion	36.611	1.000	1.000	0.006	0.014
Agreeableness	50.613	0.997	0.990	0.030	0.014
Conscientiousness	46.384	0.998	0.993	0.026	0.014
Openness to experience	41.566	0.999	0.997	0.019	0.015

Note. The χ^2-tests of model fit had between 26 and 27 degrees of freedom. In the models with baseline relationship satisfaction as covariate, the χ^2-tests of model fit had between 34 and 36 degrees of freedom. CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual.

Table 4

Estimates of Dyadic Bivariate Latent Growth Curve Models Among Women

Parameters	Neuroticism		Extraversion		Agreeableness		Conscientiousness		Openness	
	b	99% CI	*b*	99% CI	*b*	99% CI	*b*	99% CI	*b*	99% CI
Fixed effects										
$Intercept_g$	**3.60**	[3.40, 3.80]	**3.35**	[3.14, 3.56]	**3.43**	[3.28, 3.58]	**3.44**	[3.26, 3.63]	**3.46**	[3.28, 3.64]
$Slope_g$	−0.002	[−.07, .07]	−0.004	[−.06, .05]	0.02	[−.03, .07]	0.02	[−.03, .07]	0.01	[−.04, .06]
$Intercept_{rs}$	**5.14**	[4.78, 5.50]	**6.78**	[6.49, 7.06]	**7.65**	[7.37, 7.93]	**6.62**	[6.32, 6.92]	**6.63**	[6.33, 6.93]
$Slope_{rs}$	−0.13	[−.27, .001]	0.08	[−.04, .19]	−0.01	[−.13, .10]	−0.02	[−.13, .11]	−0.01	[−.12, .11]
Random effects										
$Intercept_g$	**0.41**	[.32, .50]	**0.49**	[.40, .58]	**0.23**	[.18, .28]	**0.36**	[.29, .43]	**0.35**	[.28, .41]
$Slope_g$	0.004	[−.003, .03]	0.02	[−.001, .05]	.0004	[−.01, .02]	0.01	[−.02, .03]	0.01	[−.01, .03]
$Intercept_{rs}$	**1.17**	[.93, 1.41]	**0.78**	[.60, .96]	**0.73**	[.57, .90]	**0.85**	[.66, 1.04]	**0.04**	[.65, 1.02]
$Slope_{rs}$	0.00	[.00, .00]	0.06	[−.001, .12]	0.04	[−.03, .10]	**0.07**	[.01, .14]	0.02	[−.05, .08]
Within-construct terms										
$Intercept_g$−$Slope_g$	0.01	[−.02, .04]	−0.02	[−.04, .01]	0.002	[−.02, .02]	−0.01	[−.04, .01]	−0.004	[−.03, .02]
$Intercept_{rs}$−$Slope_{rs}$	−0.03	[−.09, .04]	−0.04	[−.17, .03]	0.002	[−.07, .07]	**−0.08**	[−.16, −.003]	−0.01	[−.09, .07]
Across-construct terms										
$Intercept_g$−$Intercept_{rs}$	**0.43**	[.33, .55]	**0.41**	[.31, .51]	**0.22**	[.16, .29]	**0.38**	[.28, .47]	**0.43**	[.34, .53]
$Intercept_g$−$Slope_{rs}$	−0.02	[−.07, .03]	−0.02	[−.06, .02]	0.001	[−.03, .03]	−0.03	[−.07, .02]	−0.01	[−.05, .03]
$Intercept_{rs}$−$Slope_g$	0.02	[−.03, .07]	−0.02	[−.05, .01]	0.02	[−.01, .05]	−0.01	[−.04, .03]	0.01	[−.03, .04]
$Slope_g$−$Slope_{rs}$	0.001	[−.04, .04]	0.02	[−.01, .05]	−0.003	[−.03, .02]	0.01	[−.01, .04]	−0.0001	[−.03, .03]

Note. CI = confidence interval. Values in bold are significant at $p < .01$. $_g$ = generalized trait; $_{rs}$ = relationship-specific trait.

Table 5

Estimates of Dyadic Bivariate Latent Growth Curve Models Among Men

Parameters	Neuroticism		Extraversion		Agreeableness		Conscientiousness		Openness	
	b	99% CI	*b*	99% CI	*b*	99% CI	*b*	99% CI	*b*	99% CI
Fixed effects										
$Intercept_g$	**2.50**	[2.20, 2.69]	**3.34**	[3.12, 3.56]	**3.56**	[3.41, 3.72]	**3.18**	[3.01, 3.35]	**3.46**	[3.27, 3.65]
$Slope_g$	0.02	[−.05, .08]	−0.02	[−.08, .04]	−0.04	[−.09, .02]	0.02	[−.04, .07]	−0.01	[−.07, .05]
$Intercept_{rs}$	**3.83**	[3.49, 4.17]	**6.21**	[5.91, 6.51]	**7.70**	[7.41, 7.98]	**6.07**	[5.76, 6.38]	**6.07**	[4.74, 6.05]
$Slope_{rs}$	−0.08	[−.22, .06]	−0.04	[−.16, .08]	**−0.16**	[−.29, −.03]	−0.01	[−.14, .12]	−0.05	[−.18, .08]
Random effects										
$Intercept_g$	**0.37**	[.29, .46]	**0.49**	[.41, .58]	**0.23**	[.18, .27]	**0.31**	[.24, .37]	**0.39**	[.32, .46]
$Slope_g$	0.01	[−.02, .04]	0.00	[.00, .00]	0.00	[−.02, .02]	0.01	[−.01, .03]	**0.02**	[.002, .04]
$Intercept_{rs}$	**1.04**	[.79, .13]	**0.82**	[.63, 1.01]	**0.73**	[.55, .90]	**0.87**	[.66, 1.08]	**0.96**	[.75, 1.18]
$Slope_{rs}$	0.04	[−.06, .14]	0.02	[−.05, .09]	0.06	[−.01, .13]	0.06	[−.02, .14]	0.00	[.00, .00]
Within-construct terms										
$Intercept_g$−$Slope_g$	0.01	[−.03, .04]	.002	[−.02, .02]	0.01	[−.01, .03]	−0.01	[−.03, .01]	−0.02	[−.05, .001]
$Intercept_{rs}$−$Slope_{rs}$	−.04	[−.15, .08]	−0.03	[−.11, .05]	−0.04	[−.13, .04]	−0.03	[−.12, .06]	0.02	[−.04, .08]
Across-construct terms										
$Intercept_g$−$Intercept_{rs}$	**0.37**	[.26, .48]	**0.49**	[.38, .56]	**0.22**	[.15, .29]	**0.38**	[.28, .47]	**0.52**	[.41, .63]
$Intercept_g$−$Slope_{rs}$	−0.004	[−.06, .05]	−0.04	[−.08, .002]	−0.01	[−.04, .03]	−0.02	[−.06, .02]	−0.02	[−.07, .02]
$Intercept_{rs}$− $Slope_g$	−0.003	[−.05, .05]	−0.001	[−.04, .03]	0.02	[−.02, .05]	−0.01	[−.04, .03]	−0.02	[−.05, .03]
$Slope_g$−$Slope_{rs}$	0.02	[−.02, .06]	0.01	[−.01, .04]	0.004	[−.02, .03]	0.01	[−.02, .04]	0.01	[−.01, .04]

