

Retreating or Repairing? Examining the Alternate Linkages between Daily Partner-Instigated Incivility at Home and Helping at Work

Mahira L. Ganster
Eller College of Management
University of Arizona
mganster@arizona.edu

Allison S. Gabriel
Eller College of Management
University of Arizona
asgabriel@arizona.edu

Christopher C. Rosen
Sam M. Walton College of Business
University of Arkansas
crosen@walton.uark.edu

Lauren S. Simon
Sam M. Walton College of Business
University of Arkansas
lsimon@walton.uark.edu

Marcus M. Butts
Cox School of Business
Southern Methodist University
mbutts@smu.edu

Wendy R. Boswell, Ph.D.
Mays Business School
Texas A&M University
wboswell@mays.tamu.edu

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Abstract

Although research has recognized the straining effects of incivility at work, it is less clear how incivility experiences at home affect employees' daily states and behaviors at work. We argue that partner-instigated incivility—ambiguous aggressions from an employee's partner prior to work may affect helping behavior at work in multiple ways. Building on prior research which has identified different mechanisms (i.e., resource drain, reactive compensation) linking family and work domains, we argue that whereas partner-instigated incivility may be cognitively depleting, thus limiting employees' capacity to help others, it may also induce negative mood, which may drive employees to compensate for this unpleasant experience by engaging in more person- and task-focused helping behaviors at work. Furthermore, we consider perspective taking as an individual difference with the potential to buffer the effects of partner-instigated incivility on cognitive depletion and negative mood. Results from a critical incident study (Study 1) supported our assertion that partner-instigated incivility is cognitively depleting and inducing of negative mood. In an experience sampling study (Study 2), which included daily reports from employees and their partners who instigated incivility, we replicated the initial effects and found support for a compensation linkage between partner-instigated incivility and both forms of helping at work via negative mood, and partial support for the moderating role of perspective taking. Results also indicated that person-focused helping lessened employees' negative mood in the evening, suggesting that mood repair benefits are associated with this behavior. Implications of these findings for family incivility occurrences and self-regulation are discussed.

Keywords: partner-instigated incivility, mood repair, helping, perspective taking

“My partner woke up late and was rushing to get ready. I usually ask them to tell me about what they thought [their] day was going to be like (busy, any [long] work events, etc.) while they’re getting ready and I am drinking my coffee. While they were making their lunch, I was asking them questions about what they thought [their] day was going to be like. I was in a different room when I asked, so my partner did not hear the questions. When I asked again, they snapped at me and said something along the lines of, why are you even trying to talk to me right now? They left shortly after and did not say goodbye or “I love you” on the way out. I was really upset and annoyed at my partner because I felt like they had acted unreasonably in snapping at me since I was just trying to show an interest in their day. I was in a bit of a funk for the rest of the day. I felt like they took out their annoyance at waking up late out on me.” (Study 1 Participant)

Employees’ work lives are inexorably linked to their daily experiences outside of work (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Ilies et al., 2007a). Yet, despite the breadth of scholarship interested in how employees’ work and family lives intersect (e.g., Ashforth et al., 2000; Powell et al., 2019), work on the mechanisms through which family-related interactions shape work-related behavior intra-individually is still in its infancy. Indeed, although employees may have a stressful interaction in one domain (e.g., at home), they are often left to cope with its effects in another domain (e.g., at work). Further, prior theory (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000) suggests that these family stressors may either drain employees’ cognitive resources and decrease activity at work, or drive employees to compensate for their negative experiences at home by engaging further and seeking out positive work experiences (e.g., helping others). Yet, tests of such competing mechanisms are limited, necessitating further inquiry into how family and work link.

One occurrence in employees’ lives that may be particularly prone to affect employees from home to work is *partner-instigated incivility*—small, often ambiguous slights such as rude comments experienced from one’s spouse or romantic partner.¹ Partner-instigated incivility is a milder form of mistreatment compared to other mistreatment constructs in the home domain,²

¹ For brevity and to be inclusive of all relationships, we use the term “partner” from this point forward.

