When Fake Is Good: The Benefits Of Deceptive Responsiveness In Relationships

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WHEN FAKE IS GOOD: THE BENEFITS OF DECEPTIVE RESPONSIVENESS IN RELATIONSHIPS

by

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DISSERTATION

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CHAPTER 1 “INTRODUCTION”

Note that venerable proverb: Children and fools always speak the truth. The deduction is plain — adults and wise persons never speak it... Lying is universal—we all do it; we all must do it. Therefore, the wise thing is for us diligently to train ourselves to lie thoughtfully, judiciously; to lie with a good object, and not an evil one; to lie for others' advantage, and not our own; to lie healingly, charitably, humanely, not cruelly, hurtfully, maliciously; to lie gracefully and graciously, not awkwardly and clumsily; to lie firmly, frankly, squarely, with head erect, not haltingly, tortuously, with pusillanimous mien, as being ashamed of our high calling.

- Mark Twain, 1882

John tells his partner Sheri that he is anxious because he only has an hour to run errands before guests arrive for the party he’s hosting at their home. At the moment, however, Sheri is trying to finish an important presentation for work and finds it difficult to focus on John’s concerns. Is it better for Sheri to be honest with John and tell him that she is busy and cannot be bothered with his current problems, or is it better for Sheri to feign support and understanding and give John reassurance that he will be successful? There are popular assumptions that romantic partners are generally honest with one another and that “honesty is the best policy.” Researchers who have assessed the use of deception in relationships also argue that dishonesty results in lower perceptions of one’s relationship (e.g. Cole, 2001; Kaplar, 2006). However, is it really always beneficial to your partner and your relationship to be honest, or might there be times when it is better to forgo honesty in an attempt to provide support, even if not wholly genuine? Considering the opening example, it seems that there could be times when deception in romantic relationships would be a beneficial, supportive strategy.

When it comes to romantic relationships, there is ample evidence illustrating the negative impact of deception; however, to date, the field has not truly considered the positive influence deception may have. The present research explored if using deception to be supportive partner could be beneficial within the context of romantic relationships. Specifically, we introduced the
construct of deceptive responsiveness, which we defined as intentionally withholding information or providing false statements with the intent to make someone feel validated, supported, and cared for. The first goal of these studies was to create a measure of deceptive responsiveness and to illustrate it was unique from other forms of deception. We also sought to understand if engagement in deceptive responsiveness was associated with positive relationship outcomes (e.g., satisfaction) during an in-lab task (Study 3) and in everyday relationship experiences (Study 4). These studies not only add to our understanding of deception and its impact on relationships but could potentially also drastically revise our operationalization of responsiveness within the field of relationship science and provide a more nuanced picture of the behaviors people engage in when trying to be responsive partners.

**Responsiveness in Relationships**

Within romantic relationships, self-disclosure is a dyadic process where one partner intends to deliberately share something personal with their partner, something meaningful to them, or a need or request for help (Greene, Derlega, & Mathews, 2006; Reis, 2013; Reis & Patrick, 1996). This self-disclosure provides an opportunity for one’s partner to respond supportively (or unsupportively). An individual’s response to their partner’s self-disclosure is a critical component of the intimacy process (feelings of closeness, appreciation, and affection in response to one’s personal communication; Reis & Shaver, 1988). Intimacy arises when an individual engages in self-disclosure and they perceive their partner’s reaction and response to the disclosure as responsive (i.e., the response made the discloser feel understood, validated, and cared for; Reis & Patrick, 1996; Reis & Shaver, 1988). A responsive partner will respond to a disclosure in a way that illustrates they understand what the discloser is communicating; that is, they understand the person’s current situation and needs. More specifically, understanding illustrates that one’s partner
accurately perceives oneself, understanding what is important, relevant, and central to them. Once an individual understands the situation and its relevance to their partner, they can engage in validation. Validation is the process in which the recipient substantiates the discloser’s feelings and views of themselves and the world. That is, one needs to perceive that their partner values and respects their behaviors, attributes, and values (i.e., the things that compose one’s inner-self). Finally, the individual doing the disclosing must feel that their partner cares for them, which provides them confidence that their partner will be there for them in times of need. If the discloser recognizes their partner’s responses as understanding, validating, and caring, they will find the entire experience more pleasant and will have greater feelings of intimacy towards their partner. Overall, if a partner is perceived as responsive, they are perceived to support one’s needs, goals, values, and preferences (Reis, 2013). Importantly, this increase in intimacy is not solely experienced by the individual who engaged in the self-disclosure; rather, their partner also experiences increased intimacy and connection to the relationship if they perceive their reply was interpreted as responsive (Reis & Patrick, 1996).

In addition to leading to increased feelings of intimacy, perceived partner responsiveness is important because it is consistently associated with personal and interpersonal well-being. Perceived partner responsiveness is associated with increased self-knowledge, positive affect and happiness, warmth, acceptance, belonging, trust, coping, feelings of support, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and sleep quality (Feeney, 2004; Gable & Reis, 2006; Lemay & Neal, 2014; Reis, 2012, 2013, 2014; Selcuk, Gunaydin, Ong, & Almeida, 2016). Perceived partner responsiveness increases one’s self-regulation, achievement motivation, decreases fear of failure, and overall increases the likelihood of attaining one’s goals (Feeney, 2004; Reis, 2014). It also is predictive of eudaimonic well-being (feeling you have achieved your potential and found meaning in life) 10
years later (Selcuk et al., 2016). Following a negative event or failure, perceived partner responsiveness results in more positive self-ratings and less self-blame (Reis, 2013). Having a responsive partner is beneficial to the relationship because it leads to more positive sentiments towards one’s partner (Lemay & Neal, 2014) and it leads individuals to view their partners as better, more sexually desirable mates (Birnbaum et al., 2016). Perceived partner responsiveness also shapes future interactions. If an individual expects their partner to be supportive and responsive, they are more likely to be open and cooperative during future interactions (e.g., Gable & Reis, 2006). Conversely, if an individual expects their partner to be unsupportive and unresponsive, they are more likely to be distant and defensive in their interactions. Generally, having a responsive partner is highly indicative of personal and relationship well-being.

Responsiveness is viewed as highly important for relationship and individual well-being, however it can be very challenging to be a responsive partner. Responsiveness is a dyadic process influenced by both partners’ motives, needs, goals, and fears (Reis & Shaver, 1988). Therefore, when John discloses to his partner Sheri, what he wants and expects from Sheri in that moment will depend on the goals he has active (i.e., it is very nuanced). Similarly, Sheri’s current goals will affect how she responds to John’s self-disclosure. If we go back to our example of John and Sheri, in that moment Sheri is focused on finishing an important presentation for work, so being a responsive partner is not currently the only thing important to her. She could reprioritize her goals and engage in genuine responsiveness or finishing her presentation could remain her primary focus. In this moment, Sheri may not even attempt to be a responsive partner, or she may attempt to be perceived as a responsive partner even though there are other things she rather being doing. Or, Sheri may currently have the goal of being a responsive and supportive partner, but she is not able to reach this goal through any honest means (e.g., she understands the situation but does not
believe John will be successful in completing everything before his guests arrive). In these examples, deception may then become a viable way for Sheri to be a responsive partner to John.

Responsiveness is integral to successful relationship functioning and it can be assumed that most responsive responses are authentic and honest since the majority of communication is (Levine, 2014); however, this may not be the case. There may be certain situations where honest responses are viewed as non-responsive and even detrimental to one’s relationship (e.g., Reis & Patrick, 1996), which may explain why it can be so challenging to be a responsive partner. Deception with the goal of benefitting one’s partner may be a strategy that allows for people to be responsive partners in situations where honesty may not allow them to be.

Deception is “the deliberate attempt, whether successful or not, to conceal, fabricate, and/or manipulate in any other way factual and/or emotional information, by verbal and/or nonverbal means, in order to create or maintain in another or in others a belief that the communicator himself or herself considers false” (Masip, Garrido, & Herrero, 2004, p. 148, as cited in Cantarero & Szarota, 2017). A key aspect of the definition of deception is that people are consciously and intentionally trying to mislead another person (e.g., DePaulo, Kashy, Kirkendol, Wyer, & Epstein, 1996; Lippard, 1988). This is important because it does not include situations in which there is a misunderstanding and an individual accidently misleads another. There are multiple paths one can take when deceiving another: withholding information, fabricating information, or distorting information (McCornack, Levine, Solowczuk, Torres, & Campbell, 1992), and each of these strategies fit within this definition of deception. Lies are also classified based on the intended beneficiary (e.g., DePaulo & Kashy, 1998). Self-centered lies are told to benefit or protect the lie teller, while other-oriented lies (also known as prosocial lies) are told to benefit or protect the
target of the lie. Research has shown that not all lies are created equal and that the motives behind the deception (e.g., Lindskold & Walters, 1983) and the type of deception (Levine et al., 2018) are important when determining how wrong, permissible, or ethical the act is perceived to be. It is important that this definition of deception also does not focus on the consequences or perceived acceptability or unacceptability of the behavior in determining whether or not something is deception, because deception is not always perceived the same way. For example, communicators often believe that omitting (withholding) information is more ethical than telling a lie (even if it is a prosocial lie); while targets sometimes believe the opposite, judging lies of commission (fabricating or exaggerating information) as more acceptable than omission of information (Levine et al., 2018). This definition of deception is inclusive, it encompasses all instances where someone intentionally misleads another, regardless of their approach, motivation, and the consequences.

Using similar definitions, research on deception has shown that it is not a behavior carried out by only a few “terrible” people; rather, deception is normal behavior that individuals engage in regularly. One study had participants record all of their acts of deception over a three-week period and found that individuals engaged in deception on average 4.2 times a week (Lippard, 1988). Other studies, using a similar daily diary approach, have shown a slightly higher prevalence rate of deception, with undergraduates reporting an average of using deception two times a day and community members reporting using deception once a day (DePaulo et al., 1996). Research has also illustrated that the majority of deception is in response to a prompt by another individual, rather than being initiated by the deceiver (Lippard, 1998). Approximately 25% of the lies told everyday are told with the intent to avoid hurting close others (DePaulo et al., 1996; Lippard, 1988). Following, many of the lies told on a daily basis are considered “light” lies, where the deceiver does not experience much rumination or distress and individuals state if they could relive
the situation, they would lie again (DePaulo et al., 1996). Taken together, this illustrates that deception is a normative behavior that individuals engage in daily.

Some may consider romantic partners to be unique individuals who are not treated the same as everyone else, therefore just because research shows individuals regularly engage in deception, one cannot assume this means individuals deceive their partners. However, research has demonstrated that individuals do deceive their romantic partners (e.g., DePaulo & Kashy, 1998; DePaulo et al., 1996; Drouin, Tobin, & Wygant, 2014). DePaulo and Kashy (1998) found that even though individuals indicated feeling high levels of closeness with their romantic partners, unmarried individuals reported lying to their romantic partners during approximately one in three interactions, and spouses reported deceiving each other in approximately one in ten interactions. While individuals deceived romantic partners (32-33% of lies) less frequently than they deceived unacquainted others (56-77% of lies) overall (DePaulo & Kashy, 1998), these results illustrate that individuals do regularly engage in deception within the context of romantic relationships.

Though individuals engage in deception within their romantic relationships, research has not found it to be a beneficial behavior. The more individuals perceive their partners to be dishonest, the lower their levels of relationship satisfaction and commitment (Cole, 2001). Similarly, an individual thinking their partner is dishonest with them is also associated with their partner having lower levels of relationship satisfaction and commitment. Researchers assessing the perceived acceptability of deception in relationships have found that as relationship commitment increases, individuals’ beliefs that information needs to be shared and done so honestly increases, and their belief that it is okay to not always share everything decreases (Roggensack & Sillars, 2014). This work suggests that as relationship commitment increases there is less acceptability when it comes to using deception and a greater expectation of honesty. Overall,
deception is viewed negatively within relationships and is associated with poorer relationships. However, if deception is not detected, it can have a positive influence on one’s relationship. Cole (2001) also assessed how being successful at deception (i.e., subtracting one’s partner’s perceived partner deception score from their own reported use of deception score) was related to both the individual’s and their partner’s satisfaction and commitment. He found that the more successful at deception an individual was (i.e., the less accurately their partner detected it), the higher their partner’s relationship satisfaction; however, successful deception was not associated with the partner’s commitment or the individual’s own relationship satisfaction or commitment. This illustrates that generally relationships are at their strongest when people do not engage in deception; however, deception can have a slight positive influence on one’s partner if it is not detected. Largely, the previous work on deception and romantic relationships illustrates that people do deceive their partners, however potentially at a cost to their relationship and themselves.

**Prosocial Deception**

While deception is typically viewed as immoral and wrong, deception can have prosocial benefits because of its ability to protect other’s feelings and promote their success (Gasper, Levine, & Schweitzer, 2015; Levine & Schweitzer, 2014). Prosocial deception refers to using false statements with the intent of misleading and benefitting a target (Levine & Schweitzer, 2014) and prosocial deception is the most common type of lie told daily (Gasper et al., 2015). Prosocial lies are simultaneously moral (they show benevolence and care for others) and immoral (they are dishonest). Through a series of three studies, Levine and Schweitzer (2014) found that when honesty and benevolence were mutually exclusive (i.e., when a person was in a situation where they could be either (a) honest and hurt another person, or (b) dishonest to protect or help another person), people who engaged in prosocial deception were rated as more ethical than those who
were honest. Similarly, those who engage in other-oriented deception were rated as less deceitful than those who lied for personal gain (Cantarero & Szarota, 2017; Cantarero, Szarota, Stamkou, Navas, & Espinosa, 2018). These studies illustrate that deception is sometimes perceived to be a moral and beneficial behavior.

Not only are prosocial lies (compared to honest, hurtful truths) viewed as more moral, but compared to those who use honest disclosures that harm another person, those who use prosocial deception are perceived as more trustworthy. Bocian and colleagues conducted studies where a confederate could dishonestly complete a task, and their completing the task either benefitted only themselves or it benefitted both themselves and the participant (Bocian, Baryla, & Wojciszke, 2016; Bocian & Wojciszke, 2014). When the participant also benefitted from the confederate’s dishonest behavior, they viewed the confederate as more moral and trustworthy compared to when only the confederate benefited; in fact, they rated the confederate just as trustworthy as those who honestly completed the task. Similarly, in a series of studies, Levine and Schweitzer (2015) had participants interact with individuals who were either honest at the expense of another or were dishonest to benefit another or dishonest to mutually benefit both another and themselves. Both dishonesty conditions represent forms of prosocial deception. They found that while those who engaged in prosocial deception were perceived as significantly more dishonest than those who behaved honestly, they were also rated as significantly more benevolent and trustworthy than the selfishly honest individuals.

Prosocial deception seems to be especially likely within the context of close relationships. In fact, the more an individual likes a person, the more likely they are to engage in prosocial deception (Bell & DePaulo, 1996). Relative to the lies told to others, the lies that are told to individuals who are close to the deceiver are less self-centered and more other-oriented. In another
study, almost half (48%) of those who reported engaging in sexting admitted to lying about what they were wearing and/or doing at the time (Drouin et al., 2014). The majority of participants said they engaged in this deceptive sexting because their partners benefited (i.e., other-oriented deception). Similarly, when individuals were asked to describe a time they deceived their partner, the most common reason given for the deception was to protect their partner (Metts, 1989). These studies illustrate that individuals do engage in prosocial deception within their romantic relationships.

One specific form of prosocial deception that occurs within romantic relationships is deceptive affection. Deceptive affection is the expression of affection towards one’s partner that does not match the person’s current, internal feelings (i.e., the person is hiding their true feelings; Horan & Booth-Butterfield, 2011). In one study, participants completed a seven-day daily diary about their engagement in deceptive affection (Horan & Booth-Butterfield, 2013). It was found that on average participants engage in deceptive affection three times a week and that common motives were to avoid hurting their partner and to improve their partner’s mood. Additionally, in this study the deceiver believed their engagement in deceptive affection went undetected. In a different study, participants completed a survey that assessed their frequency of engagement in deceptive affection, general deception, and their relationship satisfaction and commitment (Gillen & Horan, 2013). There was no association between engagement in deceptive affection and these relationship outcomes; however, general deception was negatively correlated with both. Together these results further support that individuals do engage in prosocial deception within their relationships. Additionally, these studies show that general use of deceptive affection was differentially associated with relationship outcomes than general deception; indicating, at the very
least, that engagement in prosocial deception may not always be harmful within the context of
romantic relationships.

Outside of romantic relationships, those who engage in prosocial deception are rated as
more ethical (Levine & Schweitzer, 2014) and trustworthy (Levine & Schweitzer, 2015) than are
individuals who are honest at the expense of another. However, within romantic relationships, the
limited research on prosocial deception has not been as positive. Kaplar (2006) found that the use
of prosocial deception within one’s relationship was negatively correlated with relationship
satisfaction. Hart, Curtis, Williams, Hathaway, and Griffith (2014) had participants complete a
measure assessing attitudes towards telling one’s partner lies with the goal of benefitting or
protecting them from both the lie-teller’s perspective and the lie-receivers perspective. They found
that individuals view prosocial deception as more justified and acceptable when they were the lie-
teller versus the lie-receiver. Another study assessed individuals’ views on honesty in relationships
(Boon & McLeod, 2001). They found that while the majority of individuals (65%) said complete
honesty was important for relationships, 63% said there were occasions when one should mislead
their partner. Specifically, it was thought to be acceptable to mislead one’s partner to protect their
feelings. Together these studies show that while individuals do not like being the recipient of
prosocial deception, on some level people are open to the use of prosocial deception within
relationships.

While researchers have started to illustrate the positives of deception among strangers,
research has yet to determine when deception is beneficial within the context of close others and
romantic relationships. We believe that when an individual is trying to be a responsive partner but
cannot do so honestly may be a situation where deception is a beneficial behavior. Exploring this
potential adds to our understanding of deception and its impact on relationships, and also allows
us to better understand responsiveness and the behaviors people engage in when trying to be responsive partners.

**Deceptive Responsiveness**

In relationships, individuals may want to be caring, responsive partners, who help their partners feel good about themselves; however, it may not always be possible to be completely genuine when they do this. For instance, sometimes an individual may not fully agree with their partner, or individuals may have thoughts and feelings that they keep to themselves. When this occurs, individuals are engaging in *deceptive responsiveness*. Specifically, we define deceptive responsiveness as intentionally withholding information or providing false statements with the intent to make someone feel validated, supported, and cared for. Deceptive responsiveness is a subset of prosocial deception, focusing on the specific use of deception with the goal of being a responsive partner.

Going back to the example presented earlier, when John expresses anxiety regarding accomplishing everything before guests arrive, Sheri can choose between being completely honest or engaging in deceptive responsiveness. If Sheri were completely honest, she would say, “I do not see what the big deal is, that is nothing compared to the stress I am currently feeling trying to finish this presentation.” While this response demonstrates she understands the issue, it does not make her partner feel validated and cared for. In this scenario not only does John not receive the support he was looking for, but it could also make him feel worse and reduce his relationship satisfaction (e.g., Reis & Patrick, 2006). Conversely, even if those are Sheri’s honest thoughts, she could engage in deceptive responsiveness and instead say, “You do have a lot to do before guests arrive, but I am confident you will be able to accomplish everything.” This response would lead John to feel understood, validated, and cared for, which has positive outcomes for him and the
relationship (e.g., Reis, 2013). This example illustrates that there are times within romantic relationships when it may be more beneficial to engage in deceptive responsiveness than to give the complete, honest truth.

**Deceptive responsiveness and the receiver.** Deceptive responsiveness may have the same consequences as honest responsiveness. Deceptive responsiveness should be used when there is not an honest way for individuals to make their partner feel validated, supported, and cared for. Therefore, when John and Sheri are interacting, if Sheri does not feel she can be both honest and supportive of John, she may choose to engage in deceptive responsiveness. When Sheri engages in deceptive responsiveness, John feels understood, validated, and cared for, rather than hurt and unsupported (the consequences had Sheri taken the honest, unsupportive path instead). This leads John to perceive Sheri as a responsive partner, which not only increases his feelings of intimacy but is also associated with numerous other benefits for him and his relationship (e.g., Feeney, 2004; Gable & Reis, 2006; Lemay & Neal, 2014; Reis, 2012, 2013, 2014; Selcuk et al., 2016). Similarly, if Sheri engaged in deceptive responsiveness when John was telling her about something positive that happened to him, it will allow him to experience capitalization, thus deriving additional benefits from the positive event (Gable, Reis, Impett, & Asher, 2004), as well as, confidence and trust that she takes his best interests into account (Reis, 2014). Therefore, engaging in deceptive responsiveness should enable one’s partner to experience all of the positive benefits associated with responsiveness, which would not have been possible had they instead responded honestly and unsupportively.