Note. CI = confidence interval. Values in bold are significant at $p < .01$. $_g$ = generalized trait; $_{rs}$ = relationship-specific trait.

Table 6

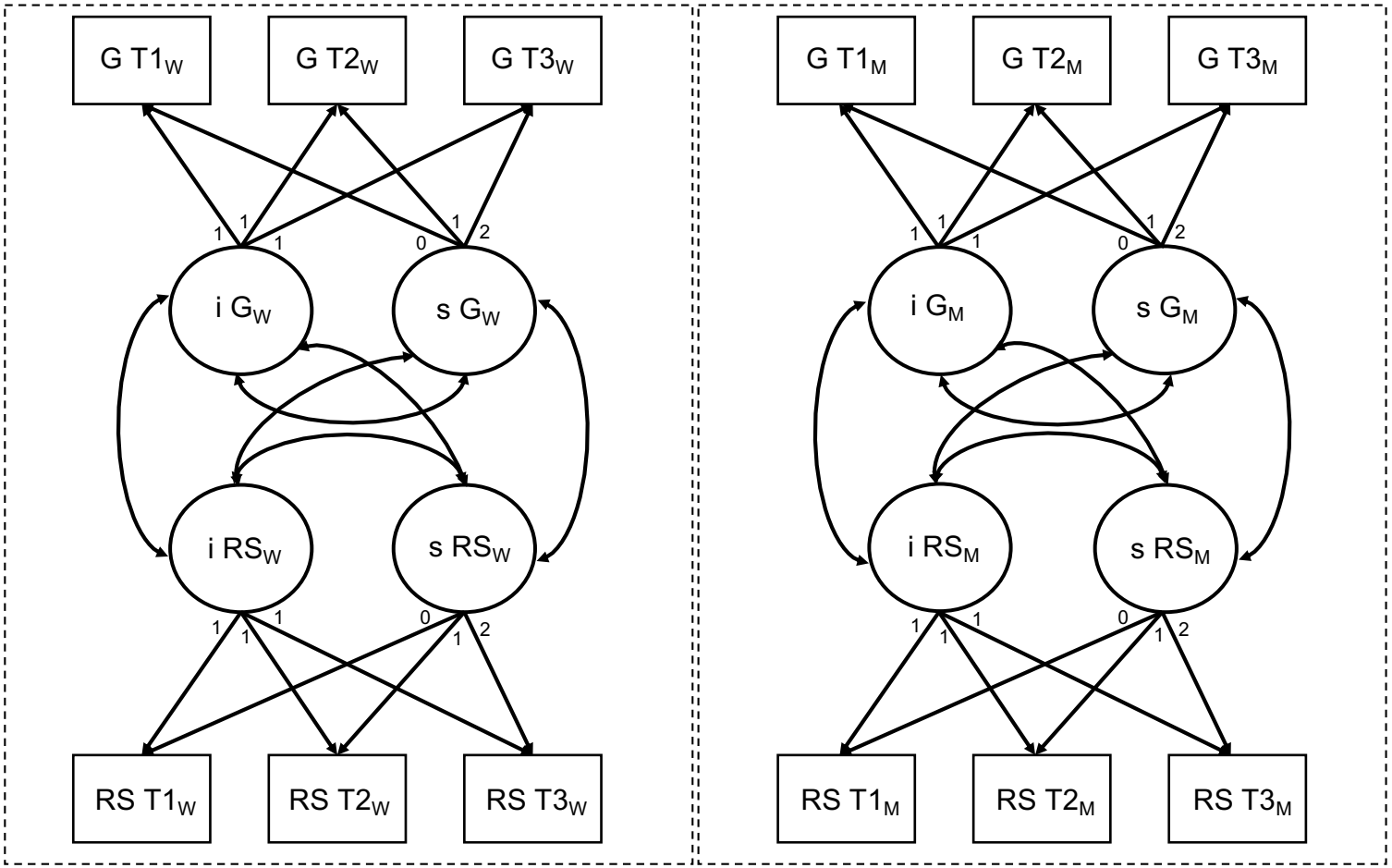
Associations Between Baseline Relationship Satisfaction and Intercepts and Slopes of Generalized Traits and Relationship-Specific Traits in Dyadic Bivariate Latent Growth Curve Models