² This distinguishes partner-instigated incivility from research on abusive incidences such as intimate partner violence (Deen et al., 2022), as many healthy relationships also involve much milder instances of rude or discourteous exchanges. Unlike intimate partner violence, partner-instigated incivility is characterized by a much lower-degree of aggression and greater ambiguity related to whether the perpetrator intended to harm the target

reflecting a family-based stressor that violates norms for mutual respect in family relationships (Lim & Tai, 2014). As employees are less likely to enact effective regulation at home versus at work (Lanaj et al., 2018), we suspect that partner-instigated incivility can serve as a precipitating event that happens with some regularity (Hershcovis, 2011). Further, although it may be assumed that such family-related stressors may adversely impact employees at work as this experience spills over across domains, we propose that how they affect employees is quite complex.

In the current investigation, we draw from Edwards and Rothbard (2000) to develop theory that explains how stressors may spillover across domains intra-individually via cognitive and affective mechanisms. In so doing, we explicate how partner-instigated incivility enters work and affects how employees engage with others—namely, whether they decide to help coworkers, a discretionary interpersonal citizenship behavior that can build social connection (Lanaj & Jennings, 2020) by providing support related to personal problems or task-related issues (Settoon & Mossholder, 2002). Acts of helping—as resource-intensive behaviors, yet also positive social experiences—may be differentially affected by how employees cope with their relational experiences from home. On the one hand, the notion of *resource drain* (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000) suggests that partner-instigated incivility may deplete cognitive resources, hindering employees' subsequent ability to help (Watkins & Umphress, 2020). This would suggest that partner-instigated incivility has an indirect negative effect on employees' daily helping via cognitive depletion, contributing to employees retreating from others. On the other hand, *reactive compensation* (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000) suggests that negative family events may motivate employees to seek positive social experiences at work. Consistent with theory on mood repair (Glomb et al., 2011) and altruism as hedonism (Cialdini et al., 1973), employees may

(Andersson & Pearson, 1999). As such, we expect the outcomes and mechanisms through which they may operate would vary substantially between these different experiences of mistreatment at home, and call for such research.

engage in helping to regulate and improve their mood states following the negative event. As such, compensating for negative experiences through helping may help employees improve their mood, and allow them to return home feeling less negatively. Combined, both pathways of our model (see Figure 1) suggest that partner-instigated incivility may spill over intra-individually to evoke cognitive and emotional strain at work. However, resource drain and reactive compensation views from Edwards and Rothbard (2000) offer competing ideas on how employees cope with this family event and relate to others at work.

Our investigation of the effects of partner-instigated incivility contributes to the literature in three ways. First, in identifying competing mechanisms, we posit that partner-instigated incivility has the potential to encourage employees to retreat from others in the form of reduced helping via cognitive depletion *or* repair one's mood by promoting helping acts via negative mood. Thus, we contribute to research on reactions to incivility by juxtaposing two pathways—resource drain and mood repair—to delineate the ways partner-instigated incivility can diminish or potentiate beneficial acts at work. Practically, this also examines the effectiveness of “compensating” with mood repair—whether helping others can improve employees' mood that evening. Second, unlike prior research on incivility, which has primarily focused on incivility occurring within the boundaries of work (e.g., Rosen et al., 2016), we argue that incivility from one's partner at home has implications for employees at work. This extends the incivility literature by expanding theory as to how incivility in the home domain initiates a process that impacts how employees cope through the behaviors they enact towards others at work.

Third, we identify an important boundary condition that extends Edwards and Rothbard's (2000) theorizing and our understanding of how people process their incivility experiences at home. Specifically, we pinpoint *perspective taking* (Davis, 1983) as a stable moderator that may

attenuate the effects of partner-instigated incivility at home on work states and behaviors, such that employees with higher trait perspective taking may be better equipped to cope with the ambiguities conveyed by partner-instigated incivility. As such, employees higher in perspective taking may not ‘bring’ partner-instigated incivility with them into work (e.g., they may understand where their partner is coming from), reducing the impact of this family-related event on their cognitive resources and mood. Conversely, those with lower perspective taking may struggle to make sense of their partner’s treatment, continuing to ruminate about and process the event at work (as our opening quote suggests). We test these hypotheses across two studies—a critical incident recall isolating a single partner-instigated incivility event (Study 1) and a multi-source experience sampling study (Study 2), allowing us to further understand the intraindividual effects of experiencing and coping with partner-instigated incivility once at work. In sum, our work informs theory about how events in the home domain may affect employees’ experiences at work, while also adding nuance to the incivility literature by considering incivility from non-work sources on a day-to-day basis and the implications for individuals at work and at home.

Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

Unlike other forms of work mistreatment such as social undermining, bullying, and abuse, incivility is characterized by the perpetrator’s unclear intentions, resulting in distracting cognitions, behaviors, and emotions (Schilpzand et al., 2016). For example, daily experiences of incivility at work (i.e., from the victim’s perspective) have been linked to lower levels of self-control (Rosen et al., 2016), as well as increased feelings of hostility (Lim et al., 2018) and distress at work (Park et al., 2018). Generally, research supports the notion that incivility is an acute interpersonal stressor with the potential to strain targeted employees in multiple ways.

Although research has established that incivility stemming from work is problematic

(e.g., Meier & Gross, 2015; Sliter et al., 2010), it is less clear what the consequences are for incivility that originates from employees' home lives and the mechanisms that may link this experience to work. Indeed, employees may experience incivility at home from their partner prior to the start of the workday, a critical time for events that 'set the stage' for later experiences at work (e.g., Hill et al., 2021). In the current investigation, we argue that the nature and consequences of how incivility from one's partner affects employees' experiences at work can be either destructive or constructive. Given the social nature of incivility, we consider the processes through which partner-instigated incivility may affect subsequent relational behaviors at work—helping coworkers with personal problems or work tasks (Settoon & Mossholder, 2002)—as helping coworkers can build work relationships (Lyons & Scott, 2012). Thus, if partner-instigated incivility is a destructive interpersonal event at home, the question arises as to whether this event might drive employees to (a) retreat from others (i.e., reduce helping), or (b) repair their mood by engaging with others (i.e., increase helping) to offset this negative event.

To explore these possibilities, we draw from self-regulation theory (Baumeister et al., 1998; Johnson et al., 2018; Tice & Bratslavsky, 2000), as well as Edwards and Rothbard's (2000) theory that identifies possible mechanisms connecting family and work domains. Edwards and Rothbard (2000) identified multiple linkages between family and work, arguing that although stressors from the family domain can impede experiences and behaviors at work via *resource drain*, there can also be reparative actions via *reactive compensation*. Whereas resource drain suggests that negative family events (i.e., partner-instigated incivility) will deplete cognitive resources needed for subsequent self-regulatory acts at work such as engaging in helping (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2018; Trougakos et al., 2015), reactive compensation suggests that employees will respond to negative family events by seeking out positive relational experiences

at work (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Yue et al., 2017). As such, these mechanisms suggest countervailing effects of partner-instigated incivility on helping via cognitive depletion (resource drain) and negative mood (reactive compensation). Cognition and emotion are, of course, not completely inseparable. However, by examining these mechanisms, we can test competing views linking family events to the work domain. Further, as we discuss later, Edwards and Rothbard (2000) also identify the criticality of factors which function as moderators by dampening the extent to which events in the family domain enter work. Specifically, we posit that employees with higher (vs. lower) perspective taking (Davis, 1983) may suppress ‘taking the incivility to work’ by experiencing less cognitive and emotional strain, lessening any effect (positive or negative) of partner-instigated incivility on helping behaviors.