While there is minimal research that deception can be beneficial to one’s relationship, we believe the previous research does not fully account for the potential benefits of deceptive responsiveness. Cole’s (2001) finding that an individual’s engagement in successful deception
within their romantic relationship was associated with their partner’s having slightly higher levels of relationship satisfaction, gives credence to the idea that one’s partner would benefit from deceptive responsiveness. In his study, deception was assessed broadly, not focusing on specific motivations or contexts of deception; therefore, this included all motivations for deception, not just the prosocial motivations that comprise deceptive responsiveness. Therefore, it is actually likely that deceptive responsiveness is more beneficial to individuals than his research would suggest.

For deceptive responsiveness to be beneficial to the receiver, it should not be detected. Considering previous research on deception (e.g., Cole, 2001), if one’s use of deceptive responsiveness is detected, not only will the individual not be perceived as responsive but it would also lead to negative relational outcomes. When individuals take the perspective of the lie teller versus the lie receiver, they view the lies as more altruistically motivated, justified by the situation, and provoked by the lie receiver (i.e., they view lies told to them as less acceptable than the lies they tell others; Kaplar & Gordon, 2004). People are also less accepting of deception and expect higher levels of sharing and honesty the more committed they are to their relationship (Roggensack & Sillars, 2014). People are not accepting of deception in romantic relationships, and when deception is detected it is perceived as a violation of trust, which negatively impacts the individuals and their relationships. Therefore, if an individual perceives that their partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness, it will not have the beneficial outcomes previously outlined, and could actually be harmful to the relationship.

Luckily, contrary to The Eagles’ popular lyrics, “You can’t hide your lyin’ eyes, And your smile is a thin disguise” (Henley & Frey, 1975), people are not skilled at detecting deception. The majority of communication is honest and therefore others tend to believe what others tell them
(i.e., they are inclined to believe that others are telling the truth; Truth Default Theory; Levine, 2014). Following from the Truth Default Theory, people should not be great at detecting deception and that is exactly what studies have shown. Studies that assess deception detection have an average of 53% to 58% accuracy rates, with the highest rates of accuracy being around 65% (Anderson, Ansfield, & DePaulo, 1999). Overall, the studies on deception detection accuracy have illustrated that individuals’ levels of detection are not much better than chance (50%).

Whereas overall deception detection is low, there is a general belief that the closer you are to another person, the better you are at detecting when they are deceptive (e.g., Cole, 2001; Levine & McCornack, 1992); however, this is not the case. For example, Stiff, Kim, and Ramesh (1992) had close friends come into the lab and one individual was assigned to be the interviewer and the other the interviewee. The interviewee watched a film and then was told to either be truthful or deceptive about their emotional reaction to the film during an interview by their friend. Prior to the interview, participants were assigned to the low suspicion condition (i.e., the interviewer was told nothing) or the high suspicion condition (i.e., the interviewer was told that some interviewees are being told to lie, while others are being told to be honest). Individuals in the high suspicion condition experienced a reduction in their truth bias, however this did not impact detection accuracy. Overall, this study found that individuals were only slightly better than chance (62.5%) at detecting their close friends engaging in deception. Similarly, in another study participants were asked to detect deceptive emotional expression of close friends, less close friends, and strangers (Sternglanz & DePaulo, 2004). When it came to detecting sadness or anger that individuals were trying to hide, less close friends were better at detecting these emotions than close friends. Overall, even though people believe they are good at detecting deception in their romantic partners, research does not suggest it is a skill people generally possess.
In addition to having a truth bias, another reason people may be so bad at detecting deception, especially within the context of romantic relationships, is that it is costly to accurately detect a lie, thus motivating people to not perceive deception. Individuals often do not see cues of deception if doing so could damage their relationship (DePaulo, Wetzel, Sternglanz, & Walker Wilson, 2003). If, for some reason, an individual has reason to suspect their partner of being dishonest, they may decide to not investigate the issue further or to just let the lie pass if detection would be harmful to the relationship (Anderson et al., 1999). Furthermore, Aune, Levine, Ching, and Yoshimoto (1993) found that the more positively individuals view the person giving the message, the less deceptive and more honest the individual was perceived to be. Therefore, one could argue that people are very susceptible to being deceived by their romantic partners because there is usually an assumption of honesty, a partner is viewed positively, and detecting deception could be harmful to one’s relationship. Overall, the closer someone is to another individual, the less likely they are able to detect the other individual’s deception. Since individuals are not likely to detect their partner’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness, they will be left to reap the benefits of deceptive responsiveness.

**Deceptive responsiveness and the deceiver.** When an individual engages in deceptive responsiveness, they are trying to make their partner feel validated, supported, and cared for (i.e., they are trying to be a responsive partner). If an individual engaging in deceptive responsiveness is perceived as successful in this goal by their partner and/or themselves, then they too may experience benefits. Being perceived as a responsive partner increases the actor’s feelings of intimacy (Debrot, Cook, Perrez, & Horn, 2012). Similarly, research has shown that those who perceive themselves as responsive experience increased confidence that their partner values them (Lemay, 2014). Therefore, engaging in deceptive responsiveness has the potential to not only
increase one’s partner’s feelings of intimacy, but also to increase feelings of intimacy for the deceiver, as well as, increasing their confidence that they are valued by their partner.

Additionally, telling a hurtful truth is not only painful for the recipient, but can also be painful for the person who says it because they have to deal with the recipient’s reactions to hearing it, as well as any consequences that follow (Hrubes, Feldman, & Tyler, 2004). Deceptive responsiveness may provide a way for people to respond to others without having to give a hurtful truth. Therefore, using deceptive responsiveness may be a way to protect both the receiver and the deceiver from negative emotions.

**Current Research**

The present research explored when engaging in deception to support one’s partner is beneficial within the context of romantic relationships, specifically focusing on responsiveness. The first goal of these studies was to create a measure of deceptive responsiveness and to illustrate it is unique from other forms of deception. We also sought to understand if engagement in deceptive responsiveness was associated with positive relationship outcomes. More specifically, the aims of the current set of studies were (a) to create a scale to assess deceptive responsiveness, (b) compare how acceptable individuals find it for themselves and their partners to engage in deceptive responsiveness, (c) to determine if individuals who engage in deceptive responsiveness are perceived as responsive by their partners, and (d) to assess how deceptive responsiveness is related to important relationship outcomes (e.g., satisfaction) for both the individual engaging in the behavior and their partner.

The first study involved creating and validating a measure of frequency of engagement in deceptive responsiveness. The psychometric validity of the new measure was assessed by determining if engagement in deceptive responsiveness was associated with, but distinct from,
other measures of use of deception within romantic relationships and motivations for engaging in deception. Study 2 confirmed the structure and psychometric validity of the Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness Scale in a new sample. Study 3 explored the use of deceptive responsiveness in real-time, during a conversation where partners discussed a personal weakness or limitation. Study 4 was a daily diary study, assessing individuals’ daily use of deceptive responsiveness, individuals’ ability to detect deceptive responsiveness, and the impact that using deceptive responsiveness had on themselves and their partners. The outlined studies were the first studies to investigate the new construct of deceptive responsiveness and to assess how engagement in deceptive responsiveness affects individuals and their partners.
CHAPTER 2 “STUDY 1”

Because deceptive responsiveness in a novel construct, not previously explored in the scientific literature, we first needed to create a measure to assess it. Items were developed and then factor analyzed to create a measure assessing individual’s self-reported engagement in deceptive responsiveness. The final scale was compared to existing measures of engagement of deception in romantic relationships, motivations for engagement in deception, perceived partner reaction to unwanted information, and how honest people are to assess convergent and divergent validity.

Method

Participants and Procedure. Participants registered on Amazon’s Mechanical Turk to take an online survey hosted on Qualtrics. Participants viewed an information sheet explaining the study and then proceeded to the survey if they agreed to participate. Following completion of the survey, participants received a debriefing summary sheet and were compensated $0.50. Participants also received a $1.00 bonus (for a total of $1.50) if they met the following criteria: 1) less than 20% of questions were left unanswered, 2) there was no evidence of responding in a patterned way that reflected inattention, and 3) there was no evidence of typing or copy-and-pasting irrelevant text into open-text questions.

The study began with 270 participants. Participants who failed two or more attention checks were removed ($n = 21$). Two individuals were removed for taking less than 5 minutes to complete the survey. Additionally, individuals who were more than three standard deviations above the average time to complete the survey were removed ($n = 5$). This left 242 participants (147 female, 94 male, 1 unreported) for analyses. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 76 years old ($M = 36.17$, $SD = 10.56$). One-hundred and eighty-one participants identified as European American/White, 22 as African American/Black, 15 as East Asian, 12 as Hispanic/Latino, 7 as
South Asian, 3 as multiracial, and 2 as Native American. The majority of participants identified as heterosexual \((n = 219)\), followed by bisexual \((n = 17)\), homosexual \((n = 2)\), pansexual \((n = 1)\), asexual \((n = 1)\), and undecided/questioning \((n = 1)\). All participants were currently in romantic relationships (64 dating, 19 engaged, 17 cohabitating, and 142 married). Their current relationships ranged in length from 1 month to 40 years \((M = 103.77\) months, \(SD = 109.97)\).

**Materials.** These measures were administered among a battery of questionnaires testing unrelated hypotheses.

**Engagement in deceptive responsiveness.** Members of the Relationships and Individual Differences Lab were asked for examples of when someone would engage in deceptive responsiveness and what engaging in deceptive responsiveness would look like. Using their responses, along with the definition of deceptive responsiveness, the author and her mentor developed items to assess engagement in deceptive responsiveness. Once the list of items was developed, duplicate items were removed. This left 10 items that were created to assess participants’ engagement in deceptive responsiveness. Example items on the Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness Scale are “I sometimes hide my true thoughts and feelings from my partner so they will feel validated,” and “There are times when I exaggerate or stretch the truth in order to make my partner feel good.” Participants indicated how true each statement was of them on a 5-point scale \((1 = \text{not at all true of me}, 5 = \text{very true of me})\). See Appendix A for items.

**Perceptions of own responsiveness.** Participants responded to nine items assessing, on average, how responsive to their partner they think they are. Three of the items were modified from Maisel and Gable’s (2009) daily responsiveness measure to assess their general responsiveness \((e.g., \text{“I try to understand my partner”})\). Participants rated how much they engage in each behavior when their partner tells them about a concern they have on a scale from 1 (not at
all) to 5 (very much). These items were averaged for each participant ($M = 4.64$, $SD = 0.56$, $\alpha = .88$). Participants also completed nine items that were modified from Lemay’s (2014) perceptions of own responsive behavior to assess their general responsiveness. Example items are, “I am considerate and respectful to my partner,” and “I listen attentively to my partner’s view of things.” Participants indicated how much each statement was reflective of them from 1 (not at all) to 9 (extremely). The nine items were averaged for each participant ($M = 7.89$, $SD = 1.11$, $\alpha = .92$).

These two measures of responsiveness were highly correlated ($r = .77$, $p < .001$) so a principle components analysis was conducted to determine if the items could be combined into one scale. All 12 items loaded strongly onto a single factor accounting for 67.30% of the variance among the items, indicating all of the items were tapping into the same construct. For this reason, we standardized participants’ ratings on these 12 items and then aggregated these values to create an overall scale of own responsiveness ($M = 0.00$, $SD = 0.82$, $\alpha = .94$). See Appendix B for all items. This measure was included to determine whether engaging in deceptive responsiveness was associated with individuals’ perceptions of their own responsiveness, and if this association was similar to the association between other forms of deception in romantic relationships and individuals’ perceptions of their own responsiveness.

**Use of deception.** Nine items assessed how much individuals tend to lie to their romantic partners more generally (Cole, 2001). Example items are, “I disclose everything to my partner, both good and bad” (reverse scored) and “I sometimes lie to my partner.” Participants indicated how much they agreed with each statement on a 7-point scale ($1 = strongly disagree$, $7 = strongly agree$, $M = 3.13$, $SD = 1.41$, $\alpha = .88$). Higher scores indicated more engagement in deception within one’s romantic relationship. See Appendix C for complete measure. We expected there to
be a positive relationship between individuals’ general use of deception in their romantic relationships and their engagement in deceptive responsiveness.

**Lying in Amorous Relationships Scale.** This scale assessed participants’ use of prosocial deception within their romantic relationships (Kaplar, 2006). Example items are, “I believe that it is better to tell my romantic partner a little white lie rather than risk hurting him or her by telling the truth,” and “My romantic partner can count on me to always tell him or her the truth no matter what” (reverse scored). Participants indicated how much they agreed with each of the 12 statements on a 5-point scale (1 = completely disagree, 5 = completely agree; M = 2.74, SD = 0.90, α = .92). Higher scores indicated greater use of prosocial deception within one’s romantic relationship. See Appendix D for complete measure. We expected there to be a positive relationship between participants’ lying in amorous relationships and their engagement in deceptive responsiveness.

**Motivations for lying.** Participants’ motivations for using deception within their romantic relationships were assessed along two dimensions: altruistic motivations and egoistic motivations (Kaplar & Gordon, 2004). Altruistic motivations assessed how much participants were motivated to use deception for partner-focused reasons; example items are, “I lie to avoid upsetting my partner,” and “I have my partner’s best interest in mind when I lie to them.” Egoistic motivations assessed how much participants were motivated to use deception for self-focused reasons; example items are, “I lie to my partner to protect myself,” and “I lie to my partner to avoid negative consequences.” Participants indicated how much they agreed with each item on a 7-point scale (1 = completely disagree, 7 = completely agree). Scores were calculated separately for altruistic motivations (M = 3.96, SD = 1.77, α = .91) and egoistic motivations (M = 2.89, SD = 1.63, α = .90). Higher scores represented more of that motivation for the use of deception within one’s
romantic relationship. See Appendix E for complete measure. We expected deceptive responsiveness to be positively correlated with both altruistic and egoistic motivations for lying. We also expected that altruistic motives for lying would uniquely predict engagement in deceptive responsiveness when controlling for egoistic motives for lying.

**Perceived partner reaction to unwanted information.** Fourteen items assessed how individuals perceive their partners to typically react when they receive unwanted information (Cloven & Roloff, 1993). The items represent two subscales: symbolic aggression (e.g., “insults or swears at me;” $M = 2.58$, $SD = 1.42$, $\alpha = .90$) and physical aggression (e.g., “throws something at me;” $M = 1.63$, $SD = 1.30$, $\alpha = .97$). For each item, participants indicated how characteristic each behavior was of their partner on a 7-point scale ($1 = extreme\text{ly } uncharacteristic$, $7 = extreme\text{ly } characteristic$). Higher scores represented increased perceptions that one’s partner responds to unwanted information in that manner. See Appendix F for complete measure. We expected there to be positive associations between participants’ perceived partner reaction to unwanted information and engagement in deceptive responsiveness for both symbolic aggression and physical aggression.

**Risk propensity scale.** Participants indicated how much they agreed with six items assessing risk taking (e.g., “Safety first” (reverse scored) and “I take risks regularly”) on a 9-point scale ($1 = total\text{ly disagree}$, $9 = total\text{ly agree}$; Meertens & Lion, 2008). The final item assessed how much participants viewed themselves as a risk avoider (1) as opposed to a risk seeker (9). Participant scores were calculated by averaging across all seven items ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 1.46$, $\alpha = .81$). Higher scores indicated a greater propensity to take risks. See Appendix G for complete measure. Deception could be viewed as a risky behavior because if one’s partner detects deception, it is often associated with negative consequences (e.g., Cole, 2001). Risk propensity was included
for exploratory reasons, to determine if engagement in deceptive responsiveness had the same relationship with risk propensity as the other measures assessing the use of deception in romantic relationships.

**Trait honesty.** The honesty-humility subscale of the HEXACO-60 (Ashton & Lee, 2009) was used to assess the personality trait of honesty. Specifically, it was assessing how much individuals manipulate others, break rules, and are interested in material possessions. Example items are, “I wouldn’t use flattery to get a raise or promotion at work, even if I thought it would succeed,” “If I knew that I could never get caught, I would be willing to steal a million dollars” (reverse scored), and “Having a lot of money is not especially important to me.” Participants indicated how much they agreed with each item on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree; \(M = 3.48, SD = 0.73, \alpha = .77\)). Higher scores indicated greater amounts of honesty. See Appendix H for complete measure. We predicted there would be a negative association between engagement in deceptive responsiveness and trait honesty, since deceptive responsiveness, by definition, is a dishonest behavior.

**Investment model.** The investment model items assessed four components of participants’ perceptions of their relationship (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998): satisfaction (e.g., “I feel satisfied with our relationship;” \(M = 7.35, SD = 1.68, \alpha = .95\)), quality of alternatives (e.g., “The people other than my partner with whom I might become involved are very appealing;” \(M = 4.39, SD = 2.21, \alpha = .89\)), investment (e.g., “I have put a great deal into our relationship that I would lose if the relationship were to end;” \(M = 7.03, SD = 1.57, \alpha = .82\)), and commitment (e.g., “I want our relationship to last for a very long time;” \(M = 7.72, SD = 1.57, \alpha = .91\)). Participants indicated how much they agreed with each statement on a 9-point scale (1 = do not agree at all, 9 = agree completely). Higher scores indicated more endorsement of that construct. See Appendix I for
complete measure. While previous research has demonstrated that deception within romantic relationships is associated with lower perceptions of one’s relationship (e.g., Cole, 2001; Kaplar, 2006), we expected deceptive responsiveness to have a more positive association with one’s perceptions of their relationship.

**Ten-item personality inventory.** Participants’ personality was assessed along five dimensions (Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, 2003): extraversion (e.g., “extraverted, enthusiastic;” \( M = 3.73, SD = 1.70, \alpha = .73 \)), agreeableness (e.g., “sympathetic, warm;” \( M = 5.33, SD = 1.31, \alpha = .46 \)), conscientiousness (e.g., “dependable, self-disciplined;” \( M = 5.55, SD = 1.26, \alpha = .51 \)), emotional stability (e.g., “calm, emotionally stable;” \( M = 4.85, SD = 1.51, \alpha = .66 \)), and openness to experiences (e.g., “open to new experiences, complex;” \( M = 5.10, SD = 1.39, \alpha = .47 \)).

Participants indicated how much they agreed with each statement on a 7-point scale (1 = disagree strongly, 7 = agree strongly). Higher scores on a subscale indicated the participant had more of that personality trait. See Appendix J for complete measure. We had no specific predictions for how engagement in deceptive responsiveness would be associated with the five dimensions of personality; rather, this measure was included for exploratory purposes.

**Demographics.** Participants were asked a series of questions asking them to describe themselves (e.g., sex and age) and their relationship (e.g., relationship length). See Appendix K for all items.

**Results**

Analyses were conducted using SPSS 25. Descriptive statistics and correlations of the 10 items created to assess engagement in deceptive responsiveness can be seen in Table 1. To determine the factor structure of these items, a principal component analysis with an Oblimin rotation was conducted (see Table 2). The items loaded onto two factors, with factor loadings
above .50. The first factor was composed of eight items and had good reliability (\( \alpha = .83 \)). The second factor was only composed of two items and did not have decent reliability (\( \alpha = .47 \)). Since ideally factors are composed of a minimum of three items (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2003) and have a minimum reliability of .70 (Nunnally, 1978), the second factor was dropped from the remaining analyses. When only the eight items were included in a principal components analysis, the analysis resulted in a single factor accounting for 56.57% of the variance among the items, with each item having a factor loading greater than .60, see Table 2. Participants’ values on these eight items were averaged to obtain their engagement in deceptive responsiveness (\( M = 3.20, SD = 0.89 \)).