Variable	Generalized traits				Relationship-specific traits			
	Intercept		Slope		Intercept		Slope	
	b	[99% CI]	*b*	[99% CI]	*b*	[99% CI]	*b*	[99% CI]
				Women				
Neuroticism	**−0.28**	[−.46, −.09]	0.01	[−.06, .07]	**−0.77**	[−1.08, −.47]	0.08	[−.05, .20]
Extraversion	**0.22**	[.03, .42]	0.003	[−.05, .06]	**0.56**	[.30, .81]	0.01	[−.10, .11]
Agreeableness	**0.19**	[.05, .33]	0.01	[−.03, .06]	**0.70**	[.47, .94]	0.02	[−.09, .12]
Conscientiousness	0.15	[−.02, .33]	0.02	[−.02, .07]	**0.56**	[.29, .85]	−0.07	[−.19, .04]
Openness to experience	−0.03	[−.20, .14]	0.03	[−01, .08]	0.24	[−.05, .52]	0.01	[−.10, .12]
				Men				
Neuroticism	**−0.26**	[−.43, −.09]	−0.03	[−.09, .03]	**−0.40**	[−.69, −.11]	−0.03	[−.15, .10]
Extraversion	0.16	[−.03, .36]	0.02	[−.04, .07]	**0.40**	[.14, .66]	0.03	[−.07, .13]
Agreeableness	**0.15**	[.02, .29]	−0.01	[−.06, .04]	**0.64**	[.42, .87]	0.01	[−.10, .13]
Conscientiousness	0.03	[−.13, .18]	0.03	[−.02, .08]	**0.34**	[.07, .61]	0.03	[−.09, .14]
Openness to experience	0.05	[−.12, .21]	0.01	[−.04, .06]	0.22	[−.07, .52]	−0.02	[−.11, .10]

Note. CI = confidence interval. Values in bold are significant at $p < .01$.

Figure 1

Dyadic Bivariate Latent Growth Curve Model



Note. Mean age was included as covariate of intercepts and slopes. The left panel shows the model for women and the right panel shows the equivalent model for men. As per focus of this manuscript and to reduce complexity, the figure shows associations within one partner and does not show associations across partners. In the statistical models, however, we modeled associations across partners (for both manifest and latent variables) and report these findings in the Supplemental Material (Table S7). G = generalized traits; RS = relationship-specific traits; i = intercept; s = slope; $_{w}$ = women; $_{m}$ = men

Table S1

Model Fit Indices for Dyadic Bivariate Latent Growth Curve Models (Controlling for Marital Status and Presence of Children)

Model	χ^2	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
Neuroticism	36.209	1.000	0.999	0.008	0.012
Extraversion	37.226	1.000	0.999	0.008	0.014
Agreeableness	37.982	0.999	0.998	0.015	0.013
Conscientiousness	43.836	0.998	0.995	0.023	0.013
Openness to experience	44.742	0.998	0.995	0.022	0.015

Note. The χ^2-tests of model fit had between 34 and 36 degrees of freedom. CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual.

Table S2

Estimates of Dyadic Bivariate Latent Growth Curve Models Among Women (Controlling for Marital Status and Presence of Children)

Parameters	Neuroticism		Extraversion		Agreeableness		Conscientiousness		Openness	
	b	99% CI	*b*	99% CI	*b*	99% CI	*b*	99% CI	*b*	99% CI
Fixed effects										
$Intercept_g$	**3.46**	[3.08, 3.85]	**3.36**	[2.96, 3.76]	**3.45**	[3.16, 3.73]	**3.50**	[3.16, 3.85]	**3.55**	[3.21, 3.89]
$Slope_g$	0.04	[−0.08, 0.17]	0.01	[−0.10, 0.12]	0.05	[−0.05, 0.14]	0.01	[−0.08, 0.11]	−0.01	[−0.11, 0.09]
$Intercept_{rs}$	**5.15**	[4.47, 5.82]	**6.87**	[6.34, 7.41]	**7.22**	[6.70, 7.74]	**6.47**	[5.91, 7.03]	**6.49**	[5.92, 7.06]
$Slope_{rs}$	−0.08	[−0.33, 0.17]	0.01	[−0.21, 0.22]	0.02	[−0.19, 0.23]	0.003	[−0.23, 0.23]	0.03	[−0.19, 0.24]
Random effects										
$Intercept_g$	**0.41**	[0.32, 0.49]	**0.49**	[0.40, 0.58]	**0.23**	[0.18, 0.28]	**0.36**	[0.29, 0.43]	**0.34**	[0.28, 0.41]
$Slope_g$	0.004	[−0.03, 0.03]	0.02	[−0.00, 0.05]	0.004	[−0.01, 0.02]	0.01	[−0.02, 0.03]	0.01	[−0.01, 0.03]
$Intercept_{rs}$	**1.16**	[0.92, 1.40]	**0.77**	[0.59, 0.95]	**0.72**	[0.56, 0.88]	**0.84**	[0.65, 1.03]	**0.83**	[0.65, 1.02]
$Slope_{rs}$	0.00	[0.00, 0.00]	0.06	[−0.003, 0.12]	0.04	[−0.03, 0.10]	**0.07**	[0.01, 0.14]	0.02	[−0.05, 0.08]
Within-construct terms										
$Intercept_g$−$Slope_g$	0.01	[−0.02, 0.04]	−0.02	[−0.04, 0.01]	0.002	[−0.03, 0.02]	−0.01	[−0.04, 0.01]	−0.004	[−0.03, 0.02]
$Intercept_{rs}$−$Slope_{rs}$	−0.03	[−0.09, 0.04]	−0.04	[−0.11, 0.04]	0.003	[−0.07, 0.07]	−0.08	[−0.16, −0.00]	−0.01	[−0.09, 0.07]
Across-construct terms										
$Intercept_g$−$Intercept_{rs}$	**0.43**	[0.31, 0.55]	**0.41**	[0.31, 0.51]	**0.22**	[0.16, 0.29]	**0.38**	[0.28, 0.47]	**0.43**	[0.33, 0.52]
$Intercept_g$−$Slope_{rs}$	−0.02	[−0.07, 0.03]	−0.02	[−0.06, 0.02]	−0.0001	[−0.03, 0.03]	−0.03	[−0.07, 0.02]	−0.01	[−0.05, 0.03]
$Intercept_{rs}$− $Slope_g$	0.02	[−0.03, 0.07]	−0.02	[−0.06, 0.01]	0.02	[−0.01, 0.05]	−0.01	[−0.04, 0.03]	0.01	[−0.03, 0.04]
$Slope_g$−$Slope_{rs}$	0.00	[−0.04, 0.04]	0.02	[−0.00, 0.05]	−0.003	[−0.03, 0.02]	0.01	[−0.02, 0.04]	−0.001	[−0.03, 0.03]

Note. CI = confidence interval. Values in bold are significant at $p < .01$. $_g$ = generalized trait; $_{rs}$ = relationship-specific trait.