Retreating from Partner-Instigated Incivility: Effects on Helping via Cognitive Depletion

In exploring the resource-drain pathway, resource-based theories of self-regulation (e.g., Baumeister et al., 1998; Johnson et al., 2018; Kanfer & Ackerman, 1989) converge in suggesting that (a) people have a finite amount of cognitive resources available for governing their behavior; (b) these resources are depleted when people engage in activities that require self-control; and (c) depletion of these resources may contribute to self-regulatory failures. As such, cognitive depletion represents a form of “mental fatigue indicating a perceived lack of personal willpower” (Lin & Johnson, 2015, p. 1381). Consistent with this perspective, Edwards and Rothbard (2000) noted that daily resources, such as cognitive resources, can be drained when people devote energy and attention to a given domain, resulting in fewer resources available for regulating behavior in other domains. Aligning with these ideas, as well as research which suggests that certain interpersonal interactions may be more (or less) depleting (e.g., Finkel et al., 2006; Fitzsimons & Finkel, 2010), we argue that partner-instigated incivility may be related to resource

drain from home to work via cognitive depletion. Similar ideas abound in the literature on incivility at work, albeit not tied to partner-instigated incivility. Incivility from customers has been found to deplete employees, as employees must not only process their own reactions, but regulate and manage customers' reactions (Troughakos et al., 2015; Yue et al., 2021). Likewise, coworker incivility has been found to be depleting as employees expend resources making sense of the rude behavior and evaluating its threat potential (Rosen et al., 2016; Taylor et al., 2017).

When it comes to partner-instigated incivility spilling into work, theory from Edwards and Rothbard (2000), and incivility research more generally (Porath & Erez, 2007), suggests that employees who experience partner-instigated incivility should report greater cognitive depletion at work. Relationships with one's partner tend to be important and meaningful (Lim & Tai, 2014). Further, romantic relationships are highly interdependent, such that the actions of one person have direct implications for the cognitions and behaviors of the other person in the partnership (Gere & Schimmack, 2013; Rusbult & Van Lange, 2003). For these reasons, incivility from one's partner is likely to be a salient 'shock' that is a source of resource drain as employees direct cognitive resources towards processing the interaction (Kanfer & Ackerman, 1989), even when they leave the family domain (Clark, 2000; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). For instance, employees may enter the workplace and continue to think about the interaction that they had with their partner earlier that day to determine the cause or meaning of the experience. Indeed, as noted by Rosen et al. (2016), the experience of incivility is cognitively taxing as employees expend cognitive resources to "understand intentions of perpetrators" and "formulate and inhibit responses" (p. 1622). As such, we propose a positive within-person relationship between partner-instigated incivility at home and cognitive depletion during work.

Hypothesis 1: On a daily basis, partner-instigated incivility in the morning before work will be positively related to the focal employee's cognitive depletion at work.

Based on resource drain theorizing, as employees feel cognitively depleted from partner-instigated incivility, it is likely that this will diminish their engagement in positive interactions at work (Watkins & Umphress, 2020), contributing to social withdrawal. Per Edwards and Rothbard (2000), experiences at home can draw down resources, hindering subsequent behavior at work. Consistent with self-regulation theory (Johnson et al., 2018), the resource drain perspective suggests that cognitive depletion should inhibit employees' likelihood of helping, as those who are depleted lack the resources needed to engage in subsequent helping acts (Gabriel et al., 2018; Lanaj et al., 2016; Trougakos et al., 2015). Decreased helping can thus be viewed as a form of withdrawal from one's typical social demeanor at work (Rodell & Judge, 2009).

The act of helping is likely to be vulnerable to cognitive depletion for two theoretical reasons. First, prior research on the intrapersonal effects of helping suggests that these behaviors require expending self-regulatory resources (Lanaj et al., 2016). When depleted, employees are likely to be strategic in their behaviors (Gabriel et al., 2018; Trougakos et al., 2015), and self-regulation theory argues that individuals' selection of behaviors when cognitively depleted may rely on various motivating factors (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007; Muraven & Slessareva, 2003). As helping is likely more discretionary, employees may limit their helping to preserve resources for more critical in-role behaviors or self-serving acts (Bergeron et al., 2013; Gabriel et al., 2018).³ As argued by Koopman et al. (2020) "instead of taking on additional work that benefits others, resource-depleted employees may thus perform fewer helping behaviors to preserve what limited attentional resources they have left" (p. 883). In line with this, multiple studies have found

³ Of course, research by Halbesleben and Wheeler (2011) found that emotional exhaustion can contribute positively to helping at work. While it is plausible that feeling depleted could benefit helping, integrating this finding with the broader literature (e.g., Bergeron et al., 2013; Trougakos et al., 2015) and self-regulation and work-family theory (e.g., Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Johnson et al., 2018), we align with the broader consensus in the literature.

support for cognitive depletion decreasing employees' daily engagement in citizenship behavior, including helping acts (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2018; Koopman et al., 2020; Trougakos et al., 2015).