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness

<table>
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<th>8</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Item 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Item 3</td>
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<td>.14*</td>
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<td>Item 4</td>
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<td>Item 6</td>
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<td>.23***</td>
<td>.49***</td>
<td>.49***</td>
<td>.54***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Item 7</td>
<td>.22***</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>.58***</td>
<td>.59***</td>
<td>.62***</td>
<td>.59***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Item 8</td>
<td>.25***</td>
<td>.22***</td>
<td>.41***</td>
<td>.36***</td>
<td>.40***</td>
<td>.60***</td>
<td>.44***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Item 9</td>
<td>.23***</td>
<td></td>
<td>.59***</td>
<td>.58***</td>
<td>.48***</td>
<td>.51***</td>
<td>.60***</td>
<td>.42***</td>
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<td>.11</td>
<td>.41***</td>
<td>.42***</td>
<td>.47***</td>
<td>.47***</td>
<td>.52***</td>
<td>.35***</td>
<td>.48***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( M = 3.83, 4.02, 3.08, 3.14, 3.32, 3.32, 3.15, 3.49, 2.99, 2.98 \)

\( SD = 1.04, 0.86, 1.23, 1.24, 1.17, 1.13, 1.23, 1.07, 1.20, 1.19 \)

*Note.* Item numbers correspond to how the items are numbered in Appendix A. *p \leq .05, **p \leq .01, ***p \leq .001.
Table 2

*Factor Loadings of the Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness Items in Study 1*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>10-item Factor Analysis</th>
<th>8-item Factor Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 1</td>
<td>Factor 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. I tend to prioritize making sure my partner feels cared for, understood, and validated, even if it means hiding some of my true thoughts and feelings.</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I typically try to validate my partner’s feelings and viewpoints even when I think their issues are unimportant</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I sometimes tell my partner they’re right just so they feel validated</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. There are times when I exaggerate or stretch the truth in order to make my partner feel good</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I sometimes try to hide my emotions if expressing them would hurt my partner</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I aim to do anything possible to make my partner feel supported and cared for, even if I don’t totally mean it</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I sometimes hide my true thoughts and feelings from my partner so they will feel validated</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I try to offer my partner consistent support and encouragement even when I do not fully support what they are doing</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I sometimes pretend to fully agree with my partner so that they feel validated and understood</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. During a discussion, I withhold information or my emotions when it will make my partner feel cared for</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eigenvalue 4.70 1.21 4.53
% of variance accounted for 47.04 12.12 56.57
Cronbach's Alpha .83 .47 .83
M (SD) 3.20 (0.89) 3.93 (0.77) 3.20 (0.89)

*Note.* Factor loadings below .30 are not presented in the table.
To assess convergent and discriminant validity, participant’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness was correlated with the other measures (see Table 3). As expected, engagement in deceptive responsiveness was positively associated with individuals’ use of deception more generally in their relationships, lying in amorous relationships, and perceptions that their partners will respond to unwanted information with symbolic aggression and physical aggression. Discriminant validity was demonstrated through the negative association with honesty. Interestingly, engagement in deceptive responsiveness was not related to risk propensity, despite the fact the other two deception measures were related to risk propensity. This suggests that it is not only individuals who are more inclined to take risks who engage in deceptive responsiveness. To further support the idea that deceptive responsiveness is unique from the other two measures of deception in relationships, deceptive responsiveness did not have a significant association with perceptions of one’s own responsiveness, while the other two measures were negatively associated with perceptions of one’s own responsiveness.
Table 3

**Correlations among Measures in Study 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Engagement DR</th>
<th>Use Deception</th>
<th>LIARS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use Deception</td>
<td>.47***</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIARS</td>
<td>.55***</td>
<td>.76***</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.36***</td>
<td>-.31***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Altruistic Motives</td>
<td>.54***</td>
<td>.62***</td>
<td>.76***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Egoistic Motives</td>
<td>.42***</td>
<td>.70***</td>
<td>.60***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Symbolic Aggression</td>
<td>.30***</td>
<td>.41***</td>
<td>.28***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Aggression</td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td>.34***</td>
<td>.19**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trait Honesty</td>
<td>-.34***</td>
<td>-.44***</td>
<td>-.45***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk Propensity</td>
<td>.09</td>
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<td>.24***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-.40***</td>
<td>-.33***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Alternatives</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>.42***</td>
<td>.30**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.30***</td>
<td>-.19**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
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<td>-.51***</td>
<td>-.32***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
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<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.06</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.23***</td>
<td>-.14*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>-.25**</td>
<td>-.22***</td>
<td>-.21**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Stability</td>
<td>-.13*</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>-.15*</td>
<td>-.14*</td>
<td>-.16*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. This correlation table is truncated for ease of viewing. DR = deceptive responsiveness. LIARS = Lying in Amorous Relationships Scale. *p ≤ .05, **p ≤ .01, ***p ≤ .001.*

In order to better understand the unique associations of engagement in deceptive responsiveness, the above correlations were re-analyzed controlling for individuals’ general use of deception and their lying in amorous relationships (see Table 4). When controlling for the other deception scales, engagement in deceptive responsiveness was positively associated with perceptions of one’s own responsiveness and investment in the relationship, was marginally positively associated with satisfaction (p = .06), and was marginally negatively associated with trait honesty (p = .07). Also, noteworthy, when controlling for the other deception scales, deceptive responsiveness was no longer associated with egoistic motives for lying, perceptions that one’s partner will respond to unwanted information with physical aggression, quality of alternatives,
relationship commitment, emotional stability, or openness to new experiences. To further understand these relationships, we conducted two simultaneous regressions predicting perceptions of one’s own responsiveness and investment in the relationship, respectively, with the three measures of deception in relationships. The three deception measures significantly predicted perceptions of one’s own responsiveness, $F(3, 238) = 15.32, p < .001, R^2 = .16$ (see Table 5). Engagement in deceptive responsiveness had a significant positive association with responsiveness, while use of deception had a significant negative association with responsiveness. Similarly, the three deception measures significantly predicted investment in one’s relationship, $F(3, 238) = 13.90, p < .001, R^2 = .15$ (see Table 6). When it came to predicting investment in one’s relationship, engagement in deceptive responsiveness had a positive association and use of deception had a negative association.
Table 4

*Correlations Among Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness and the Other Measures, Controlling for Use of Deception and Lying in Amorous Relationships Scale in Study 1*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Engagement DR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness</td>
<td>.18**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altruistic Motives</td>
<td>.22***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egoistic Motives</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolic Aggression</td>
<td>.16*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Aggression</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trait Honesty</td>
<td>-.12+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Propensity</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>.12+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Alternatives</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment</td>
<td>.26***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>-.13*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>-.16*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Stability</td>
<td>-.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>-.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. DR = deceptive responsiveness. *p ≤ .10, *p ≤ .05, **p ≤ .01, ***p ≤ .001.*

Table 5

*Regression of Perceptions of One’s Own Responsiveness on the Three Measures of Deception in Relationships*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engagement DR</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>[.05, .31]</td>
<td>2.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Deception</td>
<td>-.34</td>
<td>-3.64</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[-.30, -.09]</td>
<td>4.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIARS</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>-1.68</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>[-.32, .03]</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. DR = deceptive responsiveness. LIARS = Lying in Amorous Relationships Scale.*
Table 6

Regression of Investment in the Relationship on the Three Measures of Deception in Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>$t$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engagement DR</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>[.27, .77]</td>
<td>5.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Deception</td>
<td>-.40</td>
<td>-4.26</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>[-.64, -.24]</td>
<td>6.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIARS</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-0.53</td>
<td>.600</td>
<td>[-.43, .25]</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. DR = deceptive responsiveness. LIARS = Lying in Amorous Relationships Scale.

Since deceptive responsiveness is supposed to be utilized to make one’s partner feel validated, cared for, and supported, we expected individuals to engage in deceptive responsiveness for partner-focused motivations. To test this, engagement in deceptive responsiveness was simultaneously regressed on altruistic and egoistic motivations for lying in a relationship. Engagement in deceptive responsiveness was significantly predicted by these motivations, $F(2, 237) = 49.59, p < .001, R^2 = .30$ (see Table 7). When considering both motivations simultaneously, only altruistic motivations predicted engagement in deceptive responsiveness.

Table 7

Regression of Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness on Altruistic and Egoistic Motivations for Engaging in Deception

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>$t$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Altruistic</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>6.34</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>[.16, .31]</td>
<td>11.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egoistic</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td>[-.02, .14]</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion

Study 1 was the first to introduce a new measure of engagement in deceptive responsiveness. The new measure demonstrated good convergent and discriminant validity and was distinct from other measures of deception in romantic relationships. The average rating on this
new measure of engagement in deceptive responsiveness was over the mid-point, suggesting that it is a fairly common behavior for individuals to engage in. Results also indicate that deceptive responsiveness is not like other forms of relational deception. Specifically, unlike the two measures assessing general tendency to engage in deception in relationships (even prosocial deception), deceptive responsiveness did not have negative associations with perceptions of one’s own responsiveness or satisfaction, and deceptive responsiveness was not associated with individuals’ propensity to engage in risky behaviors. Additionally, when controlling for use of other forms of deception within one’s relationship, individuals’ engagement in deceptive responsiveness was positively associated with feelings of their own responsiveness and relationship outcomes (i.e., relationship satisfaction (marginally) and investment). This distinction gives credence to the idea that deceptive responsiveness may be a beneficial behavior for individuals to engage in.
CHAPTER 3 “STUDY 2”

The purpose of Study 2 was to confirm the factor structure and psychometric validity of the Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness Scale, created in Study 1, in an independent sample of participants. Additionally, Study 1 revealed that engagement in deceptive responsiveness is a fairly common behavior; however, it did not indicate how acceptable individuals find the behavior to be. Previous research indicates individuals find it more acceptable for themselves than others to engage in prosocial deception (Hart et al., 2014). To better understand deceptive responsiveness and individuals’ perceptions of the behavior, we developed two new measures: acceptability of one’s own engagement in deceptive responsiveness and acceptability of their partner’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness.

**Hypothesis 1 (H1):** When general use of deception in relationships is accounted for, engagement in deceptive responsiveness will be positively associated with perceptions of one’s own responsiveness.

**Hypothesis 2 (H2):** People will view it as more acceptable for themselves to engage in deceptive responsiveness than it is for their partners to engage in deceptive responsiveness.

**Method**

**Participants and Procedure.** Participants registered on SONA, the Department of Psychology’s research participation system, to take an online survey hosted on Qualtrics. Participants viewed the information sheet explaining the study and then proceeded to the survey if they agreed to participate. Following completion of the survey, participants viewed a debriefing summary sheet and were compensated with credit they could apply to one of their psychology courses.
The study began with 376 eligible participants. Participants who were missing 10% or more of the data were removed \((n = 25)\). Participants who failed four or more of the six attention checks were removed \((n = 13)\). This left 338 participants (254 female, 84 male) for analyses. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 61 years old \((M = 21.27, \text{SD} = 5.25)\). One-hundred and fifty-two participants identified as European American/White, 64 as Middle Eastern, 42 as African American/Black, 9 as East Asian, 16 as Hispanic/Latino, 30 as South Asian, 22 as multiracial, 1 as Native American, 1 as Albanian, and 1 as Moor. The majority of participants identified as heterosexual \((n = 297)\), followed by bisexual \((n = 26)\), homosexual \((n = 6)\), pansexual \((n = 4)\), asexual \((n = 1)\), queer \((n = 1)\), undecided/questioning \((n = 2)\), and unreported \((n = 1)\). All participants were currently in romantic relationships (311 dating, 6 engaged, 5 cohabitating, and 16 married). Their current relationships ranged in length from less than 1 month to 24 years \((M = 19.71 \text{ months}, \text{SD} = 26.42)\).

There is no agreed upon way to calculate power for exploratory factor analysis; however researchers tend to agree that between 200 and 300 participants is an adequate sample size (e.g., Brace, Kemp, & Snelgar, 2013; Williams, Onsman & Brown, 1996; Yong & Pearce, 2013). Previous research has demonstrated large effect sizes \((\eta^2 \text{ ranged from .18 to .30})\) when comparing perceptions of various partner-focused motives for telling a lie from the perspective of the lie teller and the lie receiver (Kaplar & Gordon, 2004). To err on the side of caution, power analyses for the within-subjects \(t\)-test were conducted using a moderate effect size \((d = .50)\), power of .80, and alpha at .05. Using G*Power, the minimum required sample size was 34 individuals.

**Materials.** The materials in this study were composed of all of the measures used in Study 1, except we only used the eight items that compose the final version of the Engagement in
Deceptive Responsiveness Scale. Additionally, three new measures were used: acceptability of deceptive responsiveness for the self and partner and engagement in deceptive affection.

**Engagement in deceptive responsiveness.** The 8-item Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness Scale created in Study 1 was used to assess participants’ engagement in deceptive responsiveness. Participants indicated how true each statement was of them on a 5-point scale (1 = *not at all true of me*, 5 = *very true of me*). See Appendix L for final version of the measure.

**Acceptability of deceptive responsiveness.** Two measures were created to assess how acceptable individuals find it for themselves and for their partners to engage in deceptive responsiveness within their romantic relationship. These measures were created by re-wording the eight items used to measure engagement in deceptive responsiveness to assess acceptability of own engagement (e.g., “It is good if I sometimes try to hide my emotions when expressing them would hurt my partner”) and partner’s engagement (e.g., “It is good if my partner sometimes tries to hide their emotions when expressing them would hurt me”) in deceptive responsiveness. Participants indicated how true each statement was of them on a 5-point scale (1 = *not at all true of me*, 5 = *very true of me*). See Appendices M and N for complete measures.

**Deceptive affection.** Twelve items assessed how much individuals tend to engage in deceptive affection within their romantic relationship (Redlick, 2015). Example items are, “I express my true feelings of affection to my partner, whether good or bad” (reverse coded) and “I sometimes express affection that I am not feeling towards my partner.” Participants indicated how much they agreed with each statement on a 7-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). Higher scores indicated more engagement in deceptive affection within one’s romantic relationship. See Appendix O for complete measure. We expected there to be a positive
relationship between individuals’ use of deceptive affection in their romantic relationships and their engagement in deceptive responsiveness.

**Results**

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted using M-Plus (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2017) to determine if the single-factor structure of the eight-item Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness Scale established in Study 1 was generalizable within another, independent sample of participants. Overall, the different model fit indices provided mediocre fit of a single-factor structure. For instance, the comparative fit index (CFI) should be above .90, with values over .95 being ideal (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2016). For these data, the CFI was .89, suggesting moderate model fit. The standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) is ideally under .08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2016). For the current model the SRMR was .06, indicating good model fit. However, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is ideally under .05, with smaller values indicating better fit (Kline, 2016). For the current sample, RMSEA was .14 (CI$_{90\%}$ [.12, .16]), indicating poor fit. However, Kenny, Kaniskan, and McCoach (2015) argue that for models with few degrees of freedom, even when other fit statistics indicate good model fit, RMSEA can sometimes be large, especially when there is a small sample size (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Since the model fit was not ideal, a principle components analysis was conducted on the eight items to determine if a multi-factor solution was more appropriate. However, the analysis resulted in a single factor accounting for 53.13% of the variance among the items, with each item having a factor loading greater than .60, see Table 8. The eight items also had good reliability ($\alpha = .87$). Overall, there is support for a single-factor solution for the Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness Scale, however cautious interpretation is recommended due to the mediocre fit indices.
Confirmatory factor analyses were also conducted to determine if a single-factor solution was appropriate for the two acceptability of deceptive responsiveness measures. The different model fit indices indicated there was adequate fit of a single factor solution for acceptability of one’s own engagement in deceptive responsiveness (CFI = .90, SRMR = .05, RMSEA = .15, RMSEA CI90% [.13, .17]) and the items had good reliability (α = .90). Similarly, the different model fit indices indicated there was adequate fit of a single factor solution for acceptability of one’s partner’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness (CFI = .94, SRMR = .04, RMSEA = .12, RMSEA CI90% [.10, .14]) and the items had good reliability (α = .91). Overall, there was support for single factor solutions for both acceptability of one’s own and one’s partner’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness.
Table 8

Factor Loadings of the Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness Items in Study 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I sometimes tell my partner they’re right just so they feel validated</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. There are times when I exaggerate or stretch the truth in order to make my partner feel good</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I sometimes try to hide my emotions if expressing them would hurt my partner</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I aim to do anything possible to make my partner feel supported and cared for, even if I don’t totally mean it</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I sometimes hide my true thoughts and feelings from my partner so they will feel validated</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I try to offer my partner consistent support and encouragement even when I do not fully support what they are doing</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I sometimes pretend to fully agree with my partner so that they feel validated and understood</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. During a discussion, I withhold information or my emotions when it will make my partner feel cared for</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eigenvalue             4.25  
% of variance accounted for 53.13  
Cronbach's Alpha          .87  
M (SD)                     2.97 (0.91)  

Next, we sought to confirm the psychometric validity of engagement in deceptive responsiveness in the new sample. The descriptive statistics for each measure are presented in Table 9. The correlations to assess convergent and discriminant validity are presented in Table 10.
Replicating the results seen in Study 1, engagement in deceptive responsiveness was positively associated with individuals’ use of deception more generally in their relationships, lying in amorous relationships, engagement in deceptive affection, and perceptions that their partners will respond to unwanted information with symbolic and physical aggression, and deceptive responsiveness was negatively associated with honesty. Supporting deceptive responsiveness is unique from the other three measures of deception in relationships, deceptive responsiveness had a different pattern of results than the other measures of deception. Specifically, deceptive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Reliability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engagement DR</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept Own DR</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept Partner DR</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use Deception</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIARS</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deceptive Affection</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altruistic Motives</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egoistic Motives</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolic Aggression</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Aggression</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trait Honesty</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Propensity</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>7.30</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Alternatives</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment</td>
<td>5.92</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>7.69</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>5.52</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Stability</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>5.37</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. DR = deceptive responsiveness, LIARS = Lying in Amorous Relationships Scale.*
Responsiveness was not associated with perceptions of one’s own responsiveness, relationship satisfaction, or commitment, while the other three measures of deception were negatively associated with these measures.

Table 10

Correlations among Measures in Study 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Engagement DR</th>
<th>Accept Own DR</th>
<th>Accept Partner DR</th>
<th>Use Deception</th>
<th>LIARS</th>
<th>Deceptive Affection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engagement DR</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept Own DR</td>
<td>.74***</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept Partner DR</td>
<td>.55***</td>
<td>.67***</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use Deception</td>
<td>.40***</td>
<td>.33***</td>
<td>.26***</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIARS</td>
<td>.30***</td>
<td>.29***</td>
<td>.30***</td>
<td>.70***</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deceptive Affection</td>
<td>.41***</td>
<td>.38***</td>
<td>.39***</td>
<td>.60***</td>
<td>-53***</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness</td>
<td>-67</td>
<td>-01</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.32***</td>
<td>.34***</td>
<td>-.25***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altruistic Motives</td>
<td>.41***</td>
<td>.37***</td>
<td>.27***</td>
<td>.61***</td>
<td>.56***</td>
<td>.50***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egoistic Motives</td>
<td>.39***</td>
<td>.32***</td>
<td>.26***</td>
<td>.63***</td>
<td>.48***</td>
<td>.45***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolic Aggression</td>
<td>.24***</td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>.17**</td>
<td>.34***</td>
<td>.24***</td>
<td>.33***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Aggression</td>
<td>.23***</td>
<td>.24***</td>
<td>.27***</td>
<td>.22***</td>
<td>.17***</td>
<td>.29***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trait Honesty</td>
<td>-.29***</td>
<td>-.26***</td>
<td>-.25***</td>
<td>-.33***</td>
<td>-.25***</td>
<td>-.28***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Propensity</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.12*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.34***</td>
<td>-.23***</td>
<td>-.29***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Alternatives</td>
<td>.21***</td>
<td>.27***</td>
<td>.19***</td>
<td>.36***</td>
<td>.27***</td>
<td>.32***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment</td>
<td>.28***</td>
<td>.25***</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.28***</td>
<td>-.28***</td>
<td>-.32***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>-.13*</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>-.11*</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.11*</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.12*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>-.15**</td>
<td>-.21***</td>
<td>-.12*</td>
<td>-.35***</td>
<td>-.38***</td>
<td>-.29***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Stability</td>
<td>-.15**</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.12*</td>
<td>-.10+</td>
<td>-.15**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>-.19***</td>
<td>-.17**</td>
<td>-.16**</td>
<td>-.25***</td>
<td>-.21***</td>
<td>-.18**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. DR = deceptive responsiveness, LIARS = Lying in Amorous Relationships Scale. *p ≤ .10, **p ≤ .05, ***p ≤ .01, ****p ≤ .001.

Deceptive responsiveness and own responsiveness (H1). To confirm the psychometric validity of the Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness Scale, correlations were re-analyzed controlling for use of deception in one’s romantic relationship (see Table 11). When controlling
for the other deception scales, engagement in deceptive responsiveness was positively associated with perceptions of one’s own responsiveness, relationship satisfaction, investment, and commitment, replicating Study 1 and supporting H1.

Table 11

*Correlations Among Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness and the Other Measures,*
*Controlling for Use of Deception and Lying in Amorous Relationships Scale in Study 2*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Engagement DR</th>
<th>Accept Own DR</th>
<th>Accept Partner DR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Accept Partner DR</td>
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<td>.61***</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responsiveness</td>
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<td>.13*</td>
<td>.16**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>.18**</td>
<td>.05</td>
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<td>.13*</td>
<td>.09</td>
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<td>-.004</td>
<td>.04</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Aggression</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>.18**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trait Honesty</td>
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<td>-.14**</td>
<td>-.15**</td>
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<td>Satisfaction</td>
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<td>.20***</td>
<td>.19***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of Alternatives</td>
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<td>.14**</td>
<td>.07</td>
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<td>Investment</td>
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<td>.30***</td>
<td>.23***</td>
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<td>Commitment</td>
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<td>.07</td>
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<td>-.04</td>
<td>.03</td>
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<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>-.10+</td>
<td>-.09+</td>
<td>-.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. DR = deceptive responsiveness. *p ≤ .10, *p ≤ .05, **p ≤ .01, ***p ≤ .001.*

**Acceptance of deceptive responsiveness (H2).** As seen in Table 11, acceptance of one’s own engagement and acceptance of one’s partner engagement in deceptive responsiveness were positively associated with perceptions of one’s own responsiveness, relationship satisfaction, investment in one’s relationship, and one’s own engagement in deceptive responsiveness.
However, acceptance of one’s own engagement in deceptive responsiveness was positively associated with quality of alternatives, altruistic motives, and egoistic motives, while acceptance of one’s partner engagement in deceptive responsiveness was not associated with these measures. These results indicate that while the two acceptability measures are assessing similar constructs, they are distinct. A within-subjects $t$-test revealed that individuals found it more acceptable for themselves to engage in deceptive responsiveness than for their partners to engage in deceptive responsiveness, $t(337) = 9.80, p < .001$, Cohen’s $d = .43$, supporting H2. However, individuals rated acceptability of their own engagement in deceptive responsiveness only at the midpoint of the scale, indicating that while individuals find it more acceptable for themselves to engage in deceptive responsiveness than their partners, they also may only moderately endorse the behavior.

**Discussion**

Study 2 confirmed the factor structure and validity of three measures: engagement in deceptive responsiveness, acceptability of one’s own engagement in deceptive responsiveness, and acceptability of one’s partner’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness. Replicating the results of Study 1, engagement in deceptive responsiveness had positive associations with relationship outcomes, making it different from other forms of deception. While engagement in deceptive responsiveness seems to be fairly common behavior, people found it more acceptable for themselves than their partner to engage in the behavior. While deceptive responsiveness is unique from other forms of deception, perceptions of its acceptability are similar to that of other forms of deception (Hart et al., 2014), indicating there is the potential for negative outcomes if detection occurs. Together, these results indicate that engaging in deceptive responsiveness may be a beneficial behavior; however, if one believes their partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness it may have negative consequences.
CHAPTER 4 “STUDY 3”

The purpose of Study 3 was to document engagement in deceptive responsiveness in real-time, during actual conversations between romantic partners. Specifically, every participant nominated a personal weakness or limitation about themselves that they would like to change. Couple members took turns discussing their topics with their partner. Following the discussions, both individuals completed measures assessing their own engagement in deceptive responsiveness, perceptions of their partner’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness, and current perceptions of their relationship (e.g., satisfaction). This was the first study to investigate the use of deceptive responsiveness in real time, whether individuals can detect when their partners engage in deceptive responsiveness, and how deceptive responsiveness impacts both members of a couple.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Individuals will perceive themselves as responsive in situations where they use deceptive responsiveness.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): When there is an opportunity for individuals to engage in deceptive responsiveness, the more individuals engage in deceptive responsiveness, the more they will be perceived as responsive by their partners.

Figure 1. Visual Representation of H4.
**Hypothesis 5 (H5):** When there is an opportunity for individuals to engage in deceptive responsiveness, the more individuals engage in deceptive responsiveness, the higher their partner’s satisfaction will be.

**Research Question 1 (RQ1):** How does engagement in deceptive responsiveness affect one’s own relationship satisfaction?

**Figure 2.** Visual Representation of H5 and RQ1.

**Hypothesis 6 (H6):** If deceptive responsiveness is perceived to have been used by one’s partner, it will be associated with the person experiencing lower satisfaction.

**Research Question 2 (RQ2):** If deceptive responsiveness is perceived to have been used by one’s partner, how will it affect their partner’s relationship satisfaction?

**Figure 3.** Visual Representation of H6 and RQ2.
Research Question 3 (RQ3): How does perceiving deceptive responsiveness to have been used by one’s partner affect perceptions of their partner’s responsiveness (compared to when deceptive responsiveness is not perceived)?

Method

Participants and Procedure. Participants were recruited through Wayne State University’s Academica page. To be eligible, both members of monogamous, romantic couples who had been dating for at least one month needed to be willing to participate. Additionally, participants could not be cohabitating/living with their romantic partner, nor could they be in a long-distance relationship with their partner. All participants had to be 18 years old or older, able to read and understand English, and have daily access to a computer or smart-phone with internet/data.

Couples who were interested in participating in the study completed a brief screening survey online. Participants who met the eligibility requirements were contacted by a member of the Relationships and Individual Differences Lab to schedule a time for them to complete the in-lab session. Following the call, both members of the couple were e-mailed a link for the intake survey. The link directed participants to an online survey hosted on Qualtrics, where they read the study information sheet, entered their unique study-generated ID numbers, and then proceeded to the remainder of the survey. Both members of each couple completed the survey separately at least 24 hours before their scheduled in-lab appointment.

When couples came to the lab for their appointment, they were first given an additional consent form to sign due to the video recording taking place. Following, the two members of the couple were escorted to different rooms and asked to nominate a topic for discussion with their partner regarding a weakness or limitation about themselves that they would like to change. They
were each then asked to complete the pre-interaction measures about their topic and their partner’s topic. Once these were completed, both couple members were moved to the “conversation room,” where the participants were video recorded as they discussed each participant’s nominated topic. Participants were randomly assigned to who spoke about their topic first. The researcher then exited the room, and the couples discussed the first topic for approximately 7 minutes. After 7 minutes, the researcher returned to the room and asked the couple to switch to the other individual’s topic. The couple then discussed this topic for 7 minutes. Once this interaction task was completed, the participants were again escorted to separate rooms and asked to complete the post-interaction measures. Following completion by both participants, both participants returned to the “conversation room,” where they completed training for the two-week daily diary portion of the study, which began the day immediately following the in-lab task (see Study 4). Each participant was compensated $5 for the intake survey and $20 for the in-lab session (totaling $50 per couple) in Amazon.com gift cards.

The study began with 301 participants completing the initial survey. Participants who failed three or more attention checks were removed (n = 27). Additionally, since this was a couple’s survey, any entry that could not be paired with a partner (i.e., their partner did not complete the survey) was removed (n = 22). This left 252 participants (126 couples) who completed the intake survey (Phase 1). However, 10 couples never came into the lab for Phase 2 of the study, so only 232 participants (116 couples) completed Phase 2.

**Phase 1 participant demographics.** Phase 1 consisted of 252 participants (117 male, 133 female, 1 transgender, 1 non-binary). Participants ranged in age from 18 to 47 years old (M = 22.48, SD = 4.83). One-hundred and thirty-six participants identified as European American/White, 27 as South Asian, 27 as multiracial, 23 as African American/Black, 16 as
Middle Eastern, 10 as East Asian, 9 as Hispanic/Latino, 2 as Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 2 as Southeast Asian. The majority of participants identified as heterosexual \((n = 207)\), followed by bisexual \((n = 21)\), undecided/questioning \((n = 9)\), homosexual \((n = 9)\), queer \((n = 4)\), and pansexual \((n = 2)\). The majority of participants indicated they were seriously dating one person \((n = 231)\), followed by casually dating one person \((n = 11)\), engaged \((n = 8)\), and married \((n = 2)\). Their current relationships ranged in length from 1 month to 9.33 years \((M = 22.84 \text{ months}, SD = 23.53)\).

**Phase 2 participant demographics.** Phase 2 consisted of 232 participants (108 males, 122 females, 1 transgender, 1 non-binary). Participants ranged in age from 18 to 47 years old \((M = 22.50, SD = 4.95)\). One-hundred and thirty participants identified as European American/White, 27 as multiracial, 21 as South Asian, 19 as African American/Black, 12 as Middle Eastern, 10 as East Asian, 9 as Hispanic/Latino, 2 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 2 as Southeast Asian. The majority of participants identified as heterosexual \((n = 191)\), followed by bisexual \((n = 19)\), undecided/questioning \((n = 9)\), homosexual \((n = 7)\), queer \((n = 4)\), and pansexual \((n = 2)\). The majority of participants indicated they were seriously dating one person \((n = 213)\), followed by casually dating one person \((n = 9)\), engaged \((n = 8)\), and married \((n = 2)\). Their current relationships ranged in length from 1 month to 9.33 years \((M = 23.35 \text{ months}, SD = 24.25)\).

**Sensitivity analyses.** Currently, there is no agreed upon way to estimate required sample size for dyadic data analyses. Looking at some better-known couples’ studies, sample sizes range from 28 couples (Aron, Norman, Aron & McKenna, 2000) to 79 couples (Gable, Gonzaga, & Strachman, 2006) to 135 couples (Russell, Baker, McNulty, & Overall, 2018). Additionally, the average sample size across 25 studies using a reciprocal standard dyadic design was 101 dyads (202 individuals; Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006). There are also effect size calculators available
online to help estimate required sample size or sensitivity given a certain sample size (e.g., Ackerman & Kenny, 2016). Ackerman and Kenny’s (2016) online program APIMPowerR (https://robert-a-ackerman.shinyapps.io/APIMPowerRdis/) was used to estimate sensitivity given 126 and 116 couples. Sensitivity analyses were conducted assuming indistinguishable dyads. Each analysis outlined below was conducted setting alpha at .05, the correlation between actor and partner variables at .30, and the correlation of errors at .30 (the program’s default settings). Study 1 showed an effect size of $r = .12$ between individuals’ engagement in deceptive responsiveness and their satisfaction. If we conduct the sensitivity analysis expecting an actor effect size of $d = .24$, we had 47% power in Phase 1 and 44% power in Phase 2 to detect this effect. Since deceptive responsiveness is a new construct, we also looked at effect sizes for use of general deception within romantic relationships (Cole, 2001). Cole (2001) found actor effects between perceived deception and satisfaction ($\beta = -.195$) and commitment ($\beta = -.133$) and no significant partner effects. Anticipating actor effects of those magnitudes, our power to detect these effects would be 88% and 56% in Phase 1 and 85% and 53% in Phase 2, respectively. Overall, we did not have adequate power to detect small effects; however, we did have adequate power to detect moderate effects.

**Materials.** These measures were administered among a battery of questionnaires testing un-related hypotheses.

**Online intake survey.** Participants completed a series of measures at least 24-hours before coming into the lab.

**Engagement in deceptive responsiveness.** Participants’ engagement in deceptive responsiveness was assessed using the Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness Scale developed in Study 1 ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 1.38$, $\alpha = .88$).
Acceptability of deceptive responsiveness. We measured how acceptable individuals find it for themselves ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 1.36$, $\alpha = .90$) and for their partners ($M = 2.61$, $SD = 1.16$, $\alpha = .90$) to engage in deceptive responsiveness within their romantic relationship using the same measures used in Study 2.

Investment model. Participants completed items assessing four components of perceptions of their relationship: satisfaction ($M = 8.07$, $SD = 0.95$, $\alpha = .86$), quality of alternatives ($M = 3.77$, $SD = 1.69$, $\alpha = .79$), investment ($M = 6.40$, $SD = 1.46$, $\alpha = .75$), and commitment ($M = 8.39$, $SD = 0.87$, $\alpha = .85$; Rusbult et al., 1998). See Study 1 for full description of measure.

Own responsiveness. Participants indicated how responsive to their partner they think they are on average using the same measures by Maisel and Gable (2009; $M = 4.82$, $SD = 0.38$, $\alpha = .78$) and Lemay (2014; $M = 8.32$, $SD = 0.71$, $\alpha = .82$) that were used in Study 1 and Study 2. Again these items were standardized and aggregated to create an overall measure of responsiveness ($M = 0.00$, $SD = 0.69$, $\alpha = .86$).

Perceived partner responsiveness. Participants responded to nine items assessing on average, how responsive they perceive their partners to be. Three of the items were modified from Maisel and Gable’s (2009) daily responsiveness measure to assess general perceived partner responsiveness (e.g., “My partner makes me feel understood”). Participants rated how much their partner engages in each behavior when they tell them about a concern they have on a 5-point scale ($1 = not at all$, $5 = very much$; $M = 4.48$, $SD = 0.66$, $\alpha = .83$). Participants also completed six items modified from Lemay’s (2014) perceptions of one’s partners’ responsive behavior to assess general perceived partner responsiveness. Example items are “My partner is considerate and respectful to me” and “My partner listens attentively to my view of things.” Participants indicated how much each statement was reflective of their partner on a 9-point scale ($1 = not at all$, $9 =$...
extremely; $M = 8.21$, $SD = 0.97$, $\alpha = .90$). Similar to perceptions of one’s own responsiveness, participants’ scores on these two measures were highly correlated ($r = .80$, $p < .001$) so we decided to merge the scales. Participants’ scores on all 12 items were standardized and aggregated to create an overall measure of perceived partner responsiveness ($M = 0.00$, $SD = 0.81$, $\alpha = .93$).

See Appendix P.

**Use of deception.** Participants’ general use of deception within their romantic relationship was assessed using Cole’s (2001) measure ($M = 2.43$, $SD = 1.07$, $\alpha = .85$). See Study 1 for the full description of the measure.

**Deceptive affection.** Participants’ use of deceptive affection within their romantic relationship was assessed using Redlick’s (2015) measure ($M = 2.47$, $SD = 1.10$, $\alpha = .88$). See Study 2 for the full description of the measure.

**In-lab session.** Participants were asked, “What is one weakness or limitation you would like to change about yourself?” A pilot study asked participants for examples of when someone would engage in deceptive responsiveness and from assessing those responses, we believed this prompt would create a scenario in which individuals were likely to engage in deceptive responsiveness.

**Pre-interaction.** These measures were administered among other measures testing unrelated hypotheses. See Appendix Q for complete measures.

**Opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness.** When an individual agrees with a weakness that might be upsetting to their partner, it provides an opportunity for them to engage in deceptive responsiveness to offer support and not upset their partner. Taking this approach, two items were created to assess one’s opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness: “To what extent would you agree this is a weakness or limitation of your partner’s?” and “How upsetting is
this weakness or limitation to your partner?” Participants responded to each of these items on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all, 5 = very much). While these two items were not significantly correlated (r = .02, p = .735), conceptually together they represent an opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness. These items were summed, with higher values reflecting more opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness (M = 7.47, SD = 1.49).

Opportunity for one’s partner to engage in deceptive responsiveness. If a partner agreeing something is a limitation or a weakness is upsetting to an individual, it creates an opportunity for their partner to engage in deceptive responsiveness. To assess opportunity for one’s partner to engage in deceptive responsiveness, participants responded to the question, “How much will it hurt your feelings if your partner agrees this is a limitation or weakness of yours?” on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all, 5 = very much; M = 1.62, SD = 0.88). Higher scores reflected more opportunity for one’s partner to engage in deceptive responsiveness.

Interaction. Participants took turns discussing their weaknesses or limitations they nominated at the beginning of the session. When it was their turn to discuss their topic, individuals were instructed, “Earlier, you said one weakness or limitation you would like to change about yourself is ________. How about you begin your discussion once I leave the room, and perhaps start by explaining this topic in a little more detail to your partner, and then the two of you can continue discussing the topic in whatever way feels comfortable. Please take the next 7 minutes to discuss this together.”

Post-interaction measures. These measures were administered among a battery of questionnaires testing unrelated hypotheses. See Appendix R for complete measures.

Perceived partner responsiveness. Lemay’s (2014) perceived partner responsiveness measure was used to assess how responsive individuals perceived their partner to be during the
interaction. Participants responded to the items on a 9-point scale (1 = not at all, 9 = extremely; \( M = 8.11, SD = 1.03, \alpha = .88 \)).

*Own responsiveness.* Lemay’s (2014) responsiveness measure was used to assess participants’ perceptions of their own responsiveness during the conversation. Participants responded to the items on a 9-point scale (1 = not at all, 9 = extremely; \( M = 8.05, SD = 0.95, \alpha = .84 \)).

*Perceived opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness.* Our hypotheses expected the associations between engagement in deceptive responsiveness and relationship outcomes to vary based on perceptions of one’s own opportunity to engage in the behavior. While there were items to assess opportunity in the pre-interaction survey, they assessed opportunity objectively. Therefore, two items were created to assess one’s perceived opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness: “During this conversation, I thought this might be a case where withholding some thoughts or feelings (rather than being totally upfront about my opinions) would make my partner feel understood, validated, and cared for,” and “During this conversation, I thought this might be a case where saying some things I did not entirely mean (rather than being totally upfront about my opinions) would make my partner feel understood, validated, and cared for.” Participants responded either yes or no to these items (200 said there was no opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness, 25 said there was an opportunity to withhold thoughts or feelings or fabricate information, 7 said there was an opportunity to withhold thoughts or feelings and fabricate information).

*Engagement in deceptive responsiveness.* Two items were created to assess participants’ engagement in deceptive responsiveness during the conversation: “During our conversation, I withheld some of my thoughts or feelings with the goal of making my partner feel understood,
validated, and cared for,” and “During our conversation, I said some things I did not entirely mean with the goal of making my partner feel understood, validated, and cared for.” Participants responded to these items on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all true, 5 = very true). These items were then recoded (0 = not at all true, 4 = very true) and summed, with higher values indicating more engagement in deceptive responsiveness ($M = 0.51$, $SD = 1.15$, $\alpha = .64$).

Relationship satisfaction. Relationship satisfaction was assessed using Rusbult et al.’s (1998) investment model. Participants indicated how much they agreed with each statement on a 9-point scale (1 = do not agree at all, 9 = agree completely; $M = 8.17$, $SD = 1.03$, $\alpha = .90$).

Perceived opportunity for one’s partner to engage in deceptive responsiveness. Our hypotheses expected the associations between perceiving one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness and relationship outcomes to vary based on perceptions of one’s partner’s opportunity to engage in the behavior. While there was an item assess one’s partner’s opportunity in the pre-interaction survey, it assessed opportunity objectively. Therefore, two items were created to assess perceptions that one’s partner had the opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness: “During this conversation, I thought this might be a case where my partner withholding some thoughts or feelings (rather than being totally upfront about their opinions) would make me feel understood, validated, and cared for,” and “During this conversation, I thought this might be a case where my partner saying some things they did not entirely mean (rather than being totally upfront about their opinions) would make me feel understood, validated, and cared for.” Participants responded either yes or no to these items (201 said there was no opportunity for their partner to engage in deceptive responsiveness, 21 said there was an opportunity for their partner to withhold thoughts or feelings or fabricate information, 10 said there was an opportunity for their partner to withhold thoughts or feelings and fabricate information).
Perceived partner engagement in deceptive responsiveness. Two items were created to assess participants’ perceptions of their partner’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness during the conversation: “During our conversation, I think my partner withheld some of their thoughts or feelings with the goal of making me feel understood, validated, and cared for,” and “During our conversation, I think my partner said some things they did not entirely mean with the goal of making me feel understood, validated, and cared for.” Participants responded to these items on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all true, 5 = very true). These items were then recoded (0 = not at all true, 4 = very true) and summed, with higher values indicating higher beliefs that one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness (M = 0.89, SD = 1.49, α = .71).

Results

Because the data had a nested structure of participants nested within couples, multilevel modeling (MLM) was used. MLM allowed us to account for the lack of independence between couple members when conducting our analyses. A specific type of MLM, the actor-partner interdependence model (APIM; Kenny et al., 2006) was used when we were assessing how participants’ values on one variable (actor effect) and their partners’ values on that same variable (partner effect) were associated with outcome variables for the participant.

