From Unethical to Prosocial Behavior: The Role of Guilt, Positive Affect, and System Processing
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**Research Question:** How and when does unethical behavior lead to prosocial behavior?

**Unethical Behavior**
Ex: Calling in sick to get out of work

Once people engage in unethical behavior, are they likely to engage in prosocial behavior? (Tetlock, Kristel, Elon, Green, & Lerner, 2000)

**Prosocial Behavior**
Ex: Coming into work early or donating to charity

Existing Findings: People engage in prosocial behaviors after unethical behaviors to morally cleanse

**Moral Cleansing**
Engaging in prosocial behavior to make up for unethical behavior

But how does unethical behavior lead to prosocial behavior?

**Argument:** Guilt is a mediator between unethical behavior and prosocial behavior

Acting unethically makes a people feel guilty because the unethical behaviors goes against their moral identity (i.e., I am a good person)

Prosocial behaviors help to restore a person’s moral identity and get rid of felt guilt

**Possible Explanation:** Dual Processing Theory

Two systems for decision making: System 1 and System 2

System 1: Fast, automatic, and closely associated with emotions

System 2: Analytical-rational system that makes logical decisions at high levels of abstraction

System 2 processing helps people rationalize unethical behavior (Zhong, 2011)

System 1 - more guilt and more moral cleansing
System 2 - more PA and less moral cleansing

**Hypothesis 1**
The indirect effect of unethical behavior on prosocial behavior through guilt will be moderated by cognitive processing style. System 1 will increase this relationship while System 2 will decrease it.

**Conflicting Evidence**
Ruedy, Moore, Gino, and Schweitzer (2013)

Unethical Behaviors lead to positive affect

Why would some people feel more guilt when acting unethical while others feel more positive affect?

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**Hypothesis 2**
The indirect effect of unethical behavior on prosocial behavior through positive affect will be moderated by cognitive processing style. System 2 will increase this relationship while System 1 will decrease it.

**Method:**
Sample: 194 Participants (48-50 observations per condition

2 X 2 Factorial Design
- Unethical Behavior: Yes or No
- Processing: System 1 or System 2

Word Jumble: only 7 out of 10 can be answered (Wiltermuth, 2011)

System Processing Manipulation (Hsee & Rottenstreich, 2011):
- **System 1:** Emotional responses (e.g., when you hear the name Donald J. Trump...)
- **System 2:** Math questions

Unethical Behavior Manipulation: Conf ederate helped the participants cheat to win $10

**Emotion Measure:** Modified PANAS-X

**Prosocial Behavior:** Donation to charity

**Results**

**Conclusion**
Dual processes theory plays a roll in moral cleansing:
- Provides an explanation for contradictory results in the ethics literature
- How and when unethical behavior will lead to future prosocial behavior

**Unethical System 1:** more guilt -> more donations
Unethical System 2: less guilt -> fewer donations

Hypothesis 1 Supported

Unethical System 2: more PA -> fewer donations
Unethical System 1: less PA -> more donations

Hypothesis 2 Supported