Table S3

Estimates of Dyadic Bivariate Latent Growth Curve Models Among Men (Controlling for Marital Status and Presence of Children)

Parameters	Neuroticism		Extraversion		Agreeableness		Conscientiousness		Openness	
	b	99% CI	*b*	99% CI	*b*	99% CI	*b*	99% CI	*b*	99% CI
Fixed effects										
$Intercept_g$	**2.59**	[2.22, 2.96]	**3.34**	[2.93, 3.76]	**3.60**	[3.31, 3.89]	**3.23**	[2.91, 3.56]	**3.42**	[3.07, 3.77]
$Slope_g$	0.05	[−0.07, 0.18]	−0.01	[−0.12, 0.10]	−0.05	[−0.15, 0.05]	0.01	[−0.10, 0.11]	−0.05	[−0.15, 0.06]
$Intercept_{rs}$	**4.28**	[3.65, 4.92]	**6.15**	[5.59, 6.71]	**7.71**	[7.18, 8.25]	**5.94**	[5.36, 6.52]	**6.06**	[5.43, 6.69]
$Slope_{rs}$	−0.07	[−0.33, 0.19]	−0.08	[−0.30, 0.13]	−0.02	[−0.47, 0.02]	0.02	[−0.22, 0.26]	−0.22	[−0.47, 0.02]
Random effects										
$Intercept_g$	**0.37**	[0.29, 0.45]	**0.49**	[0.40, 0.58]	**0.26**	[0.18, 0.27]	**0.30**	[0.24, 0.36]	**0.39**	[0.32, 0.46]
$Slope_g$	0.01	[−0.02, 0.04]	0.00	[0.00, 0.00]	0.0001	[−0.02, 0.02]	0.01	[−0.01, 0.03]	0.02	[0.00, 0.04]
$Intercept_{rs}$	**1.03**	[0.78, 1.28]	**0.79**	[0.62, 0.96]	**0.73**	[0.56, 0.90]	**0.87**	[0.66, 1.08]	**0.97**	[0.75, 1.18]
$Slope_{rs}$	0.04	[−0.06, 0.14]	0.00	[0.00, 0.00]	0.06	[−0.01, 0.13]	0.06	[−0.02, 0.14]	0.00	[0.00, 0.00]
Within-construct terms										
$Intercept_g$−$Slope_g$	0.01	[−0.03, 0.04]	0.002	[−0.02, 0.02]	0.01	[−0.01, 0.03]	−0.01	[−0.03, 0.01]	−0.02	[−0.05, 0.00]
$Intercept_{rs}$−$Slope_{rs}$	−0.04	[−0.15, 0.08]	−0.01	[−0.06, 0.03]	−0.04	[−0.13, 0.04]	−0.03	[−0.12, 0.07]	0.02	[−0.04, 0.08]
Across-construct terms										
$Intercept_g$−$Intercept_{rs}$	**0.37**	[0.25, .048]	**0.48**	[0.37, 0.59]	**0.22**	[0.15, 0.29]	**0.38**	[0.28, 0.47]	**0.52**	[0.41, 0.63]
$Slope_g$−$Slope_{rs}$	0.02	[−0.02, 0.06]	0.01	[−0.02, 0.03]	0.003	[−0.02, 0.03]	0.01	[−0.02, 0.04]	0.01	[−0.01, 0.04]
$Intercept_g$−$Slope_{rs}$	−0.003	[−0.06, 0.05]	−0.04	[−0.08, 0.00]	−0.01	[−0.04, 0.03]	−0.02	[−0.06, 0.02]	−0.02	[−0.07, 0.02]
$Intercept_{rs}$− $Slope_g$	−0.004	[−0.05, 0.04]	−0.01	[−0.04, 0.03]	0.02	[−0.02, 0.05]	−0.01	[−0.04, 0.03]	−0.02	[−0.05, 0.02]

Note. CI = confidence interval. Values in bold are significant at $p < .01$. $_g$ = generalized trait; $_{rs}$ = relationship-specific trait.

Table S4

Associations Between Sample Characteristics (Marital Status and Presence of Children) and Intercepts and Slopes of Generalized Traits and Relationship-Specific Traits Among Women

Variable	Generalized traits				Relationship-specific traits			
	Intercept		Slope		Intercept		Slope	
	b	99% CI	*b*	99% CI	*b*	99% CI	*b*	99% CI
Marital status								
Neuroticism	0.02	[−0.22, 0.15]	−0.004	[−0.08, 0.07]	0.24	[−0.17, 0.65]	−0.03	[−0.18, 0.12]
Extraversion	0.14	[−0.10, 0.38]	−0.01	[−0.08, 0.05]	0.27	[−0.05, 0.60]	**−0.14**	[−0.26, −0.01]
Agreeableness	−0.06	[−0.23, 0.12]	0.01	[−0.04, 0.07]	−0.17	[−0.48, 0.15]	−0.02	[−0.15, 0.11]
Conscientiousness	−0.01	[−0.22, 0.20]	−0.04	[−.010, 0.01]	−0.04	[−0.38, 0.30]	−0.03	[−0.16, 0.11]
Openness to experience	0.16	[−0.05, 0.37]	−0.01	[−0.07, 0.05]	0.18	[−0.17, 0.52]	0.01	[−0.12, 0.14]
Presence of children								
Neuroticism	0.13	[−0.14, 0.35]	−0.03	[−0.16, 0.05]	0.06	[−0.37, 0.50]	−0.04	[−0.21, 0.12]
Extraversion	0.03	[−0.22, 0.29]	−0.01	[−0.08, 0.06]	0.01	[−0.33, 0.36]	0.01	[−0.12, 0.15]
Agreeableness	−0.03	[−0.21, 0.16]	−0.01	[−0.07, 0.05]	0.26	[−0.08, 0.59]	−0.03	[−0.17, 0.11]
Conscientiousness	−0.05	[−0.27, 0.18]	−0.01	[−0.07, 0.05]	0.09	[−0.27, 0.45]	−0.02	[−0.17, 0.13]
Openness to experience	−0.02	[−0.24, 0.20]	0.01	[−0.05, 0.07]	0.15	[−0.22, 0.51]	−0.02	[−0.16, 0.12]

Note. CI = confidence interval.