Intake Survey Analyses. Prior to testing the hypotheses for the in-lab interactions, MLM models with restricted maximum likelihood (REML) were constructed using the measures from the intake survey to assess how an individual’s general engagement in deceptive responsiveness was associated with their partner’s perceived partner responsiveness and relationship satisfaction. Additionally, MLM was used to test the association between engagement in deceptive responsiveness and perceptions of one’s own responsiveness. All analyses were conducted using SPSS 26 and all predictor variables were grand-mean centered.
**General engagement in deceptive responsiveness and perceived partner responsiveness.**

APIM was used to estimate the effects of a person’s own general engagement in deceptive responsiveness on their own perceived partner responsiveness (i.e., the actor effect) and partner’s perceived partner responsiveness (i.e., partner effect). Table 12 depicts the actor and partner effects of general engagement in deceptive responsiveness on perceived partner responsiveness. The actor effect was not statistically significant, but the partner effect was statistically significant. These results indicate that an individual’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness is not associated with their perceived partner responsiveness. However, there was a significant negative association between one’s partner’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness and the individual’s perceived partner responsiveness, indicating that the more a person generally engages in deceptive responsiveness, the less responsive they are perceived to be by their partner.

Table 12

*APIM Results for General Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness and Perceived Partner Responsiveness*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>Actor Engagement DR</td>
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<td>0.011</td>
<td>[-0.16, -0.02]</td>
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</table>

*Note. DR = deceptive responsiveness.*

To better understand the unique association between general engagement in deceptive responsiveness and perceived partner responsiveness, the above analyses were rerun controlling for general use of deception and deceptive affection within one’s romantic relationship. The results of these analyses can be seen in Table 13. When actor and partner general use of deception and deceptive affection are included in the model, one’s general engagement in deceptive responsiveness was not significantly associated with their own or their partner’s perceived partner responsiveness. Together these results indicate that one’s partner’s general engagement in
deceptive responsiveness may not always negatively impact perceived partner responsiveness; specifically, there was no association when general use of deception and deceptive affection within romantic relationships were also considered.

Table 13

**APIM Results for General Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness and Perceived Partner Responsiveness Controlling for General Use of Deception and Deceptive Affection**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>Actor Engagement DR</td>
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<td>.170</td>
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<td>.103</td>
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<td>Partner Use Deception</td>
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<td>.06</td>
<td>.294</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.002</td>
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<td>Partner Deceptive Affection</td>
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<td>.05</td>
<td>.250</td>
<td>[-.17, .04]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* DR = deceptive responsiveness.

**General engagement in deceptive responsiveness and relationship satisfaction.** An APIM model was used to estimate the effects of a person’s own general engagement in deceptive responsiveness on their own satisfaction (i.e., the actor effect) and their partner’s satisfaction (i.e., partner effect), see Table 14. These results indicate that general engagement in deceptive responsiveness is negatively associated with relationship satisfaction for both the person engaging in the behavior and for their partner.

Table 14

**APIM Results for General Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness and Satisfaction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Estimate</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actor Engagement DR</td>
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<td>.04</td>
<td>.020</td>
<td>[-.18, -.02]</td>
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<td>Partner Engagement DR</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>[-.20, -.04]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* DR = deceptive responsiveness.
To better understand the unique association between general engagement in deceptive responsiveness and relationship satisfaction, the above analysis was rerun controlling for general use of deception and deceptive affection within one’s romantic relationship, see Table 15. When accounting for other forms of deception in one’s relationship, engagement in deceptive responsiveness was no longer associated with the individual’s or their partner’s relationship satisfaction. These results indicate that when general use of deception is considered, engagement in deceptive responsiveness is not associated with individuals’ relationship satisfaction.

Table 15

APIM Results for General Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness and Satisfaction Controlling for General Use of Deception and Deceptive Affection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estimate</th>
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<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Engagement DR</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>.213</td>
<td>[-.13, .03]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor Use Deception</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[-.34, -.10]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Use Deception</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>[-.29, -.06]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor Deceptive Affection</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[-.34, -.11]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Deceptive Affection</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>.768</td>
<td>[-.13, .10]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* DR = deceptive responsiveness.

**General engagement in deceptive responsiveness and perceptions of one’s own responsiveness.** MLM was conducted to assess the relationship between general engagement in deceptive responsiveness and perceptions of one’s own responsiveness. There was no association with general engagement in deceptive responsiveness (\(b = -.01, \ SE = .03, \ p = .685, \ 95\% \ CI [-.07, .05])\). Similar to previous analyses, to better understand the unique association between general engagement in deceptive responsiveness and perceptions of one’s own responsiveness, the above analysis was rerun including one’s general use of deception and deceptive affection in their romantic relationship. The results of this analysis can be seen in Table 16. When all three forms
of deception were included in the model, engagement in deceptive responsiveness was significantly positively associated with perceptions of one’s own responsiveness, while engagement in general deception and deceptive affection were negatively associated with perceptions of one’s own responsiveness.

Table 16

Results for General Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness and Perceptions of One’s Own Responsiveness Controlling for General Use of Deception and Deceptive Affection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engagement DR</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>[.01, .13]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use Deception</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>[-.21, -.03]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deceptive Affection</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[-.29, -.12]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* DR = deceptive responsiveness.

In-lab analyses. MLM and APIM analyses with REML were conducted using SPSS 26 to test Study 3 hypotheses. Originally, it was planned to use the items in the post-interaction survey that directly asked participants if they felt there was an opportunity for themselves and for their partner to engage in deceptive responsiveness during the conversations for the analyses that included opportunity of engagement. However, looking at the frequencies of responses to these variables, very few people indicated there was an opportunity for themselves (n = 32) or for their partner (n = 31) to engage in deceptive responsiveness. If individuals were able to recognize opportunity, individuals should have indicated there was an opportunity to engage in the behavior at least every time they engaged in deceptive responsiveness. However, this was not the case; 32 individuals reported they had the opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness and 54 individuals reported engaging in it.

Assessing these items more closely, we realized individuals may not have been able to accurately determine if there was an opportunity for them or their partner to engage in deceptive
responsiveness following the conversation. Additionally, selecting yes to these items may have been influenced by how the conversation went. For example, individuals who felt they were not as responsive as they should have been may have been more likely to perceive they missed an opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness. Similarly, those who felt their partner was not as responsive as they would have liked may have been more likely to report their partner had an opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness. For these reasons, we chose to assess opportunity using the measures in the pre-interaction survey. When using the items from the pre-interaction survey to assess opportunity, 232 had an opportunity (i.e., did not select “not at all” to both items) and 96 indicated their partner had an opportunity.

Prior to testing the hypotheses, we tested the association between participants’ general engagement in deceptive responsiveness (assessed in the intake survey) and participants’ reported engagement in deceptive responsiveness during their partner’s disclosure. MLM analyses revealed a significant positive association, with higher general engagement in deceptive responsiveness predicting more self-reported engagement in deceptive responsiveness during the conversation with their partner ($b = .25, SE = .05, p < .001, 95\% CI [.15, .36])$.

**Engagement in deceptive responsiveness during interaction and perceptions of one’s own responsiveness (H3).** MLM was conducted to analyze the relationship between individuals’ engagement in deceptive responsiveness during the conversation and perceptions of their own responsiveness. Contrary to expectations, there was a significant negative association ($b = -.33, SE = .05, p < .001, 95\% CI [-.43, -.24])$, indicating that the more individuals engaged in deceptive responsiveness during the conversation, the less responsive they perceived themselves to be.

We next explored whether this association was moderated by the perception that one had the opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness, see Table 17. Individuals’ engagement in
deceptive responsiveness predicted lower perceptions of their own responsiveness and having the opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness was not associated with perceptions of one’s own responsiveness. There was no significant interaction between engagement in and the opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness.

Table 17

*Effect of Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness During Interaction on Perceptions of One’s Own Responsiveness Moderated by Opportunity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engagement DR</td>
<td>-.33</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[-.42, -.24]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity DR</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>.313</td>
<td>[-.04, .11]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement*Opportunity</td>
<td>-.001</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>.949</td>
<td>[-.05, .05]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* DR = deceptive responsiveness. Opportunity = the opportunity for the individual to engage in deceptive responsiveness during the conversation. The pattern of results held when including general use of deception and deceptive affection from the intake survey in the model.

**Engagement in deceptive responsiveness during interaction and one’s partner’s perceived partner responsiveness (H4).** APIM was conducted to understand the effect of one’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness during the conversation on their own and their partner’s perceived partner responsiveness when there is an opportunity for the actor to engage in deceptive responsiveness, see Table 18. There was a significant actor effect, such that the more an individual engaged in deceptive responsiveness the less responsive they perceived their partner to be. Contrary to the hypothesis, one’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness was not associated with their partner’s perceived partner responsiveness, regardless of if there was an opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness or not. That is, the more one engaged in deceptive responsiveness was not associated with how responsive their partner perceived them to be.
Table 18

**Effect of Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness During Interaction on Perceived Partner Responsiveness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actor Engaged DR</td>
<td>-.35</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[-.46, -.25]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Engaged DR</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>.261</td>
<td>[-.17, .05]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor Opportunity DR</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>.592</td>
<td>[-.06, .11]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor Engaged * Actor Opportunity</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>.369</td>
<td>[-.08, .03]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Engage * Actor Opportunity</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>.706</td>
<td>[-.06, .09]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* DR = deceptive responsiveness. Opportunity = opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness. The pattern of results held when including the actor’s general use of deception and deceptive affection from the intake survey in the model.

**Engagement in deceptive responsiveness during interaction and relationship satisfaction**

*(H5 and RQ1).* APIM was conducted to understand the impact of engagement in deceptive responsiveness on both actor and partner relationship satisfaction, taking into account the opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness. Results can be seen in Table 19. These analyses revealed that the association between one’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness and one’s relationship satisfaction was moderated by one’s opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness, see Figure 4 (RQ1). Simple slope analyses revealed when engagement in deceptive responsiveness is low (-1 SD), there was no difference in satisfaction based on opportunity \(b = .09, p = .102\). Conversely, at high engagement in deceptive responsiveness, the more opportunity for an individual to engage in deceptive responsiveness, the lower their satisfaction \(b = -.09, p = .058\). Contrary to our hypothesis, an individual’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness was not predictive of their partner’s relationship satisfaction. Together, these results indicate that while engagement in deceptive responsiveness may be detrimental to the actor’s satisfaction, it does not impact their partner’s satisfaction.
Table 19

Effect of Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness During the Interaction on Relationship Satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actor Engage DR</td>
<td>-.37</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[-.47, -.26]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Engage DR</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.326</td>
<td>[-.16, .05]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor Engaged * Actor Opportunity</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.855</td>
<td>[-.07, .09]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Engaged * Actor Opportunity</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>[-.13, -.03]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.134</td>
<td>[-.02, .13]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. DR = deceptive responsiveness. Opportunity = opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness. The pattern of results held when including the actor’s general use of deception and deceptive affection from the intake survey in the model.

Figure 4. Visual Representation of Interaction between Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness and the Actor’s Opportunity to Engage in Deceptive Responsiveness on Relationship Satisfaction

Perception of partner’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness during interaction and relationship satisfaction (H6 and RQ2). APIM was used to determine the effect of perceiving that one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness during the conversation had on the individual’s satisfaction and their partner’s satisfaction, see Table 20. Perceiving that one’s partner engaged in
deceptive responsiveness significantly predicted the individual experiencing lower satisfaction (actor effect, supporting H6) and was not associated with their partner’s satisfaction (partner effect, RQ2).

Table 20

Effect of Perceiving One’s Partner Engaged in Deceptive Responsiveness During the Interaction on Relationship Satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actor Detect DR</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[-.30, -.13]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Detect DR</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>.509</td>
<td>[-.11, .06]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Detect DR = perceiving one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness. The pattern of results held when including general use of deception and deceptive affection from the intake survey in the model.

An additional APIM was conducted to determine if the association between perceptions that one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness and satisfaction was moderated by their partner’s opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness. The previous analyses were rerun, including partner opportunity in the model, see Table 21. Similar to the previous analysis, when one’s partner’s opportunity was included in the model, perceiving one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness significantly predicted the individual experiencing lower satisfaction and was not associated with their partner’s satisfaction. These analyses also revealed the association between perceiving one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness and one’s own relationship satisfaction was moderated by the partner’s opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness, see Figure 5. Specifically, when perceptions of one’s partner’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness was low (-1 SD), the higher the partner’s opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness the lower the actor’s relationship satisfaction (b = -.20, p = .036). Conversely, when perceptions of one’s partner’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness was high (+1 SD), the higher the partner’s opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness the lower the actor’s
relationship satisfaction ($b = .23, p = .014$). These results indicate that even though high perceptions of one’s partner’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness was less detrimental to relationship satisfaction when there was high partner opportunity (compared to low partner opportunity); overall, perceptions of one’s partner’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness was associated with lower satisfaction.

Table 21

*Effect of Opportunity and Perceiving One’s Partner Engaged in Deceptive Responsiveness During the Interaction on Relationship Satisfaction*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actor Detect DR</td>
<td>-.23</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[-.32, -.15]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Detect DR</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.687</td>
<td>[-.10, .07]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Opportunity</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.851</td>
<td>[-.12, .15]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor Detect * Partner Opportu</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>[.06, .23]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Detect * Partner Opportu</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.704</td>
<td>[-.12, .08]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Detect DR = perceiving one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness. Opportunity = opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness. The pattern of results held when including general use of deception and deceptive affection from the intake survey in the model.
Figure 5. Visual Representation of Interaction between Perceiving One’s Partner Engaged in Deceptive Responsiveness and Partner’s Opportunity to Engage in Deceptive Responsiveness on Relationship Satisfaction.

Perception of partner’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness during interaction and perceived partner responsiveness (RQ3). MLM was used to assess the effect of perceiving one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness on perceived partner responsiveness. Perceiving one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness predicted lower perceptions of one’s partner’s responsiveness ($b = -0.16, SE = 0.04, p < .001, 95\% CI [-0.24, -0.07]$). We also tested if the relationship between perceiving one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness and perceived partner responsiveness was moderated by one’s partner’s opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness. The previous analysis was redone, including one’s partner’s opportunity in the model, see Table 22. Similar to the previous results, perceiving one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness predicted lower perceived partner responsiveness, regardless of the partner’s opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness.
Table 22

**Effect of Perceiving One’s Partner Engaged in Deceptive Responsiveness During the Interaction on Perceived Partner Responsiveness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detect DR</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>[-.24, -.06]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think Partner Opportunity</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.138</td>
<td>[-.26, .04]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detect*Partner Opportunity</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.328</td>
<td>[-.05, .14]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Detect DR = perceptions that one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness. The pattern of results held when including general use of deception and deceptive affection from the intake survey in the model.

**Discussion**

This was the first study to investigate engagement in deceptive responsiveness across both members of couples. The intake survey expanded previous research by examining the association between general engagement in deceptive responsiveness and relationship outcomes for both members of a couple. When one’s general use of deception and deceptive affection was controlled for, one’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness was not associated with their partner’s perceived partner responsiveness or relationship satisfaction. Lastly, similar to the results of Study 1 and Study 2, when controlling for general deception and deceptive affection, one’s own engagement in deceptive responsiveness was positively associated with perceptions of one’s own responsiveness but was not associated with one’s relationship satisfaction. These results indicated that one’s general engagement in deceptive responsiveness was not associated with their partner’s relationship outcomes. However, engaging in deceptive responsiveness had mixed associations for one’s self, suggesting in some ways it may be a beneficial behavior (e.g., perceptions of one’s own responsiveness), but in others it is not a beneficial nor a harmful behavior (e.g., satisfaction).
The purpose of the in-lab portion of Study 3 was to document engagement in deceptive responsiveness in real-time, during actual conversations between romantic partners. Contrary to our hypotheses, engagement in deceptive responsiveness was not positively associated with relationship outcomes. More engagement in deceptive responsiveness was associated with lower perceptions of one’s own responsiveness, one’s perceived partner responsiveness, and one’s relationship satisfaction. However, one’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness was not associated with their partner’s relationship outcomes (i.e., perceived partner responsiveness and relationship satisfaction). Overall, these results indicate engagement in deceptive responsiveness may not be a beneficial behavior for the deceiver, but that it is a neutral behavior for one’s partner. As hypothesized, perceiving deceptive responsiveness to have been used by one’s partner was negatively associated with one’s relationship satisfaction and perceived partner responsiveness; indicating that perceiving deceptive responsiveness was used by one’s partner is detrimental to one’s own relationship outcomes. Interestingly though, perceiving that one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness was not associated with the suspected deceiver’s relationship satisfaction. This indicates that perceiving the behavior does not negatively impact one’s partner.

We had intended to include perceptions of one’s own opportunity and perceptions of one’s partner’s opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness as moderators in the analyses for relationship satisfaction and perceived partner responsiveness. Unfortunately, upon investigating the responses in the survey, the items were not usable. We attempted to still assess opportunity using other items, and opportunity moderated the association between actor engagement in deceptive responsiveness and relationship satisfaction, as well as the association between perceptions that one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness and relationship
satisfaction. At this moment, conclusions regarding opportunity cannot be confidently drawn as the variables we used to assess opportunity did not speak to one’s perceptions of opportunity, rather they were a more objective measure of opportunity.

Thus far, results indicate that deceptive responsiveness was not a beneficial behavior for the deceiver during a specific interaction; however, it also was not consistently a detrimental behavior to engage, as indicated by the intake survey results. Conversely, engaging in deceptive responsiveness was neither beneficial nor harmful to one’s partner. While engagement in deceptive responsiveness has mixed associations with relationship outcomes, perceiving one’s partner has engaged in deceptive responsiveness was consistently associated with negative relationship outcomes for the perceiver. This suggests that while engagement in deceptive responsiveness may not always be harmful to a relationship, perceiving that one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness is.
CHAPTER 5 “STUDY 4”

Study 3 provided information about individuals’ use of deceptive responsiveness during an experimenter-created support paradigm; however, it did not address if and how people engage in deceptive responsiveness in their everyday lives. To better appreciate deceptive responsiveness and its impact on both members of a couple, we needed to understand if individuals engage in the behavior in their daily lives and the impact of that use on themselves and their partners. Studying engagement in deceptive responsiveness across days allowed us to understand how common of a behavior it is and allowed us to assess how within-person fluctuations (i.e., how a person engaging in more or less deceptive responsiveness than their average amount of engagement) affected the individual and their partner. For 14 days, participants completed daily diaries assessing their own engagement in deceptive responsiveness, perceptions of their partners’ engagement in deceptive responsiveness, and daily perceptions of their relationship. Study 4 addressed similar hypotheses as Study 3, except the hypotheses for Study 4 also considered within-person variation. Additionally, there are two new research questions.

**Research Question 4 (RQ4):** How common is engagement in deceptive responsiveness within daily life?

**Hypothesis 7 (H7; similar to H3):** On days when individuals engage in deceptive responsiveness, they will perceive themselves to be more responsive than they are on days where there is an opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness, but they do not engage in it.

**Hypothesis 8 (H8; similar to H4):** On days when there is an opportunity for individuals to engage in deceptive responsiveness, the more individuals engage in deceptive responsiveness, the more they will be perceived as responsive by their partners.
Figure 6. Visual Representation of H8.

**Hypothesis 9 (H9; similar to H5):** When there is an opportunity for individuals to engage in deceptive responsiveness, the more individuals engage in deceptive responsiveness, the higher their partner’s satisfaction will be.

**Research Question 5 (RQ5; similar to RQ1):** How do individuals’ relationship satisfaction compare on days they do and do not engage in deceptive responsiveness?

Figure 7. Visual Representation of H9 and RQ5.

**Hypothesis 10 (H10; similar to H6).** On days when an individual perceives deceptive responsiveness, they will experience lower satisfaction compared to days when they do not perceive their partner engaging in deceptive responsiveness.
Research Question 6 (RQ6; similar to RQ2): On days deceptive responsiveness is perceived to have been used by one’s partner, how does it affect their partner’s relationship satisfaction?

Figure 8. Visual Representation of H10 and RQ6.

Research Question 7 (RQ7; similar to RQ3): How does perceived partner responsiveness compare on days when individuals do and do not perceive deceptive responsiveness to have been used by their partner?

Method

Participants and Procedure. Following completion of the in-lab session (see Study 3), participants received orientation regarding the two-week daily diary phase (Phase 3), which began the day immediately following the in-lab task. For 14 days, participants received an e-mail with a link to that day’s survey. The link directed them to a survey hosted on Qualtrics, where they were asked to enter their unique participant ID number and complete that day’s survey. Participants needed to complete the survey within the window of 6 PM to 3 AM each day. Participants were compensated $2.50 per day that they completed the daily diary survey. Participants who completed all 14 of the daily diary surveys received an additional $10 compliance bonus. In total each participant could earn up to $45 (totaling $90 per couple). Compensation was given in the form of
Amazon.com gift cards. To be eligible for analyses in Phase 3, couples were required to have a minimum of four matching days. Fourteen couples did not meet this requirement, leaving 102 couples.

**Participant demographics.** Phase 3 consisted of 204 participants (94 males, 108 females, 1 non-binary, 1 transgender). Participants ranged in age from 18 to 47 years old ($M = 22.45, SD = 4.90$). One-hundred eighteen participants identified as European American/White, 24 as multiracial, 17 as South Asian, 15 as African American/Black, 11 as Middle Eastern, 10 as East Asian, 5 as Hispanic/Latino, 2 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 2 Southeast Asian. The majority of participants identified as heterosexual ($n = 167$), followed by bisexual ($n = 16$), undecided/questioning ($n = 8$), homosexual ($n = 7$), queer ($n = 4$), pansexual ($n = 2$). The majority of participants indicated they were seriously dating one person ($n = 189$), followed by casually dating one person ($n = 9$) and engaged ($n = 6$). Their current relationships ranged in length from 1 month to 9.33 years ($M = 22.98$ months, $SD = 24.43$).

**Sensitivity analysis.** Ackerman and Kenny’s (2016) online program APIMPowerR (https://robert-a-ackerman.shinyapps.io/APIMPowerRdis/) was used to estimate sensitivity given 102 couples. Sensitivity analyses were conducted using the same criteria as Study 3. Anticipating actor effects of those magnitudes, our power to detect those effects ranged from 40% to 82%. Similar to Study 3, we did not have adequate power to detect small effects; however, we did have adequate power to detect moderate effects.

**Materials.** In addition to the intake survey and in-lab session outlined in Study 3, participants completed measures each night, for 14 consecutive days. See Appendix S for complete daily diary measures.
**Opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness.** Each day, participants were asked to think of a specific conversation where their partner shared something about themselves. Participants were then asked whether or not they were in a situation where they could have engaged in deceptive responsiveness. Similar to the items used in Study 3, participants completed two items assessing their perceived opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness. Participants responded yes or no to each item (participants indicated there was no opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness in 2355 diaries, there was an opportunity to withhold thoughts or feelings or fabricate information in 105 diaries, and there was an opportunity to both withhold thoughts or feelings and fabricate information in 59 diaries).

**Engagement in deceptive responsiveness.** Regardless of the participants’ responses on the opportunity items, they were also asked two items assessing whether or not they engaged in deceptive responsiveness on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all true, 5 = very true; see Study 3 for a full description of items). These items were then recoded (0 = not at all true, 4 = very true) and summed, with higher values indicating more engagement in deceptive responsiveness ($M = 0.35$, $SD = 1.08$, $\alpha = .57$).

**Perception of partner’s opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness.** Each day, participants were asked to think of a specific conversation where they shared something about themselves with their partners. Participants were then asked whether or not they were in a situation where their partner could have engaged in deceptive responsiveness. Similar to the items used in Study 3, participants completed two items assessing perceptions of their partner’s opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness. Participants responded yes or no to each item (participants indicated there was no opportunity for their partner to engage in deceptive responsiveness in 2346 diaries, there was an opportunity for their partner to withhold thoughts or feelings or fabricate
information in 100 diaries, and there was an opportunity for their partner to both withhold thoughts or feelings and fabricate information in 71 diaries).

**Perception of partner’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness.** Regardless of the participants’ responses on the opportunity items, they were also asked two items assessing whether or not they perceived their partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness on a 5-point scale (1 = *not at all true*, 5 = *very true*; see Study 3 for a full description of items). These items were then recoded (0 = *not at all true*, 4 = *very true*) and summed, with higher values indicating more engagement in deceptive responsiveness (*M* = 0.39, *SD* = 1.14, *α* = .57).

**Responsiveness.** Perceptions of participants’ own responsiveness and perceived partner responsiveness were assessed using Maisel and Gable’s (2009) daily responsiveness items. Participants indicated how much they agreed with each item on a 5-point scale (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much*). These items were aggregated to assess participants perceptions of their own responsiveness (*M* = 4.18, *SD* = .90, *α* = .92) and perceptions of their partner’s responsiveness (*M* = 4.24, *SD* = .93, *α* = .93). See Study 3 for a full description of the measures.

**Daily perceptions of their relationship.** One item was adapted from Rusbult et al.’s (1998) investment model to assess individuals’ daily relationship satisfaction: “I felt satisfied with my relationship today”. Participants indicated how much they agreed with the statement on a 9-point scale (1 = *do not agree at all*, 9 = *agree completely*; *M* = 8.04, *SD* = 1.39).

**Results**

There were a possible 2,856 diaries, if each participant had completed every possible diary. Of the 2,595 diaries that were completed, 44 were completed outside of time and 25 were less than 50% complete. Removing these left 2,526 completed, usable diaries for analyses (an average of
12.38 days completed per person). Of these, there were 1148 days where both members of the couple completed the diaries (an average of 11.25 days per couple matching).

Similar to Study 3, each day participants were asked about their own and their partner’s opportunity to engage in deceptiveness. As found in Study 3, very few people endorsed these items (individuals indicated they had an opportunity in 164 diaries; individuals indicated their partner had an opportunity in 171 diaries), and more people indicated engaging in deceptive responsiveness (n = 320) than reported having an opportunity. Unfortunately, unlike Study 3, there were no items in the daily diary measures that could be used to replace the original opportunity items. For these reasons, opportunity was not included in any analyses in Study 4.

Because the data had a nested structure of days nested within participants, nested within couples, multilevel modeling (MLM) was used. MLM allowed us to test or hypotheses by modeling the lack of independence due to having couples’ data and due to having participants’ data across multiple days. A specific type of MLM, the stacked actor-partner interdependence model (stacked APIM; Kashy & Ackerman, 2017) was used to assess how participants’ values on one variable (actor-effect) and their partners’ values on that same variable (partner-effect) were associated with outcome variables on the same day for the participant. Stacked APIM treats time as a replication so we could get a more stable estimate of our research question: Does engagement in (or detection of) deceptive responsiveness on a particular day predict relationship outcomes on the same day? Additionally, the analyses allowed us to distinguish between within-person (person-mean-centered predictors) and between-person (grand-mean centered predictors) effects. That is, for each analysis we could see how engaging in more or less deceptive responsiveness than the average person (between-person effect) and how an individual engaging in more or less deceptive
responsiveness than their average (within-person effect) were associated with relationship outcomes.

**Frequency of engagement in deceptive responsiveness within daily life (RQ4).** A value of one or higher on the engagement in deceptive responsiveness measure indicated engagement that day, a value of zero indicated no engagement in deceptive responsiveness. Participants indicated they engaged in deceptive responsiveness in 320 diaries (i.e., 12.69% of the diaries indicated engagement in deceptive responsiveness during their interaction with their partner). For days individuals reported engaging in deceptive responsiveness, their average amount of engagement was 2.74 ($SD = 1.63$). These results indicate that while individuals do engage in deceptive responsiveness, it may not be a particularly frequent behavior.

**Engagement in deceptive responsiveness and perceptions of one’s own responsiveness (H7):** Due to measurement limitations, we were not able determine how opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness moderated the relationship between engagement in deceptive responsiveness and perceptions of one’s own responsiveness (i.e., we were not able to test H7). In lieu of testing H7, we used MLM to assess the association between engagement in deceptive responsiveness and perceptions of one’s own responsiveness. Both the between-person ($b = -.23, SE = .03, p < .001, 95\% CI [-.29, -.16]$) and within-person ($b = .20, SE = .04, p < .001, 95\% CI [.13, .27]$) effects were statistically significant. These results indicate that when a person engaged in deceptive responsiveness more than the average person, they perceived themselves to be less responsive. However, on days when a person engaged in deceptive responsiveness more than they typically engage in the behavior, they perceived themselves to be more responsive. This suggests that those who engage in deceptive responsiveness more frequently may, on the whole, have lower
perceptions of their own responsiveness; however, on the specific day they engage in the behavior, they perceive themselves to be more responsive than they usually are.

Engagement in deceptive responsiveness and perceived partner responsiveness (H8): Due to not being able to accurately assess opportunity, we were not able to fully test H8; however, we did assess the association between engagement in deceptive responsiveness and one’s partner’s perceived partner responsiveness. Since we were specifically interested in the partner effect, stacked APIM was used. Both between-person and within-person actor and partner effects were statistically significant, see Table 23. These results indicate that when a person engaged in deceptive responsiveness more than the average person, they perceived their partner to be less responsive; however, when a person engaged in deceptive responsiveness more than they typically engage in the behavior, they perceived their partner to be more responsive. Similarly, when a person engaged in deceptive responsiveness more than the average person, they were perceived as less responsive by their partner. However, when a person engaged in deceptive responsiveness more than they typically engage in the behavior, they were perceived as more responsive by their partner. This suggests that those who engage in deceptive responsiveness more frequently may, on the whole, perceive their partners to be less responsive and be perceived as less responsive by their partner; however, on the specific day they engage in more of the behavior, they perceive their partner to be more responsive and their partner perceives them as more responsive.
Table 23

**Effect of Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness on Perceived Partner Responsiveness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>b</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actor Engaged DR (between-person)</td>
<td>-0.90</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[-1.11, -0.68]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Engaged DR (between-person)</td>
<td>-0.53</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[-0.74, -0.32]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor Engaged DR (within-person)</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[0.51, 0.99]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Engaged DR (within-person)</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[0.28, 0.77]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* DR = deceptive responsiveness.

**Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness and Relationship Satisfaction (H9 and RQ5).** We were not able to assess H9 because we did not have a reliable way to assess opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness; however, we did still assess the association between one’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness and their partner’s satisfaction. A stacked API was used to assess the association between engagement in deceptive responsiveness on both the individual’s and their partner’s relationship satisfaction. The between-person and within-person effects for both the actor and the partner can be seen in Table 24. Individuals engaging in more deceptive responsiveness than average was associated with their partner reporting lower relationship satisfaction, and when an individual engaged in more deceptive responsiveness than their average, their partner reported greater satisfaction. Similarly, when an individual engaged in more deceptive responsiveness than average, they reported lower relationship satisfaction (RQ5); however, on days when they engaged in more deceptive responsiveness than their average, they reported greater relationship satisfaction. These results indicate there are potentially negative long-term consequences for those who engage in deceptive responsiveness regularly and for their partners; however, there are also potentially short-term positive outcomes for individuals and their partners on days they engage in more deceptive responsiveness.
Table 24

**Effect of Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness on Relationship Satisfaction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>b</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actor Engaged DR (between-person)</td>
<td>-.73</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[-.83, -.63]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Engaged DR (between-person)</td>
<td>-.33</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[-.43, -.23]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor Engaged DR (within-person)</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[.51, .74]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Engaged DR (within-person)</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[.20, .43]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* DR = deceptive responsiveness.

**Perceptions One’s Partner Engaged in Deceptive Responsiveness and Relationship Satisfaction (H10 and RQ6).** A stacked APIM was constructed to assess the effect of perceiving one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness on both the individual’s and their partner’s relationship satisfaction, see Table 25. As hypothesized (H10), the more individuals perceived their partners to engage in deceptive responsiveness the lower their relationship satisfaction. However, unexpectedly, when individuals perceived their partners to engage in deceptive responsiveness more than their average, they experienced greater relationship satisfaction. A similar pattern of results was seen for the partner effect (RQ6). The more individuals perceived their partners to engage in deceptive responsiveness the lower their partner’s relationship satisfaction, and individuals perceiving their partners to engage in deceptive responsiveness more than their average, was associated with their partners experiencing greater relationship satisfaction.
Table 25

*Effect of Perceiving One’s Partner Engaged in Deceptive Responsiveness on Relationship Satisfaction*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>b</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actor Detected DR (between-person)</td>
<td>-.76</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[-.86, -.67]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Detected DR (between-person)</td>
<td>-.32</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[-.42, -.22]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor Detected DR (within-person)</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[.57, .79]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Detected DR (within-person)</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>[.17, .39]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* DR = deceptive responsiveness.

**Perceptions One’s Partner Engaged in Deceptive Responsiveness and Perceived Partner Responsiveness (RQ7).** MLM was used to assess the association between perceptions one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness and perceived partner responsiveness. Both the between-person ($b = -.34, SE = .03, p < .001, 95\% CI [-.40, -.28]$) and within-person ($b = .29, SE = .04, p < .001, 95\% CI [.22, .37]$) effects were statistically significant. These results indicate that when an individual perceived their partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness more than average, they experienced lower perceived partner responsiveness; however, on specific days when individuals perceived their partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness more than their average, they experienced greater perceived partner responsiveness.

**Discussion**

Study 4 investigated engagement in deceptive responsiveness in everyday life. Results revealed that individuals do engage in deceptive responsiveness in their daily lives; however, not at an extremely frequent rate. The within-person results for engagement in deceptive responsiveness were contrary to the results in Study 3. Overall level, across days, those who engage more in deceptive responsiveness perceived themselves as less responsive, their partner’s as less responsive, and experienced lower relationship satisfaction. Similarly, their partners experienced
lower perceived partner responsiveness and lower relationship satisfaction. Replicating the results from Study 3, overall perceptions that one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness more than average, across days, was associated with them reporting lower relationship satisfaction and perceived partner responsiveness. Unlike the results of Study 3, individual’s overall perceptions of their partner’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness was also associated with their partner experiencing lower relationship satisfaction.

Since data were also nested overtime, we were able to assess within-person effects; however, we recommend cautious interpretation as the rate of engagement in deceptive responsiveness was low across days. Interestingly, individuals engaging in deceptive responsiveness more than their typical amount of engagement was associated with them perceiving themselves to be more responsive, their partner indicating more perceived partner responsiveness, and both the actor and their partner reporting greater relationship satisfaction. Similarly, when individuals perceived their partner engaging in deceptive responsiveness more than their typical amount, it was associated with them reporting higher relationship satisfaction and perceived partner responsiveness. These unanticipated associations could reveal that while individuals do not condone engaging in deceptive responsiveness, in the moment they may recognize it as their partner attempting to be responsive.

Overall, the results from Study 4 suggests there are both positives and negatives to engagement in deceptive responsiveness. As indicated by the between-person effects, frequent engagement may be harmful to individuals and their partners. However, as indicated by the within-person effects, on individual days when deceptive responsiveness is engaged in, it may be beneficial to the individuals and their partners.
CHAPTER 6 “GENERAL DISCUSSION”

The present research introduced the concept of deceptive responsiveness and investigated the effect of engaging in deceptive responsiveness on relationship outcomes. Responsiveness is integral to successful relationship functioning and is associated with intra- and inter-personal well-being (e.g., Feeney, 2004; Gable & Reis, 2006; Lemay & Neal, 2014; Reis, 2012, 2013, 2014). However, it can be challenging to a responsive partner, as it is a dyadic process influenced by both partners’ motives, needs, fears, and goals (e.g., Reis & Shaver, 1998). We proposed that deceptive responsiveness provides individuals an opportunity to be responsive partners, when genuine honesty may not. While research suggests that deception within romantic relationships is associated with negative relationship outcomes for both the deceiver and the receiver (Cole, 2001; Kaplar, 2006), research among strangers has begun to illustrate the potential benefits of prosocial deception (e.g., Cantarero & Szarota, 2017; Cantarero et al., 2018; Levine & Schweitzer, 2014, 2015). Through a series of four studies, we sought to extend the work on prosocial deception in relationships. Specifically, we tested if when an individual is trying to be a responsive partner but cannot do so honestly if deception is a beneficial behavior within the context of romantic relationships.

Interpretation of Findings

A measure of engagement in deceptive responsiveness was developed and demonstrated to be unique from other forms of deception in relationships. Replicating previous studies (e.g., Cole, 2001; Kaplar, 2006), use of general deception and prosocial deception were negatively associated with relationship outcomes (e.g., satisfaction); however, engagement in deceptive responsiveness was not associated with relationship outcomes. In fact, when general and prosocial deception within relationships were controlled for, engagement in deceptive responsiveness was positively
associated with feelings of one’s own responsiveness, investment, and satisfaction in Study 1 and Study 2.

Study 2 also confirmed the factor structure of measures assessing perceptions of acceptability of one’s own engagement and one’s partner’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness. Individuals found it more acceptable for themselves than their partners to engage in deceptive responsiveness, which replicates individuals’ perceptions of acceptability of engagement in prosocial deception (Hart et al., 2014). These results indicate that while engagement in deceptive responsiveness has different associations with relationship outcomes than other forms of deception, it is not entirely different from other forms of deception. Individuals in romantic relationships expect their partners to be honest (Roggensack & Sillar, 2004) and violations are associated with reduced relationship outcomes (e.g., Cole, 2001). Similarly, the present research found that perceiving one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness was associated with and individual experiencing lower perceived partner responsiveness and relationship satisfaction (Study 3 and Study 4). Conversely, the within-person effects in Study 4 indicated that on days when individuals perceived their partner engaged in more deceptive responsiveness than they usually do, was beneficial to both the individual and their partner. It could be that on these days, individuals recognize their partners are trying to be supportive partners and thus still perceive them to be responsive and therefore experience the outcomes associated with perceiving one’s partner is responsive (Reis, 2013).

In Study 3, participants completed an intake survey prior to participating in the in-lab portion of the study. Replicating the results of Studies 1 and 2, when controlling for the other uses of deception within one’s relationship, engagement in deceptive responsiveness was positively associated with perceptions of one’s own responsiveness. However, unlike the results in the
previous two studies which had positive associations, when controlling for other uses of deception within one’s relationship, engagement in deceptive responsiveness was not associated with one’s relationship satisfaction. This difference may be due to the individuals participating in the study with their partners reporting higher relationship satisfaction and commitment and lower quality of alternatives than the participants in Studies 1 and 2, which is commonly found among individuals who participate in studies with their romantic partners (Barton, Lavner, Stanley, Johnson, & Rhoades, 2019). Interestingly, individual’s overall engagement in deceptive responsiveness was also higher in Study 3 than it was in Study 1 or Study 2. It could be that deceptive responsiveness is most beneficial to couples who are not already extremely high in relationship outcomes. Engaging in deceptive responsiveness could be viewed as a negative maintenance behavior (Dainton & Gross, 2008), and individuals in lower quality relationships tend to engage in more negative relationship maintenance behaviors (Goodboy & Meyers, 2010). Unfortunately, causal explanations cannot be made given the current data.

In Study 3 we assessed engagement in deceptive responsiveness during a support paradigm. Contrary to our hypotheses, engagement in deceptive responsiveness was negatively associated with perceptions of one’s own responsiveness, perceptions of one’s partner’s responsiveness, and one’s relationship satisfaction. While unexpected, this fits with research on negative maintenance behaviors, where engaging in the majority of negative behaviors individuals use to maintain their relationships is negatively associated with one’s relationship satisfaction (Dainton & Gross, 2008). Interestingly, we did not see any association between one’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness and their partner’s perceived partner responsiveness or their partner’s relationship satisfaction. These results indicate that while engagement in deceptive responsiveness is not always a positive behavior for the deceiver, it may not be harmful to their partner if it goes
undetected. It could be that being completely honest in the interactions where deceptive responsiveness was used would actually be more detrimental to the deceiver’s relationship outcomes than engagement in deceptive responsiveness is. We attempted to test this idea through the inclusion of items designed to measure one’s perceived opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness. While we did find opportunity to be a significant moderator between engagement in deceptive responsiveness and relationship satisfaction and between perceptions one’s partner engaged in deceptive responsiveness and relationship satisfaction, overall engagement in and perception of deceptive responsiveness were still significantly negatively associated with the actor’s relationship satisfaction.

In Study 4 the between-person results indicated that regular engagement in deceptive responsiveness was harmful for the individual and their partner. Conversely, the within-person effects indicated that on days when individuals engaged in more deceptive responsiveness than they usually do, was beneficial to both the individual and their partner. However, these results warrant cautious interpretation as there was a low number of diaries that reported engagement in deceptiveness. While MLM and APIM are robust against unequal sample size, extremely discrepant sample size can result in large differences in variances amongst groups, which they are not robust against and could bias the results.

Overall, the findings that engaging in deceptive responsiveness was not harmful to one’s partner fits with Gottman’s Stress Reducing Conversation (Benson, 2016; Gottman & Silver, 1999). During Gottman’s Stress Reducing Conversation, individuals are instructed to take their partner’s side, regardless of whether they truly agree with their partner. Couples who engage in these types of conversations each day feel more support from their partners and have longer lasting
marriages. Similarly, engaging in deceptive responsiveness allows individuals to be responsive in situations they would not genuinely be able to, potentially benefiting their relationships.

**Strengths and Limitations**

The current studies had a number of strengths and contribute to the current literature. The psychometric validity of the developed Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness Scale was confirmed in two separate samples. Both Study 3 and Study 4 assessed both members of couples, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of engaging in deceptive responsiveness within one’s relationship. Additionally, Study 4 allowed for differentiating between between-person and within-person effects, resulting in a more nuanced understanding of deceptive responsiveness and relationship outcomes.

While the results were not all in line with expectations, the present work is still important. The studies support that individuals do engage in deceptive responsiveness, extending our understanding of behaviors individuals engage in when trying to be responsive partners. Additionally, the current research demonstrated that engagement in deceptive responsiveness is not always detrimental to one’s relationship. Specifically, Study 1 and Study 2 demonstrated positive associations between one’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness and their relationship outcomes. The intake survey in Study 3 indicated engagement in deceptive responsiveness was positively associated with perceptions of one’s own responsiveness and was not associated with one’s own or their partner’s relationship satisfaction or perceived partner responsiveness. Additionally, Study 3 indicated there was no association between one’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness during a support paradigm and their partner’s perceived partner responsiveness or relationship satisfaction. Finally, in Study 4, specific days individuals were high in engagement in deceptive responsiveness (compared to their typical amount of
engagement) were associated with positive outcomes for both the individual and their partner. This suggest that while more work still needs to be done to fully appreciate deceptive responsiveness and its associations with relationship outcomes, it has the potential to be a positive behavior within relationships.

The studies also had some limitations. Both the in-lab study (Study 3) and the daily diary (Study 4) asked participants if there was an opportunity for themselves or their partners to engage in deceptive responsiveness. However, it seems these items were challenging for individuals to answer. One of the main premises behind deceptive responsiveness is that individuals use it when they cannot be genuinely responsive. Following, for individuals to be able engage in deceptive responsiveness, there needs to be an opportunity present. However, in both the in-lab interaction and the daily diary, individuals reported engagement at a higher frequency than they did opportunity. In Study 3, we were able to use some items from the pre-interaction survey as a proxy for the opportunity items. This allowed us to still assess what role opportunity played; however, these analyses could not speak to perceived opportunity, which we believe plays an important role in the associations between engagement and detection of deceptive responsiveness and relationship outcomes. In Study 4, we did not have any items that could be used as a proxy for the opportunity items, so we were not able to assess the role of opportunity in daily interactions. It would be beneficial to find a more valid way to assess perceived opportunity to truly understand what role it plays with deceptive responsiveness.

In Study 4, each day participants were asked to focus on a specific conversation that occurred that day and then were asked questions about deceptive responsiveness specific to that conversation. While this is informative, it does not speak to how common of a behavior deceptive responsiveness is. Additionally, comparisons could not be made comparing days when
the behavior occurred versus did not, because someone may not have engaged in deceptive responsiveness during that conversation but still engaged in the behavior during that day. In order to gain a better understanding of daily engagement in deceptive responsiveness, a study should ask about general engagement each day.

**Future Directions**

The current work aimed to understand the association between deceptive responsiveness and relationship outcomes. While the current work extends our understanding of deceptive responsiveness, it does not allow causal claims. Currently, we do not know if engagement in deceptive responsiveness causes specific relationship outcomes, or if it is having certain levels of relationship outcomes that lead to engaging in deceptive responsiveness. To better understand causality, an experiment should be conducted. Additionally, randomly assigning some individuals to be completely honest in their interactions would allow us to understand how deceptive responsiveness compares to hurtful, honesty.

The findings on how engagement in deceptive responsiveness affects the deceiver were mixed across studies. To better understand when the behavior is or is not beneficial to the deceiver, motivations should be considered. People may engage in deceptive responsiveness for either approach or avoidance motivations, and these motivations should influence how beneficial the behavior is. Within relationships people can engage in a behavior because they are motivated to obtain some positive outcome (approach motivation) or because they are motivated to avoid some negative outcome (avoidance motivation; Gable & Reis, 2001; Impett, Gable, & Peplau, 2005). Engaging in sacrifice (i.e., doing something unwanted or giving up something wanted) within one’s romantic relationship for approach motivations is associated with greater positive affect, satisfaction with life, positive relationship quality, and less conflict (Impett et al., 2005).
Conversely, engaging in sacrifice for avoidance motivations is associated with greater negative affect, lower satisfaction with life, lower positive relationship quality, and more conflict. Other studies have assessed individuals’ general tendencies to have approach or avoidance motivations (i.e., tendency to pursue positive experiences and relational growth versus tendency to avoid conflict and rejection) within romantic relationships and have found that approach motivations are associated with increased daily feelings of satisfaction and closeness and, over time, greater feelings of commitment. On the other hand, avoidance motivations are not associated with daily relationship quality, but are associated with decreased relationship satisfaction over time (Impett et al., 2010). Following from previous research, individuals who engage in deceptive responsiveness for approach motivations (e.g., an individual telling their partner they agree with them because they want to show their partner support) may experience greater relationship satisfaction and commitment than those who engage in it for avoidance motivations (e.g., an individual telling their partner they agree with them to prevent their partner’s distress). Assessing the motivations for engagement in deceptive responsiveness would further enhance our understanding of the construct and how engaging in it impacts the deceiver.

**Conclusions**

The present work introduced the concept of deceptive responsiveness, which is intentionally withholding information or providing false statements with the intent to make someone feel validated, supported, and cared for. We developed a measure of deceptive responsiveness and demonstrated it was unique from other forms of deception and that individuals engage in the behavior with their partners in mind. While findings were mixed across studies, engagement in deceptive responsiveness was associated with some positive relationship outcomes across studies. However, any potential benefits seem to be lost if it is
perceived to have been used by one’s partner. Together, this novel construct highlights nuance in how responsiveness is enacted and suggests that deception with the goal of responsiveness has the potential to be a positive behavior within romantic relationships.
APPENDIX A

ENGAGEMENT IN DECEPTIVE RESPONSIVENESS ITEMS PRIOR TO FACTOR ANALYSIS

These items were created to tap into how frequently people engage in deceptive responsiveness within their romantic relationship. Participants rated each item on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all true of me, 5 = very true of me).

Using the following scale, please indicate how true each statement is for you.

1. I tend to prioritize making sure my partner feels cared for, understood, and validated, even if it means hiding some of my true thoughts and feelings.
2. I typically try to validate my partner’s feelings and viewpoints even when I think their issues are unimportant.
3. I sometimes tell my partner they’re right just so they feel validated.
4. There are times when I exaggerate or stretch the truth in order to make my partner feel good.
5. I sometimes try to hide my emotions if expressing them would hurt my partner.
6. I aim to do anything possible to make my partner feel supported and cared for, even if I don’t totally mean it.
7. I sometimes hide my true thoughts and feelings from my partner so they will feel validated.
8. I try to offer my partner consistent support and encouragement even when I do not fully support what they are doing.
9. I sometimes pretend to fully agree with my partner so that they feel validated and understood.
10. During a discussion, I withhold information or my emotions when it will make my partner feel cared for.
APPENDIX B

PERCEPTIONS OF OWN RESPONSIVENESS

Two different scales were used to assess participants’ perceptions of their own responsiveness. The first scale adapted Maisel and Gable’s (2009) daily responsiveness measure to assess their own average perceived responsiveness. Participants responded to these items on 5-point scale (1 = not at all, 5 = very much).

When my partner tells me about a concern he/she has

1. I try to understand my partner
2. I try to make my partner feel like I value their abilities and opinions
3. I try to make my partner feel cared for

The second scale adapted Lemay’s (2014) perceptions of own responsiveness measure to assess participants own average perceived responsiveness. Participants responded to these items on a 9-point scale (1 = not at all, 9 = extremely).

Using the scale below, please respond to the following items

1. I am considerate and respectful to my partner
2. I am warm and affectionate to my partner
3. I am concerned about my partner’s needs and feelings
4. I express positive views of my partner and my relationship
5. I ask about my partner’s point of view
6. I listen attentively to my partner’s view of thing
APPENDIX C

USE OF DECEPTION

This scale assess how much individuals lie to their romantic partner (Cole, 2001).

Participants indicated how much they agree with each statement on a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree).

Answer the following items keeping in mind there is no right or wrong answer.

1. I disclose everything to my partner, both good and bad (R)
2. I sometimes find myself lying to my partner about things I have done
3. I sometimes lie to my partner
4. I tell my partner the complete truth, even things he/she does not want to hear (R)
5. I try to hide certain things that I have done from my partner
6. Please estimate the number of times you lie to your partner during the course of a week.

7. There are certain issues that I try to conceal from my partner
8. There are certain things I try to mislead my partner about
9. When I don’t live up to my partner’s expectations, I always tell him/her what I’ve done (R)
APPENDIX D

LYING IN AMOROUS RELATIONSHIPS SCALE

This scale assessed participants’ use of prosocial deception within their romantic relationship (Kaplar, 2006). Participants indicated how much they agreed with each of the 12 statements on a 5-point scale (1 = completely disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = completely agree).

Please rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning the role of honesty within exclusive romantic relationships. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested solely in your opinions. Please remember that all of your responses are anonymous.

1. I believe that it is better to tell my romantic partner a little white lie rather than risk hurting him or her by telling the truth
2. My romantic partner can count on me to always tell him or her the truth no matter what (R)
3. There are some things that my romantic partner is better off not knowing
4. I believe that it is wrong to lie to my romantic partner, regardless of the circumstances (R)
5. Sometimes telling my romantic partner the truth can cause more harm than good
6. There are times when avoiding causing my partner unnecessary pain will—and should—have a higher value than being completely honest
7. Lying to my romantic partner, even about minor things, makes me feel uncomfortable (R)
8. I believe that lying to my romantic partner is the best thing to do if it means sparing him or her unnecessary pain
9. I believe that it is best to always be honest with my romantic partner, even if this means that his or her feelings will likely be hurt (R)
10. I see nothing wrong with lying to my partner as long it is in his or her best interest
11. I think it is naive and unrealistic to expect that I will always tell my romantic partner the complete truth
12. I believe that lying to my romantic partner, even about minor things, could hurt my relationship (R)
APPENDIX E

MOTIVATIONS FOR LYING

Participants’ motivations for using deception within their romantic relationships was assessed along two dimensions: altruistic motivations and egoistic motivations (Kaplar & Gordon, 2004). Participants indicated how much they agreed with each item on a 7-point scale (1 = completely disagree, 7 = completely agree).

Lying occurs both when purposefully leaving out relevant information and when telling someone something that is not true. Lying occurs frequently and it is normal to lie from time to time. We neither condone nor condemn lying but, rather, study it scientifically. Please read each statement and indicate your level of agreement.

**Altruistic motivations**
1. I lie to avoid upsetting my partner
2. I have my partner’s best interests in mind when I lie to them
3. I lie to my partner because I do not want to hurt their feelings
4. I lie to my partner to spare them unnecessary pain or suffering
5. I lie to my partner when I feel sorry for them

**Egoistic motivations**
5. I lie to my partner to protect myself
6. I lie to my partner to avoid negative consequences
7. I lie to my partner to deliberately hurt them
8. I lie to my partner because it is easier than explaining the truth
9. I lie to my partner because it is in my own best interest to lie
APPENDIX F

PERCEIVED PARTNER REACTION TO UNWANTED INFORMATION

This scale assess how individuals perceive their partners to typically react when they receive unwanted information on two subscales: symbolic aggression and physical aggression (Cloven & Roloff, 1993). Participants indicated how characteristic each behavior was of their partner on a 7-point scale (1 = extremely uncharacteristic, 7 = extremely characteristic).

Think about how your partner generally responds when receiving unwelcome information. When my partner receives unwelcome information, he/she sometimes…

**Symbolic Aggression**
1. insults or swears at me
2. sulks and/or refuses to talk about it
3. stomps out of the room, house, or yard
4. does or says something to spite me
5. threatens to break off the relationship
6. becomes cold or less affectionate
7. throws, smashes, hits, or kicks something

**Physical Aggression**
8. threatens to hit or to throw something at me
9. throws something at me
10. pushes, grabs, or shoves me
11. slaps me
12. kicks, bites, or hits me
13. hits or tries to hit me with something

**Not included**
Item 4 was excluded from analyses per the measure’s instructions.
4. cries
APPENDIX G

RISK PROPENSITY SCALE

Participants indicated how much they agreed with six items assessing risk taking on a 9-point scale (1 = totally disagree, 9 = totally agree; Meertens & Lion, 2008). The final item assessed how much participants viewed themselves as a risk avoider (1) as opposed to a risk seeker (9).

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement by selecting the option you prefer. Please do not think too long before answering; usually your first inclination is also the best one.

1. Safety first (R)
2. I do not take risks with my health (R)
3. I prefer to avoid risks (R)
4. I take risks regularly
5. I really dislike not knowing what is going to happen (R)
6. I usually view risks as a challenge
7. I view myself as…
APPENDIX H

TRAIT HONESTY

The honesty-humility subscale of the HEXACO-60 (Ashton & Lee, 2009) was used to assess how much individuals manipulate others, break rules, and are interested in material possessions. Participants indicated how much they agreed with each item on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral (neither agree nor disagree), 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree).

Below, you will find a series of statements about you. Please read each statement and decide how much you agree or disagree with that statement. Please answer every statement, even if you are not completely sure of your response.

1. I wouldn’t use flattery to get a raise or promotion at work, even if I thought it would succeed.
2. If I knew that I could never get caught, I would be willing to steal a million dollars (R)
3. Having a lot of money is not especially important to me
4. I think that I am entitled to more respect than the average person is (R)
5. If I want something from someone, I will laugh at that person’s worst jokes (R)
6. I would never accept a bribe, even if it were very large
7. I would get a lot of pleasure from owning expensive luxury goods (R)
8. I want people to know that I am an important person of high status (R)
9. I wouldn’t pretend to like someone just to get that person to do favors for me
10. I’d be tempted to use counterfeit money, if I were sure I could get away with it (R)
These items assessed four components of perceptions of one’s relationship: satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment, and commitment (Rusbult et al., 1998). Participants indicated how much they agreed with each statement on a 9-point scale (1 = do not agree at all, 3 = disagree, 5 = agree somewhat, 7 = agree, 9 = agree completely).

**APPENDIX I**

**INVESTMENT MODEL**

These items assessed four components of perceptions of one’s relationship: satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment, and commitment (Rusbult et al., 1998). Participants indicated how much they agreed with each statement on a 9-point scale (1 = do not agree at all, 3 = disagree, 5 = agree somewhat, 7 = agree, 9 = agree completely).

**Satisfaction**
1. I feel satisfied with our relationship
2. My relationship is much better than others’ relationships
3. My relationship is close to ideal
4. Our relationship makes me very happy
5. Our relationship does a good job of fulfilling my needs for intimacy, companionship, etc.

**Quality of Alternatives**
1. The people other than my partner with whom I might become involved are very appealing
2. My alternatives to our relationship are close to ideal (dating another, spending time with friends or on my own, etc.)
3. If I weren’t dating my partner, I would do fine-I would find another appealing person to date
4. My alternatives are attractive to me (dating another, spending time with friends or on my own, etc.)
5. My needs for intimacy, companionship, etc., could easily be fulfilled in an alternative relationship

**Investment**
1. I have put a great deal into our relationship that I would lose if the relationship were to end
2. Many aspects of my life have become linked to my partner (recreational activities, etc.), and I would lose all of this if we were to break up
3. I feel very involved in our relationship - like I have put a great deal into it
4. My relationships with friends and family members would be complicated if my partner and I were to break up (e.g., partner is friends with people I care about)
5. Compared to other people I know, I have invested a great deal in my relationship with my partner

**Commitment Level**
1. I want our relationship to last for a very long time
2. I am committed to maintaining my relationship with my partner
3. I would not feel very upset if our relationship were to end in the near future (R)
4. It is likely that I will date someone other than my partner within the next year (R)
5. I feel very attached to our relationship - very strongly linked to my partner
6. I want our relationship to last forever
7. I am oriented toward the long-term future of my relationship (for example, I imagine being with my partner several years from now)
APPENDIX J

TEN-ITEM PERSONALITY INVENTORY

Participants’ personality was assessed along 5 dimensions: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experiences (Gosling et al., 2003).

Participants indicated how much they agreed with each statement on a 7-point scale (1 = disagree strongly, 2 = disagree moderately, 3 = disagree a little, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 5 = agree a little, 6 = agree moderately, 7 = agree strongly).

Here are a number of personality traits that may or may not apply to you. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement. You should rate the extent to which the pair of traits applies to you, even if one characteristic applies more strongly than the other. I see myself as:

1. Extraverted, enthusiastic
2. Critical, quarrelsome (R)
3. Dependable, self-disciplined
4. Anxious, easily upset (R)
5. Open to new experiences, complex
6. Reserved, quiet (R)
7. Sympathetic, warm
8. Disorganized, careless (R)
9. Calm, emotionally stable
10. Conventional, uncreative (R)
APPENDIX K

DEMOGRAPHICS USED IN STUDY 1 AND 2

The questions were asked to get a general understanding of who the participants in the study were.

We would like to ask a few general background questions. This is important because we would like to be sure that the study includes a wide range of people from different backgrounds and with different types of experiences.

Age: _____

Sex:
☐ Male
☐ Female
☐ Other: ______________
☐ Prefer not to say

Current Relationship Status:
☐ Single
☐ Casually dating more than one person
☐ Casually dating one person
☐ Seriously dating more than person
☐ Seriously dating one person
☐ Engaged
☐ Cohabiting/Common-law married
☐ Married
☐ Separated or Divorced
☐ Widowed

Throughout your life, how many romantic relationships have you been in (including your current relationship)? _______

How long have you been in your current relationship? __________ (please give your answer in months)

Do you live with your current partner?
☐ Yes
☐ No
Are you in a long distance relationship with your partner?
□ Yes
□ No

How many children do you have? ______

Please indicate your sexual orientation by selecting one or more of the five categories listed below.
1 – Heterosexual
2 – Homosexual (Gay or Lesbian)
3 – Bisexual
4 – Undecided or Questioning
5 – Other

What is your race/ethnicity?
□ African American/Black
□ East Asian
□ European American/White
□ Hispanic/Latino
□ Middle Eastern
□ Multiracial (specify) ___________________
□ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
□ South Asian
□ None of the above (specify) ___________________

Is English your first language?
□ Yes
□ No

If NO, at what age did you first learn to speak English? ______
APPENDIX L

ENGAGEMENT IN DECEPTIVE RESPONSIVENESS

This is the final version of the measure created to assess people’s engagement in deceptive responsiveness within their romantic relationship. Participants will rate each item on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all true of me, 5 = very true of me).

Using the following scale, please indicate how true each statement is for you.

1. I sometimes tell my partner they’re right just so they feel validated
2. There are times when I exaggerate or stretch the truth in order to make my partner feel good
3. I sometimes try to hide my emotions if expressing them would hurt my partner
4. I aim to do anything possible to make my partner feel supported and cared for, even if I don’t totally mean it
5. I sometimes hide my true thoughts and feelings from my partner so they will feel validated
6. I try to offer my partner consistent support and encouragement even when I do not fully support what they are doing
7. I sometimes pretend to fully agree with my partner so that they feel validated and understood
8. During a discussion, I withhold information or my emotions when it will make my partner feel cared for
APPENDIX M

ACCEPTABILITY OF DECEPTIVE RESPONSIVENESS – OWN

This measure was created to assess how acceptable individuals think it for them to engage in deceptive responsiveness within their romantic relationship. Participants will rate each item on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all true of me, 5 = very true of me).

Using the following scale, please indicate how true each statement is for you.