Second, it is plausible that feeling depleted will naturally encourage people to withdraw or limit the interactions they have with others. Indeed, with social interaction comes the need for further regulation of behavior (Bolton, 2005), and the possibility of other unpleasant exchanges. As such, employees who have already been depleted by a negative exchange in the form of partner-instigated incivility may elect to protect their remaining self-regulatory resources by not helping others at work (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2018; Hobfoll et al., 2018). Combined, we predict that cognitive depletion will be negatively related to helping others at work, with depletion mediating the indirect effect of daily partner-instigated incivility on this behavior. Thus, we propose:

Hypothesis 2: On a daily basis, cognitive depletion at work is negatively related to helping at work.

Hypothesis 3: Cognitive depletion at work mediates the daily negative relationship between partner-instigated incivility in the morning before work and helping at work.

Repairing from Partner-Instigated Incivility: Effects on Helping via Negative Mood

While experiences of partner-instigated incivility are likely to be cognitively depleting, they may also have negative emotional consequences. Because people hold a strong need for positive relationships (Deci & Ryan, 2000), incivility from one's partner may threaten relational needs (Ferris et al., 2017), signaling a discrepancy between current and ideal relationship states that can contribute to one's negative mood. Consistent with this perspective, prior research has found that incivility tends to generate negative emotional states when experienced at work from customers (Gabriel & Diefendorff, 2015; Wang et al., 2013), supervisors (Kim & Shapiro, 2008), and coworkers (Zhou et al., 2015)—all critical relationships to maintain in the work domain.

Although this line of research on negative affective reactions has been aimed at uncivil

exchanges occurring in the work domain, we expect that partner-instigated incivility may also be emotionally straining, promoting employees' negative mood at work. Compared to workplace relationships, in romantic relationships individuals rely on their partner for multiple relational needs including intimacy, companionship, security, support, and emotional involvement (Drigotas & Rusbult, 1992). Likewise, individuals hold strong norms for respect in their family roles (Hendrick et al., 2010; Lim & Tai, 2014), both of which suggest that experiences tied to partner-instigated incivility may evoke salient unpleasant emotions. Additionally, the affective consequences of these pre-work experiences may be lasting, such that negative experiences of receiving partner-instigated incivility may be ongoing even after one leaves the home domain and enters the work environment (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Rothbard & Wilk, 2011). As such, we position partner-instigated incivility as a daily exchange that has implications for negative mood at work, generating the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: On a daily basis, partner-instigated incivility in the morning before work will be positively related to the focal employee's negative mood at work.

Despite negative mood having the potential to hinder performance-related outcomes (e.g., Bandura, 1991; Lazarus, 1991), research on mood regulation (e.g., Glomb et al., 2011; Tice & Bratslavsky, 2000) and Edwards and Rothbard's (2000) ideas related to reactive compensation (see also Lambert, 1990) suggest that negative mood may *promote*, rather than detract from, employees' helping at work. Per Edwards and Rothbard (2000), reactive compensation "occurs when excess undesirable experiences in a domain decrease satisfaction in that domain and lead to the pursuit of contrasting pleasurable experiences in the other domain" (p. 188-189). Likewise, mood regulation theory suggests that negative mood motivates individuals to engage in pleasurable behaviors that will return them to improved mood states (Glomb et al., 2011; Manucia et al., 1984; Tice & Bratslavsky, 2000). Following these ideas, one way that employees

can repair their negative mood from partner-instigated incivility is through helping coworkers.