Table S5

Associations Between Sample Characteristics (Marital Status and Presence of Children) and Intercepts and Slopes of Generalized Traits and Relationship-Specific Traits Among Men

Variable	Generalized traits				Relationship-specific traits			
	Intercept		Slope		Intercept		Slope	
	b	99% CI	*b*	99% CI	*b*	99% CI	*b*	99% CI
Marital status								
Neuroticism	−0.05	[−0.28, 0.18]	−0.04	[−0.12, 0.04]	−0.19	[−0.57, 0.20]	−0.04	[−0.19, 0.12]
Extraversion	0.07	[−0.18, 0.32]	−0.01	[−0.07, 0.06]	−0.02	[−0.36, 0.32]	0.02	[−0.11, 0.15]
Agreeableness	0.07	[−0.12, 0.25]	0.03	[−0.03, 0.09]	−0.14	[−0.47, 0.18]	0.11	[−0.04, 0.26]
Conscientiousness	0.05	[−0.15, 0.25]	0.01	[−0.06, 0.07]	−0.04	[−0.39, 0.32]	0.02	[−0.13, 0.16]
Openness to experience	−0.01	[−0.22, 0.20]	0.04	[−0.03, 0.10]	−0.15	[−0.53, 0.23]	0.06	[−0.09, 0.21]
Presence of children								
Neuroticism	−0.08	[−0.32, 0.16]	−0.04	[−0.12, 0.04]	−0.37	[−0.78, 0.04]	−0.02	[−0.18, 0.15]
Extraversion	0.02	[−0.25, 0.28]	−0.01	[−0.08, 0.07]	0.05	[−0.32, 0.41]	0.03	[−0.11, 0.17]
Agreeableness	−0.004	[−0.19, 0.18]	0.02	[−0.05, 0.09]	−0.05	[−0.40, 0.29]	0.07	[−0.09, 0.23]
Conscientiousness	−0.02	[−0.23, 0.19]	0.01	[−0.06, 0.08]	0.08	[−0.30, 0.45]	−0.01	[−0.17, 0.14]
Openness to experience	0.03	[−0.20, 0.25]	0.04	[−0.03, 0.11]	−0.03	[−0.44, 0.37]	0.14	[−0.02, 0.30]

Note. CI = confidence interval.

Table S6

Items Used to Assess Relationship-Specific Traits (in the Original English Version and the German Translation)

Personality trait	English items	German items
Neuroticism	1. moody	1. launisch
	2. envious	2. neidisch
	3. temperamental	3. temperamentvoll
	4. fretful	4. gereizt
	5. touchy	5. empfindlich
	6. relaxed	**6. entspannt**
	7. unenvious	**7. nicht neidisch**
	8. jealous	8. eifersüchtig
Extraversion	**1. bashful**	1**. verlegen**
	2. energetic	2. energisch
	3. bold	3. mutig
	4. talkative	4. gesprächig
	5. extraverted	5. extravertiert
	6. quiet	**6. ruhig**
	7. shy	**7. schüchtern**
	8. withdrawn	**8. verschlossen**
Agreeableness	**1. cold**	**1. kalt**
	2. harsh	**2. rau**
	3. cooperative	3. kooperativ
	4. rude	**4. unhöflich**
	5. unsympathetic	**5. gefühllos**
	6. warm	6. warm
	7. kind	7. gütig
	8. sympathetic	8. mitfühlend

Table S6

Items Used to Assess Relationship-Specific Traits (in the Original English Version and the German Translation)

Personality trait	English items	German items
Conscientiousness	1. systematic	1. systematisch
	2. organized	2. organisiert
	3. careless	**3. achtlos**
	4. practical	4. praktisch
	5. inefficient	**5. ineffizient**
	6. disorganized	**6. desorganisiert**
	7. sloppy	**7. nachlässig**
	8. efficient	8. effizient
Openness to experience	1. philosophical	1. philosophisch
	2. complex	2. komplex
	3. uncreative	**3. unkreativ**
	4. imaginative	4. einfallsreich
	5. creative	5. kreativ
	6. unintellectual	**6. nicht intellektuell**
	7. deep	7. tiefsinnig
	8. intellectual	8. intellektuell

Note. Items were introduced with the question "How would you describe yourself in your romantic relationship? I am … ." The German translation reads as follows, "Wie würden Sie sich in Ihrer Partnerschaft beschreiben? Ich bin … ." Items in bold are reverse-coded items.

Table S7

Dyadic Estimates of Dyadic Bivariate Latent Growth Curve Models

Parameters	Neuroticism		Extraversion		Agreeableness		Conscientiousness		Openness	
	b	99% CI	*b*	99% CI	*b*	99% CI	*b*	99% CI	*b*	99% CI
Within-construct associations										
$Intercept_g$–$Intercept_g$	−0.05	[−0.11, 0.000]	−0.003	[−0.06, 0.06]	0.01	[−0.02, 0.04]	−0.01	[−0.05, 0.03]	**0.05**	[0.01, 0.10]
$Intercept_{rs}$-$Intercept_{rs}$	0.16	[−0.001, 0.32]	−0.05	[−0.16, 0.07]	0.10	[−0.002, 0.21]	−0.03	[−0.15, 0.09]	0.06	[−0.07, 0.19]
$Intercept_g$–$Slope_g$	0.002	[−0.02, 0.02]	−0.01	[−0.02, 0.01]	0.001	[−0.01, 0.01]	−0.001	[−0.02, 0.01]	0.001	[−0.01, 0.01]
$Intercept_{rs}$–$Slope_{rs}$	0.02	[−0.04, 0.09]	−0.01	[−0.05, 0.03]	−0.02	[−0.07, 0.03]	0.004	[−0.05, 0.05]	0.02	[−0.04, 0.07]
$Slope_g$–$Slope_g$	0.002	[−0.004, 0.01]	0.004	[−0.001, 0.01]	0.00	[−0.004, 0.003]	**0.004**	[0.001, 0.01]	0.002	[−0.001, 0.01]
$Slope_{rs}$-$Slope_{rs}$	0.01	[−0.02, 0.03]	0.02	[−0.003, 0.03]	0.02	[−0.003, 0.04]	0.02	[−0.01, 0.04]	−0.003	[−0.02, 0.02]
Across-construct associations										
$Intercept_g$–$Intercept_{rs}$	−0.08	[−0.18, 0.02]	−0.02	[−0.10, 0.08]	0.05	[−0.02, 0.11]	0.02	[−0.06, 0.11]	0.06	[−0.02, 0.15]
$Intercept_g$–$Slope_{rs}$	0.03	[−0.02, 0.08]	−0.01	[−0.04, 0.03]	0.00	[−0.03, 0.03]	−0.01	[−0.05, 0.03]	0.01	[−0.03, 0.05]
$Intercept_{rs}$–$Slope_g$	0.01	[−0.03, 0.06]	0.01	[−0.02, 0.04]	0.002	[−0.03, 0.03]	0.001	[−0.03, 0.03]	0.01	[−0.02, 0.03]
$Slope_g$–$Slope_{rs}$	−0.02	[−0.05, 0.02]	0.01	[−0.01, 0.04]	0.02	[−0.01, 0.04]	0.02	[−0.01, 0.04]	0.001	[−0.02, 0.02]

Note. CI = confidence interval. Values in bold are significant at $p < .01$. $_g$ = generalized trait; $_{rs}$ = relationship-specific trait.

Table S8

Summary of Fit Indices of Neuroticism Measurement Models to Test Invariance Over Time

Model	χ^2	*df*	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
			Women			
Generalized traits						
Configural invariance	719.884	225	0.939	0.925	0.065	0.060
Metric invariance	739.561	239	0.938	0.929	0.063	0.064
Scalar invariance	757.427	253	0.938	0.932	0.062	0.064
Relationship-specific traits						
Configural invariance	1035.018	225	0.875	0.847	0.084	0.094
Metric invariance	1045.937	239	0.876	0.857	0.081	0.094
Scalar invariance	1103.820	253	0.869	0.857	0.081	0.093
			Men			
Generalized traits						
Configural invariance	761.004	225	0.921	0.903	0.068	0.070
Metric invariance	792.030	239	0.918	0.906	0.067	0.072
Scalar invariance	813.835	253	0.917	0.910	0.066	0.072
Relationship-specific traits						
Configural invariance	943.099	225	0.870	0.841	0.079	0.102
Metric invariance	963.338	239	0.869	0.849	0.077	0.102
Scalar invariance	1011.228	253	0.863	0.851	0.077	0.103

Note. df = degrees of freedom; CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual.

Table S9

Summary of Fit Indices of Extraversion Measurement Models to Test Invariance Over Time

Model	χ^2	*df*	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
			Women			
Generalized traits						
Configural invariance	628.776	225	0.959	0.949	0.058	0.053
Metric invariance	645.331	239	0.958	0.952	0.057	0.057
Scalar invariance	696.417	253	0.955	0.951	0.058	0.058
Relationship-specific traits						
Configural invariance	558.015	225	0.929	0.913	0.054	0.064
Metric invariance	581.274	239	0.927	0.916	0.053	0.067
Scalar invariance	631.542	253	0.919	0.912	0.054	0.068
			Men			
Generalized traits						
Configural invariance	558.811	225	0.963	0.955	0.053	0.050
Metric invariance	576.030	239	0.963	0.957	0.052	0.054
Scalar invariance	604.280	253	0.961	0.957	0.051	0.054
Relationship-specific traits						
Configural invariance	513.036	225	0.934	0.919	0.050	0.057
Metric invariance	532.297	239	0.932	0.922	0.049	0.060
Scalar invariance	561.641	253	0.929	0.922	0.049	0.061

Note. df = degrees of freedom; CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual.

Table S10

Summary of Fit Indices of Agreeableness Measurement Models to Test Invariance Over Time

Model	χ^2	*df*	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
			Women			
Generalized traits						
Configural invariance	1487.233	372	0.868	0.845	0.077	0.126
Metric invariance	1519.700	390	0.866	0.850	0.075	0.125
Scalar invariance	1571.831	408	0.862	0.853	0.075	0.128
Relationship-specific traits						
Configural invariance	530.135	225	0.953	0.943	0.052	0.044
Metric invariance	553.748	239	0.952	0.944	0.051	0.051
Scalar invariance	570.359	253	0.951	0.947	0.050	0.052
			Men			
Generalized traits						
Configural invariance	1278.727	372	0.876	0.855	0.069	0.077
Metric invariance	1301.467	390	0.875	0.861	0.067	0.079
Scalar invariance	1347.448	408	0.872	0.863	0.067	0.080
Relationship-specific traits						
Configural invariance	612.424	225	0.930	0.914	0.059	0.050
Metric invariance	627.442	239	0.929	0.918	0.057	0.054
Scalar invariance	646.008	253	0.929	0.922	0.056	0.054

Note. df = degrees of freedom; CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual.

Table S11

Summary of Fit Indices of Conscientiousness Measurement Models to Test Invariance Over Time

Model	χ^2	*df*	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
			Women			
Generalized traits						
Configural invariance	720.356	294	0.952	0.943	0.053	0.059
Metric invariance	731.680	310	0.953	0.947	0.051	0.060
Scalar invariance	768.236	326	0.951	0.947	0.051	0.060
Relationship-specific traits						
Configural invariance	867.525	225	0.881	0.854	0.075	0.079
Metric invariance	889.756	239	0.879	0.086	0.073	0.081
Scalar invariance	905.594	253	0.879	0.868	0.071	0.081
			Men			
Generalized traits						
Configural invariance	729.711	294	0.940	0.928	0.054	0.056
Metric invariance	889.756	239	0.879	0.861	0.073	0.081
Scalar invariance	821.407	326	0.931	0.926	0.055	0.060
Relationship-specific traits						
Configural invariance	908.954	225	0.873	0.844	0.077	0.066
Metric invariance	925.512	239	0.872	0.852	0.075	0.068
Scalar invariance	952.234	253	0.870	0.858	0.073	0.069

Note. df = degrees of freedom; CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual.

Table S12

Summary of Fit Indices of Openness Measurement Models to Test Invariance Over Time

Model	χ^2	*df*	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
			Women			
Generalized traits						
Configural invariance	1448.723	372	0.903	0.887	0.075	0.091
Metric invariance	1470.527	390	0.903	0.891	0.073	0.093
Scalar invariance	1502.157	408	0.901	0.895	0.072	0.093
Relationship-specific traits						
Configural invariance	1114.565	225	0.865	0.835	0.089	0.122
Metric invariance	1133.732	239	0.865	0.844	0.087	0.122
Scalar invariance	1166.727	253	0.862	0.849	0.085	0.123
			Men			
Generalized traits						
Configural invariance	1687.557	372	0.873	0.851	0.082	0.109
Metric invariance	1720.757	390	0.871	0.856	0.081	0.109
Scalar invariance	1765.856	408	0.869	0.860	0.080	0.109
Relationship-specific traits						
Configural invariance	1217.413	225	0.838	0.801	0.094	0.129
Metric invariance	1231.952	239	0.838	0.813	0.091	0.130
Scalar invariance	1259.608	253	0.836	0.821	0.089	0.130

Note. df = degrees of freedom; CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual.

Table S13

Pearson Correlations Between Generalized Traits and Relationship-Specific Traits Among Women

Relationship-specific trait	Generalized trait														
	N T1	N T2	N T3	E T1	E T2	E T3	A T1	A T2	A T3	C T1	C T2	C T3	O T1	O T2	O T3
N T1	**.56**	**.50**	**.48**	**−.12**	−.07	**−.11**	**−.25**	**−.22**	**−.20**	**−.23**	**−.23**	**−.27**	−.02	.00	−.03
N T2	**.50**	**.53**	**.47**	**−.11**	−.11	**−.13**	**−.20**	**−.23**	**−.18**	**−.24**	**−.33**	**−.34**	−.04	−.05	−.05
N T3	**.50**	**.53**	**.54**	−.10	−.10	**−.12**	**−.21**	**−.23**	**−.21**	**−.25**	**−.31**	**−.33**	−.04	−.06	−.08
E T1	−.05	−.05	−.05	**.53**	**.50**	**.47**	**.13**	**.14**	**.13**	**.22**	**.26**	**.22**	**.22**	**.24**	**.19**
E T2	−.07	−.09	−.08	**.51**	**.55**	**.50**	**.16**	**.19**	**.18**	**.24**	**.30**	**.26**	**.23**	**.27**	**.20**
E T3	−.07	−.08	−.11	**.49**	**.50**	**.52**	**.16**	**.18**	**.19**	**.23**	**.27**	**.29**	**.25**	**.27**	**.25**
A T1	**−.39**	**−.38**	**−.35**	−.02	−.01	.03	**.50**	**.43**	**.40**	**.17**	**.12**	**.17**	.05	.00	.02
A T2	**−.33**	**−.40**	**−.34**	−.03	.01	.03	**.44**	**.46**	**.38**	**.14**	**.15**	**.18**	.06	.04	.04
A T3	**−.37**	**−.42**	**−.42**	−.01	.04	.05	**.48**	**.49**	**.49**	**.15**	**.15**	**.21**	.04	.03	.05
C T1	**−.18**	**−.15**	**−.14**	.04	.01	.02	**.16**	**.16**	**.14**	**.60**	**.54**	**.53**	.09	.10	.11
C T2	**−.16**	**−.18**	**−.13**	.06	.08	.08	**.14**	**.20**	**.17**	**.56**	**.58**	**.57**	.09	.10	.11
C T3	**−.23**	**−.22**	**−.20**	.02	.03	.07	**.19**	**.21**	**.21**	**.58**	**.58**	**.62**	.07	.08	.14
O T1	−.05	−.07	−.08	**.16**	**.15**	**.17**	.09	.13	.10	−.02	.01	−.03	**.69**	**.64**	**.61**
O T2	−.04	−.07	−.04	**.15**	**.17**	**.19**	.09	.12	.11	−.06	−.01	−.03	**.63**	**.67**	**.61**
O T3	−.04	−.07	−.07	**.15**	**.17**	**.20**	.10	.15	.15	−.04	.00	.01	**.65**	**.67**	**.70**

Note. N = Neuroticism, E = Extraversion, A = Agreeableness, C = Conscientiousness, O = Openness to experience. Coefficients in bold are significant at $p < .01$. The areas shaded in gray show correlations between the generalized level and relationship-specific level for the same trait.

Table S14

Pearson Correlations Between Generalized Traits and Relationship-Specific Traits Among Men

Relationship-specific trait	Generalized trait														
	N T1	N T2	N T3	E T1	E T2	E T3	A T1	A T2	A T3	C T1	C T2	C T3	O T1	O T2	O T3
N T1	**.48**	**.42**	**.45**	−.07	−.10	−.13	**−.23**	**−.23**	**−.24**	**−.21**	**−.19**	**−.22**	−.04	−.06	−.04
N T2	**.45**	**.54**	**.49**	−.07	−.12	−.13	**−.17**	**−.27**	**−.22**	**−.20**	**−.25**	**−.27**	−.05	−.10	−.08
N T3	**.43**	**.47**	**.52**	−.10	−.11	−.17	**−.21**	**−.24**	**−.29**	**−.21**	**−.22**	**−.30**	−.07	−.08	−.13
E T1	.07	.02	.07	**.61**	**.56**	**.52**	**.18**	**.20**	**.20**	**.21**	**.23**	**.22**	**.23**	**.27**	**.32**
E T2	.05	−.04	.03	**.59**	**.60**	**.54**	**.18**	**.27**	**.21**	**.23**	**.28**	**.27**	**.24**	**.31**	**.32**
E T3	.07	−.01	.03	**.59**	**.56**	**.59**	**.22**	**.25**	**.27**	**.23**	**.27**	**.30**	**.21**	**.26**	**.33**
A T1	**−.36**	**−.27**	**−.27**	−.02	.03	.04	**.48**	**.38**	**.36**	.07	.05	.09	.00	−.01	.01
A T2	**−.41**	**−.36**	**−.35**	−.02	.05	.07	**.43**	**.48**	**.40**	.03	.10	.12	.03	.05	.03
A T3	**−.39**	**−.34**	**−.39**	−.03	.06	.10	**.42**	**.44**	**.51**	.08	**.13**	**.21**	.04	.04	.09
C T1	−.08	−.04	−.06	.07	.03	.06	.05	.09	**.12**	**.64**	**.54**	**.53**	.12	.08	.10
C T2	−.06	−.11	−.13	.08	.07	.08	.02	.13	**.13**	**.59**	**.61**	**.58**	.09	.14	**.12**
C T3	−.09	−.07	−.15	.08	.07	.13	.07	.13	**.21**	**.59**	**.55**	**.61**	.06	.08	**.12**
O T1	.02	−.02	.02	**.19**	**.26**	**.23**	**.18**	**.21**	**.14**	.08	.11	.05	**.69**	**.65**	**.61**
O T2	−.01	−.05	−.02	**.20**	**.29**	**.25**	**.19**	**.25**	**.21**	.07	.13	.09	**.63**	**.71**	**.61**
O T3	−.01	−.02	−.01	**.22**	**.29**	**.33**	**.20**	**.23**	**.25**	.11	.14	**.13**	**.63**	**.64**	**.70**

Note. N = Neuroticism, E = Extraversion, A = Agreeableness, C = Conscientiousness, O = Openness to experience. Coefficients in bold are significant at $p < .01$. The areas shaded in gray show correlations between the generalized level and relationship-specific level for the same trait.

Table S15

Pearson Correlations Between Baseline Relationship Satisfaction and Both Trait Representations

Variable	Generalized traits		Relationship-specific traits	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Neuroticism T1	**−.17**	**−.23**	**−.34**	**−.27**
Neuroticism T2	−.11	**−.25**	**−.30**	**−.27**
Neuroticism T3	**−.16**	**−.25**	**−.30**	**−.27**
Extraversion T1	**.11**	.09	**.22**	**.19**
Extraversion T2	**.13**	**.16**	**.24**	**.24**
Extraversion T3	**.13**	**.14**	**.25**	**.27**
Agreeableness T1	**.17**	**.19**	**.43**	**.42**
Agreeableness T2	**.14**	**.22**	**.38**	**.41**
Agreeableness T3	**.18**	**.20**	**.45**	**.38**
Conscientiousness T1	.02	.05	**.21**	**.18**
Conscientiousness T2	.08	.06	**.14**	**.16**
Conscientiousness T3	.09	.07	**.18**	**.23**
Openness to experience T1	−.07	.11	.04	**.18**
Openness to experience T2	−.04	.10	.04	**.14**
Openness to experience T3	.00	.09	.07	**.16**

Note. Values in bold are significant at $p < .01$.

Table S16

Associations Between Baseline Relationship Satisfaction and Intercepts and Slopes of Generalized Traits and Relationship-Specific Traits Across Partners

Variable	Generalized traits				Relationship-specific traits			
	Intercept		Slope		Intercept		Slope	
	b	[99% CI]	*b*	[99% CI]	*b*	[99% CI]	*b*	[99% CI]
Women								
Neuroticism	−0.09	[−.27, .08]	−0.01	[−.07, .05]	**−0.35**	[−.64, −.06]	0.02	[−.10, .14]
Extraversion	0.04	[−15, .23]	0.02	[−.04, .07]	−0.17	[−.42, .08]	0.04	[−.07, .14]
Agreeableness	0.04	[−.09, .17]	0.003	[−.04, .05]	0.20	[−.02, .43]	0.04	[−.07, .14]
Conscientiousness	−0.09	[−26, .07]	0.02	[−.02, .07]	−0.14	[−.39, .12]	0.07	[−.04, .18]
Openness to experience	−0.02	[−.18, .15]	0.01	[−.04, .06]	−0.20	[−.46, .07]	0.05	[−.06, .15]
Men								
Neuroticism	−0.07	[−.25, .11]	0.02	[−.04, .09]	**−.038**	[−.68, −.07]	0.04	[−.09, .17]
Extraversion	−0.02	[−.23, .18]	0.04	[−.01, .10]	−0.07	[−.35, .20]	0.10	[−.01, .20]
Agreeableness	0.12	[−.02, .26]	0.02	[−.03, .08]	**0.25**	[.01, .49]	−0.05	[−.17, .07]
Conscientiousness	0.10	[−.06, .26]	−0.02	[−.08, .03]	0.07	[−.21, .36]	0.08	[−.04, .20]
Openness	0.16	[−.01, .34]	−0.04	[−.10, .01]	0.27	[−.03, .58]	−0.01	[−.13, .12]

Note. CI = confidence interval. The upper part of the table shows estimates on the associations between men's baseline relationship satisfaction and women's intercepts and slopes. The lower part of the table reports estimates on the associations between women's baseline relationship satisfaction and men's intercepts and slopes. Values in bold are significant at $p < .01$.