1. It is okay if I tell my partner they’re right just so they feel validated
2. It is okay to exaggerate or stretch the truth in order to make my partner feel good
3. It is good if I sometimes try to hide my emotions when expressing them would hurt my partner
4. I should do anything possible to make my partner feel supported and cared for, even if I don’t totally mean it
5. It is best if I sometimes hide my true thoughts and feelings from my partner so they will feel validated
6. It is important that I try to offer my partner consistent support and encouragement even if I do not fully support what they are doing
7. I should sometimes pretend to fully agree with my partner so that they feel validated and understood
8. During a discussion, it is okay if I withhold information or my emotions if I am doing so to make my partner feel cared for
APPENDIX N

ACCEPTABILITY OF DECEPTIVE RESPONSIVENESS – PARTNER

This measure was created to assess how acceptable individuals think it for their partner to engage in deceptive responsiveness within their romantic relationship. Participants will rate each item on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all true of me, 5 = very true of me).

Using the following scale, please indicate how true each statement is for you.

1. It is okay if my partner tells me I am right just so I feel validated
2. It is okay for my partner to exaggerate or stretch the truth in order to make me feel good
3. It is good if my partner sometimes tries to hide their emotions when expressing them would hurt me
4. My partner should do anything possible to make me feel supported and cared for, even if they don’t totally mean it
5. It is best if my partner sometimes hides their true thoughts and feelings from me so that I will feel validated
6. It is important that my partner tries to offer me consistent support and encouragement even if they do not fully support what I am doing
7. My partner should sometimes pretend to fully agree with me so that I feel validated and understood
8. During a discussion, it is okay if my partner withholds information or their emotions if they are doing so to make me feel cared for
APPENDIX O

DECEPTIVE AFFECTION

Participants’ use of deceptive affection within their romantic relationship was assessed using a modified version of Cole’s (2001) frequency of deception measure (Redlick, 2015). After reading a brief introduction to deceptive affectionate messages, participants indicated how much they agreed with each item on a 7-point scale (1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree).

Below is a list of items describing how you communicate affection with your romantic relational partner.

Affectionate communication consists of verbal and nonverbal messages that communicate liking, fondness, and love. Examples of affectionate messages include, but are not limited to, the following: holding hands, kissing, hugging, putting your arm around your partner, saying “I like/love you,” telling your partner how important the relationship is to you, complimenting your partner, or sitting close to your partner.

A deceptive affectionate message occurs when you actively communicate affection to your partner that you are not genuinely feeling. This part of the survey will be asking you about communicating affection that you are not genuinely feeling.

Using the scale below, please rate how accurately each item describes your communication.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I express my true feelings of affection to my partner, whether good or bad.
2. I sometimes find myself deceiving my partner about my feelings of affection.
3. I sometimes express affection that I am not feeling towards my partner.
4. I tell my partner the complete truth about my feelings of affection, even if he/she does not want to hear it.
5. I try to hide it from my partner when I’m not feeling affectionate toward him/her.
6. I try to conceal it from my partner when I’m not feeling affectionate toward him/her.
7. There are times when I try to mislead my partner about my feelings of affection.
8. When I don’t feel as affectionate as my partner expects me to, I always tell him/her how I am really feeling.

9. Please estimate the number of times you express affection you are not feeling towards your partner during the course of a week. ____

10. Please estimate the number of times you lie to or conceal the truth from your partner during the course of a week. ____

11. Of the times that you express affection you are not feeling towards your partner over the course of the week, how many times do you express affection that you are not feeling to protect your partner or make your partner feel good? ____

12. Of the times that you express affection you are not feeling towards your partner over the course of the week, how many times do you express affection that you are not feeling to benefit yourself or to get something you want? ____
APPENDIX P

PERCEIVED PARTNER RESPONSIVENESS

Two different scales will be used to assess perceived partner responsiveness. The first scale will adapt Maisel and Gable’s (2009) daily responsiveness measure to assess average perceived partner responsiveness. Participants will respond to these items on 5-point scale (1 = not at all, 5 = very much)

When I tell my partner about a concern I have

1. My partner makes me feel understood
2. My partner makes me feel like he/she values my abilities and opinions
3. My partner makes me feel cared for

The second scale will adapt Lemay’s (2014) perceptions of partner responsiveness measure to assess participants average perceived partner responsiveness. Participants will respond to these items on a 9-point scale (1 = not at all, 9 = extremely).

Using the scale below, please respond to the following items

1. My partner is considerate and respectful to me
2. My partner is warm and affectionate to me
3. My partner is concerned about my needs and feelings
4. My partner expresses positive views of me and our relationship
5. My partner asks about my point of view
6. My partner listens attentively to my view of things
APPENDIX Q

STUDY 3 PRE-INTERACTION MEASURES

Thoughts on your topic: Pre-interaction

Participants’ perceptions of the limitation or weakness they nominated will be assessed before they discuss the topic with their partner. Participants will respond to the items on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all, 5 = very much).

You said [insert participant’s topic]
1. To what extent would you like to change this?
2. How capable are you of changing this weakness or limitation?
3. How upsetting is this to you?
4. How central or important is this to your life?
5. Have you talked about this with your partner before?

**If No**
1. To what extent would your partner agree this is a weakness or limitation of yours?
2. How important would your partner say it is that you improve this?

**If Yes**
1. Did your partner agree that it was a weakness or limitation?
2. Was it important to your partner that you improve this weakness or limitation?

Expectations for interaction

Participants will complete items assessing their expectations and ideal partner responses for when they discuss their limitation or weakness with their partner. When applicable, participants will respond to the items on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all, 5 = very much).

1. To what extent do you think talking with your partner about this weakness or limitation will be helpful?
2. How much do you want to talk with your partner about this weakness or limitation?
3. If your partner agrees this is a limitation or weakness of yours, do you want them to tell you?
4. How much will it hurt your feelings if your partner agrees this is a limitation or weakness of yours?
5. When you tell your partner about [insert participant’s topic], ideally how would your partner respond? (open-ended)
Thoughts on partner’s topic: Pre-interaction

Participants will respond to a series of questions assessing perceptions about their partner’s limitation or weakness before they discuss the topic in the lab. Unless otherwise noted, participants will respond to these items on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all, 5 = very much).

1. What are your initial thoughts hearing your partner say [insert topic] is a limitation or weakness they would like to change? (open-ended)
2. How surprised are you that your partner nominated this topic?
   a. Please explain your answer about whether or not you were surprised. (open-ended)
3. To what extent would you like your partner to change this weakness or limitation?
4. Does this weakness or limitation impact you?
   Please explain your response (open-ended)
5. To what extent would you agree this is a weakness or limitation of your partner’s?
6. How upsetting is this weakness or limitation to your partner?
7. How important is it to you that your partner improves this weakness or limitation?
8. How important is it to your partner that they improve this weakness or limitation?
9. Have you and your partner talked about this before? (Yes/ No)
10. Have you ever told your partner this is something they should work on? (Yes/ No)
11. Have you ever told someone other than your partner that this is something you would like to see your partner improve? - yes/ no
12. To what extent do you think your partner has the ability to change this weakness or limitation?
13. To what extent do you think your partner will change this weakness or limitation?
APPENDIX R

STUDY 3 POST-INTERACTION MEASURES

Thoughts on your topic: Post-interaction

Following the conversations, participants’ perceptions of the limitation or weakness they nominated will be assessed again. Participants will respond to the items on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all, 5 = very much).

1. To what extent would you like to change this weakness or limitation?
2. How capable are you of changing this weakness or limitation?
3. How strongly does this weakness or limitation impact you?
4. Do you think your partner agrees that this is a weakness or limitation?
5. Do you think it is important to your partner that you improve this weakness or limitation?
6. My partner responded how I expected them to respond
7. My partner responded how I was hoping they would respond
   a. Please explain your selection regarding how you were hoping your partner would respond. (open-ended)

Perceived Partner Responsiveness

Lemay’s (2014) partner’s responsiveness measure will be used to assess how responsive individuals perceive their partner to be during the interaction. Participants will respond to the items on a 9-point scale (1 = not at all, 9 = extremely).

1. How considerate and respectful was your partner
2. How warm and affectionate was your partner
3. How concerned about your needs and feelings was your partner
4. To what extent did your partner express positive views of you or your relationship
5. To what extent did your partner ask about your point of view
6. To what extent was your partner listening attentively to your view of things

Thoughts on Partner’s Topic: Post-interaction

Following the conversations, participants will respond to the same series of questions to re-assess their perceptions about their partner’s limitation or weakness. Unless otherwise noted, participants will respond to these items on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all, 5 = very much).

1. To what extent would you like your partner to change this weakness or limitation?
2. Does this weakness or limitation impact you?
3. To what extent would you agree this is a weakness or limitation of your partner’s?
4. How important is it to you that your partner improves this weakness or limitation?
5. How important is it to your partner that they improve this weakness or limitation?
6. How upsetting is this weakness or limitation to your partner?
7. To what extent do you think your partner has the ability to change this weakness or limitation?
8. To what extent do you think your partner will change this weakness or limitation?

Own Responsiveness

Lemay’s (2014) responsiveness measure will be used to assess participants’ perceptions of their own responsiveness during the conversation. Participants will respond to the items on a 9-point scale (1 = not at all, 9 = extremely).

1. How considerate and respectful were you
2. How warm and affectionate were you
3. How concerned about your partner’s needs and feelings were you
4. To what extent did you express positive views of your partner or your relationship
5. To what extent did you ask about your partner’s point of view
6. To what extent were you listening attentively to your partner’s view of things

Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness

These items were created to assess if participants had the opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness and if they engaged in honest and/or deceptive responsiveness during the conversation. Unless otherwise indicated, participants will indicate their agreement with each item on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all true, 5 = very true).

1. During this conversation, I thought this might be a case where withholding some thoughts or feelings (rather than being totally upfront about my opinions) would make my partner feel understood, validated, and cared for (Yes/ No)
2. During this conversation, I thought this might be a case where saying some things I did not entirely mean (rather than being totally upfront about my opinions) would make my partner feel understood, validated, and cared for (Yes/ No)
3. During our conversation, I withheld some of my thoughts or feelings with the goal of making my partner feel understood, validated, and cared for
   1. Specifically, what did you withhold with the goal of making your partner feel understood, validated, and cared for? (open-ended - only get if do not select 1 for previous question)
4. During our conversation, I said some things I did not entirely mean with the goal of making my partner feel understood, validated, and cared for
1. Specifically, what did you say that you did not entirely mean with the goal of making your partner feel understood, validated, and cared for? (open-ended - only get if do not select 1 for previous question)

5. During our conversation, I expressed only my true thoughts and feelings to my partner with the goal of making my partner feel understood, validated, and cared for

**Investment Model**

These items assess four components of perceptions of their relationships: satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment, and commitment (Rusbult et al., 1998). Participants will indicate how much they agree with each statement on a 9-point scale (1 = do not agree at all, 3 = disagree, 5 = agree somewhat, 7 = agree, 9 = agree completely).

**Satisfaction**
1. I feel satisfied with our relationship
2. My relationship is much better than others’ relationships
3. My relationship is close to ideal
4. Our relationship makes me very happy
5. Our relationship does a good job of fulfilling my needs for intimacy, companionship, etc.

**Quality of Alternatives**
1. The people other than my partner with whom I might become involved are very appealing
2. My alternatives to our relationship are close to ideal (dating another, spending time with friends or on my own, etc.)
3. If I weren’t dating my partner, I would do fine-I would find another appealing person to date
4. My alternatives are attractive to me (dating another, spending time with friends or on my own, etc.)
5. My needs for intimacy, companionship, etc., could easily be fulfilled in an alternative relationship

**Investment**
1. I have put a great deal into our relationship that I would lose if the relationship were to end
2. Many aspects of my life have become linked to my partner (recreational activities, etc.), and I would lose all of this if we were to break up
3. I feel very involved in our relationship - like I have put a great deal into it
4. My relationships with friends and family members would be complicated if my partner and I were to break up (e.g., partner is friends with people I care about)
5. Compared to other people I know, I have invested a great deal in my relationship with my partner
Commitment Level

1. I want our relationship to last for a very long time
2. I am committed to maintaining my relationship with my partner
3. I would not feel very upset if our relationship were to end in the near future (R)
4. It is likely that I will date someone other than my partner within the next year (R)
5. I feel very attached to our relationship - very strongly linked to my partner
6. I want our relationship to last forever
7. I am oriented toward the long-term future of my relationship (for example, I imagine being with my partner several years from now)

Detection of Deceptive Responsiveness

These items were created to assess if participants perceived their partners had the opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness and if they perceived their partner to engaged in honest and/or deceptive responsiveness during the conversation. Unless otherwise indicated, participants will indicate their agreement with each item on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all true, 5 = very true).

1. During this conversation, I thought this might be a case where my partner withholding some thoughts or feelings (rather than being totally upfront about their opinions) would make me feel understood, validated, and cared for (Yes/ No)
2. During this conversation, I thought this might be a case where my partner saying some things they did not entirely mean (rather than being totally upfront about their opinions) would make me feel understood, validated, and cared for (Yes/ No)
3. During our conversation, I think my partner withheld some of their thoughts or feelings with the goal of making me feel understood, validated, and cared for
   1. Specifically, what do you think your partner withheld from you during the conversation with the goal of making you feel understood, validated, and cared for? (open-ended – only get if do not select 1 for previous question)
4. During our conversation, I think my partner said some things they did not entirely mean with the goal of making me feel understood, validated, and cared for
   1. Specifically, what do you think your partner said during the conversation that they did not entirely mean with the goal of making you feel understood, validated, and cared for? (open-ended - only get if do not select 1 for previous question)
5. During our conversation, I think my partner only expressed their true thoughts and feelings to me with the goal of making me feel understood, validated, and cared for
APPENDIX S

STUDY 4 DAILY DIARY MEASURES

Prompt for a Specific Interaction – Partner Disclosure

This prompt will be given before the engagement in deceptive responsiveness engagement measures. The purpose of adding this prompt is to get participants thinking about a single interaction that occurred with their partner today.

Think of something your partner shared about themselves with you today. This can be something large or small. Please think about the conversation you had with your partner.

1. Briefly explain what your partner shared with you today. (open-ended)
2. What were you personally doing right before your partner shared this information? (open-ended)

Engagement in Deceptive Responsiveness

These items were created to assess if participants had the opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness and if they engaged in honest and/or deceptive responsiveness each day. Unless otherwise indicated, participants will indicate their agreement with each item on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all true, 5 = very true).

1. During this interaction, I thought this might be a case where withholding some thoughts or feelings (rather than being totally upfront about my opinions) would make my partner feel understood, validated, and cared for (Yes/No)
2. During this interaction, I thought this might be a case where saying some things I did not entirely mean (rather than being totally upfront about my opinions) would make my partner feel understood, validated, and cared for (Yes/No)
3. During this interaction, I withheld some of my thoughts or feelings with the goal of making my partner feel understood, validated, and cared for
   1. Specifically, what did you withhold with the goal of making your partner feel understood, validated, and cared for? (open-ended - only get if do not select 1 for previous question)
4. During this interaction, I said some things I did not entirely mean with the goal of making my partner feel understood, validated, and cared for
   1. Specifically, what did you say that you did not entirely mean with the goal of making your partner feel understood, validated, and cared for? (open-ended - only get if do not select 1 for previous question)
5. During this interaction, I think I could have made my partner feel even more understood, validated, and cared for by withholding some of my true thoughts or feelings than being totally upfront about my opinions (Yes/ No)

**Prompt for a Specific Interaction – Participant Disclosure**

This prompt will be given before the detection of deceptive responsiveness measures.

The purpose of adding this prompt is to get participants thinking about a single interaction that occurred with their partner today.

Think of something you shared about yourself with your partner today. This can be something large or small. Please think about the conversation you had with your partner.

1. Briefly explain what you shared with your partner today. (open-ended)
2. What was your partner doing right before you shared this information? (open-ended)

**Detection of Deceptive Responsiveness**

These items were created to assess if participants perceived their partners had the opportunity to engage in deceptive responsiveness and if they perceived their partner to engaged in honest and/or deceptive responsiveness each day. Unless otherwise indicated, participant will indicate their agreement with each item on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all true, 5 = very true).

1. During this interaction, I thought this might be a case where my partner withholding some thoughts or feelings (rather than being totally upfront about their opinions) would make me feel understood, validated, and cared for (Yes/ No)
2. During this interaction, I thought this might be a case where my partner saying some things they did not entirely mean (rather than being totally upfront about their opinions) would make me feel understood, validated, and cared for (Yes/ No)
3. During this interaction, I think my partner withheld some of their thoughts or feelings with the goal of making me feel understood, validated, and cared for
   1. Specifically, what do you think your partner withheld from you during the conversation with the goal of making you feel understood, validated, and cared for? (open-ended – only get if do not select 1 for previous question)
4. During this interaction, I think my partner said some things they did not entirely mean with the goal of making me feel understood, validated, and cared for
   1. Specifically, what do you think your partner said during the conversation that they did not entirely mean with the goal of making you feel understood, validated, and cared for? (open-ended - only get if do not select 1 for previous question)
5. During this interaction, I think my partner only expressed their true thoughts and feelings to me with the goal of making me feel understood, validated, and cared for
Own Responsiveness

Participants’ perceptions of their responsiveness will be assessed each day on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all, 5 = very much; Maisel & Gable, 2009).

1. Today, I think I made my partner feel understood
2. Today, I think I made my partner feel like I valued their abilities and opinions
3. Today, I think I made my partner feel cared for

Perceived Partner Responsiveness

Participants’ perceptions of their partners’ responsiveness will be assessed each day on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all, 5 = very much; Maisel & Gable, 2009).

1. Today, my partner made me feel understood
2. Today, my partner made me feel like he/she valued my abilities and opinions
3. Today, my partner made me feel cared for

Daily Perceptions of Their Relationship - Own

These three items were adapted from Rusbult et al.’s (1998) investment model to assess individuals’ daily perceptions of their relationship. Participants will indicate how much they agree with each statement on a 9-point scale (1 = do not agree at all, 3 = disagree, 5 = agree somewhat, 7 = agree, 9 = agree completely).

1. I felt satisfied with my relationship today
2. At this moment, I think that if I weren’t with my dating partner, I would do fine- I’d find another appealing person to date
3. Today, I am feeling very committed to maintaining my relationship with my partner

Daily Perceptions of Their Relationship – Partner

These three items were adapted from Rusbult et al.’s (1998) investment model to assess individuals’ perceptions of their partners’ daily perceptions of the relationship. Participants will indicate how much they agreed with each statement on a 9-point scale (1 = do not agree at all, 3 = disagree, 5 = agree somewhat, 7 = agree, 9 = agree completely).
1. I think my partner felt satisfied with our relationship today
2. At this moment, I think that if my partner wasn’t in a relationship with me, s/he would do fine- S/he would find another appealing person to date
3. Today, I think my partner felt very committed to maintaining our relationship
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ABSTRACT

WHEN FAKE IS GOOD: THE BENEFITS OF DECEPTIVE RESPONSIVENESS IN RELATIONSHIPS

by

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Responsiveness is integral for successful relationship functioning (Reis & Shaver, 1988); however, it can be quite challenging to be a responsive partner (Reis & Patrick, 1996). Additionally, there may be an assumption that individuals need to be honest in their communication for their responses to be perceived as responsive. The goal of the present research was to determine if deceptive responses could be perceived as responsive and have beneficial consequences. The present research introduced the construct of deceptive responsiveness, which we defined as intentionally withholding information or providing false statements with the intent to make someone feel validated, supported, and cared for. Study 1 and Study 2 developed and validated a measure of deceptive responsiveness, demonstrating it was unique from other forms of deception. Using this new measure, we sought to understand if engagement in deceptive responsiveness was associated with positive intra- and inter-personal outcomes (e.g., satisfaction) during an in-lab task (Study 3) and in everyday relationship experiences (Study 4). These studies increased our understanding of deception and its impact on relationships, as well as our understanding of responsiveness and the behaviors people engage in when trying to be responsive partners.
AUTBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Isabel Cantarella graduated magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a minor in Mathematics from the University of Wisconsin - Whitewater in 2008 and received her Master of Arts in Psychology from University of Colorado Colorado Springs in 2015. She is currently a social-personality doctoral student at Wayne State University, working with Dr. Stephanie Spielmann. Her research focuses on the seemingly negative interpersonal behaviors (e.g., use of deception) individuals use to help maintain their romantic relationships. Specifically, she investigates the contexts in which these “negative behaviors” are associated with positive inter- and intra-personal outcomes.