Indeed, as individuals hold a fundamental need for affiliation and positive relationships (Deci & Ryan, 2000), engaging in behaviors that may have a prosocial impact on others can gratify those needs and repair negative moods. The negative-state relief hypothesis for helping behaviors—or, mood repair (Cialdini & Kenrick, 1976)—further suggests that individuals are hedonically driven to perform altruistic behaviors to relieve negative emotional states. From this perspective, helping can be viewed as a form of altruism (Batson et al., 2003), and acts of altruism are often associated with improved mood (Baumann et al., 1981; Glomb et al., 2011). Illustrating this, Glomb et al. (2011) found that negative mood was positively related to daily altruistic work behaviors. However, their research started at the point of requiring mood repair (i.e., being in a bad mood), without considering what preempted this negative mood state.

Building on Edwards and Rothbard (2000) and research on mood repair (Cialdini et al., 1973; Glomb et al., 2011), we suggest that negative moods and subsequent mood regulation activities (i.e., helping) may be preceded by experiences at home (i.e., partner-instigated incivility). Thus, our theory suggests that incivility from one's partner should be positively related to helping at work via negative mood. In contrast with “retreating” from engaging with others at work after experiencing partner-instigated incivility via cognitive depletion (per our resource drain hypotheses), employees may alternatively increase their engagement in helping based on their desire to “repair” their mood vis-à-vis negative mood. Therefore, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 5: On a daily basis, negative mood at work is positively related to helping at work.

Hypothesis 6: Negative mood at work mediates the daily positive relationship between partner-instigated incivility in the morning before work and helping at work.

Of course, proposing effects for mood repair presumes that employees will return home

in a less negative mood. Indeed, the negative-state relief model suggests not only that negative moods will motivate people to help others, but also that, by extension, helping behaviors should be successful in improving their subsequent mood (Cialdini et al., 1973; Yinon & Landau, 1987). By helping others with personal or task-related problems, employees can make social connections and satisfy relationship needs, distract themselves from the source of their bad mood (i.e., partner-instigated incivility), and receive gratitude or praise from others, which may improve their mood (e.g., Baranik & Eby, 2016; Glomb et al., 2011). As such, enacting helping should have an overall positive effect on how employees feel when they return home from work.

Fitting with this, Glomb et al. (2011) found that engaging in altruism and courtesy behaviors at work—behaviors that are conceptually similar to helping acts—were related to improved mood, suggesting support for mood repair outcomes of daily helping at work. Other research on mood repair suggests that the lasting emotional effects of daily helping can extend into non-work hours. For example, work by Sonnentag and Grant (2012) illustrated this emotional spillover of helping from work to home, finding that daily perceived social impact (i.e., “the perception that one’s actions are beneficial to others;” Sonnentag & Grant, 2012, p. 497) benefited employees’ end-of-day mood assessed at home. As such, we argue that partner-instigated incivility will not only prompt employees to engage in helping at work via negative mood, but that helping will compensate for the effects of partner-instigated incivility by improving their mood at home. Therefore, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 7: On a daily basis, helping at work is negatively related to negative mood in the evening at home.

Hypothesis 8: Negative mood at work and helping at work serially mediate the daily relationship between partner-instigated incivility in the morning before work and negative mood at home.

The Sensemaking Role of Perspective Taking

In processing the competing pathways within our model, a natural question arises—are certain individuals more, or less, reactive to partner-instigated incivility? As noted by Edwards and Rothbard (2000), additional factors (including individual differences) may attenuate the strength of relationships between experiences at home and work by affecting the extent to which individuals experience and cope with family-based strain at work (and vice versa). Thus, when it comes to understanding conditions that make individuals more or less reactive to partner-instigated incivility, it is likely that some people may be better equipped to process and make sense of incivility, attenuating the strain they experience as a result. Aligning with this idea, we posit that perspective taking (Davis, 1983) plays an important role in mitigating the daily reactions of employees to partner-instigated incivility before work.

Perspective taking refers to the “tendency to spontaneously adopt the psychological point of view of others” (Davis, 1983, p. 113-114), with Johnson (1975) noting that those with higher perspective taking are able “to understand how a situation appears to another person and how that person is reacting cognitively and emotionally to the situation” (p. 241). Perspective taking is a cognitive-based counterpart to empathy (or “empathic concern”), the latter of which represents an emotional understanding of others (Davis, 1983). As such, individuals with higher perspective taking tend to be more understanding of others’ viewpoints (Galinsky et al., 2008; Parker & Axtell, 2001). Such tendencies may explain why those with higher perspective taking have a stronger cognitive closeness with others (Ku et al., 2015). Indeed, the sensemaking processes undertaken by those higher in perspective taking may differ compared to the efforts and conclusions reached by those lower in perspective taking (Galinsky et al., 2008).

In the case of being treated uncivilly, the resulting strain is often triggered by the ambiguity surrounding incivility, and the need to process the exchange, both cognitively and

emotionally (Rosen et al., 2016; Schilpzand et al., 2016). Unlike other forms of aggression at work or home (e.g., bullying, abuse, or conflict), incivility is unique in its ambiguous nature (Hershovis, 2011). However, to effectively appraise interpersonal events, employees try to determine whether the event was aggressively intended by the perpetrator (Hershcovis, 2011; Neuman & Baron, 2005). As such, higher levels of perspective taking may *weaken* the positive effects of partner-instigated incivility on both cognitive depletion and negative mood. By extension, perspective taking may attenuate the cognitive (resource drain) and emotional (reactive compensation) effects of incivility on helping. Regarding the relation between partner-instigated incivility and cognitive depletion, given that coping with the ambiguity of incivility is cognitively taxing (Rosen et al., 2016), perspective taking should be a possible antidote, allowing the person who was treated uncivilly to (a) understand where their partner was coming from when they behaved in an uncivil manner and (b) minimize the cognitive load associated with this experience. Speaking to this, prior research has found that perspective taking is related to increased capacity to efficiently recall, seek out, and process complex and logically inconsistent information (e.g., Ku et al., 2015), with incivility being a complex experience.

Furthermore, perspective taking should affect individuals' attributions of the event itself. Rather than blaming partner-instigated incivility on themselves or their partner, those with higher perspective taking are more likely to consider circumstantial factors surrounding the incivility episode (Arriaga & Rusbult, 1998; Batson et al., 1997). As a result, individuals with greater perspective taking are more likely to form positive attributions of others (Parker & Axtell, 2001), versus making hostile attributions and reciprocating uncivilly in kind (Batson et al., 1997). These attributions may result in lessened negative reactions, with research suggesting that "partner perspective taking promotes relatively more positive emotions and benign interpretations of a

partner's potentially destructive act" (Arriaga & Rusbult, 1998, p. 926). Combined, we make the following hypothesis for the cross-level moderating effects, alongside hypotheses that reflect how perspective taking alters the varying downstream effects on helping and—in the case of our mood repair hypotheses—evening negative mood via negative mood at work and helping:

Hypothesis 9: Perspective taking moderates the daily relationship between partner-instigated incivility and (a) cognitive depletion and (b) negative mood, such that the daily positive effects of partner-instigated incivility on cognitive depletion and negative mood are stronger when perspective taking is lower versus when it is higher.

Hypothesis 10: The daily negative indirect effect of partner-instigated incivility in the morning before work on enacted helping via cognitive depletion will be stronger when perspective taking is lower versus when it is higher.

Hypothesis 11: The daily positive indirect effect of partner-instigated incivility in the morning before work on enacted helping via negative mood will be stronger when perspective taking is lower versus when it is higher.

Hypothesis 12: The daily serial indirect effect of partner-instigated incivility in the morning before work on negative mood that evening via negative mood at work and helping at work will be stronger when perspective taking is lower versus when it is higher.

Overview of Studies and Transparency/Openness Statement

To explore the effects of partner-instigated incivility on cognitive depletion and negative mood, we conducted a cued recall experiment to consider how couples experienced incivility before their workday. In so doing, we focused on a single, isolated event on a given day, and how such events are recalled and experienced by the victim themselves. