

# From Motives to Mechanisms

## A Motivated Model of Empathic Accuracy within Romantic Relationships

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### INTRODUCTION

**Empathic accuracy (= E.A.)** → "The extent to which partners can accurately infer one another's unspoken thoughts and feelings as they spontaneously occur during the course of natural interactions" (Ickes, 1993, p. 588)

- Contributes positively to the overall **quality of romantic relationships** (Sened et al., 2017; Hinneken et al., 2018)

- May be better understood as a **motivational process** rather than a stable ability (Hodges et al., 2015)

**Motives** - the goals or reasons driving individuals to be empathically (in)accurate - may shape how partners infer each other's thoughts / feelings (Ickes, 2011)

**Aims** → **Conceptualize E.A. within romantic relationships as a motivational process**

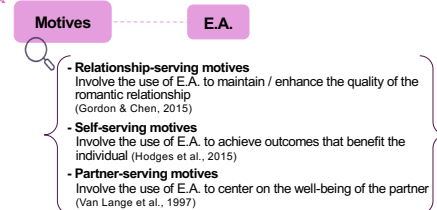
- Identify the motives that drive individuals to be empathically (in)accurate in romantic relationships**

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

E.A. considered as a process **mediated by regulatory strategies**

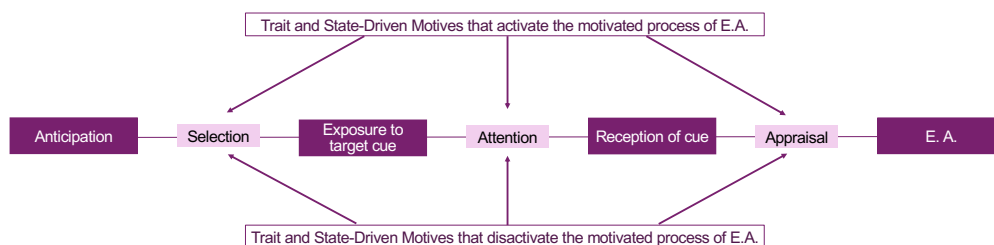
- Selection** → Do I want to engage in this interaction?
- Attention** → What aspects of my partner do I focus on?
- Appraisal** → How do I make sense of what I perceive?

**State-driven / trait-driven motives** (dis)activate the motivated process of E.A.



### A MOTIVATED MODEL OF EMPATHIC ACCURACY

This poster introduces a theoretical model that adapts Zaki's (2014) motivated model of empathy to empathic accuracy in romantic relationships



### SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

Identify motives (dis)activating the process of E.A. put forward in the scientific literature

#### Eligibility Criteria

Measurement of EA in **adults** within the context of a **romantic relationship** and involve the inference of thoughts and/or feelings

#### Primary studies

- Research that **directly** explores what motivates romantic partners to be empathically (in)accurate
- Studies that assess motives **explicitly** in relation to E.A.

#### Secondary studies

- Research that investigates the link between identified variables and E.A., where motivation is **strongly implied**

#### Reporting

Following PRISMA guidelines, a flowchart will be provided to detail the number of studies included/excluded, along with reasons for exclusion

#### Data Analysis

Descriptive analysis of study characteristics  
Extract + Classify motives

### EMPERICAL PERSPECTIVE

- Measure the **trait-driven and state-driven motives** of romantic partners that (dis)activate the motivated process of empathic accuracy (put forward in the systematic review) via questionnaires
- Romantic partners will engage in an interaction in a **controlled context**
- Partners will participate individually in the dyadic interaction paradigm to gather E.A. scores (Ickes et al., 1993)
- Regulatory strategies of E.A. will be assessed post-interaction

### Acknowledgements

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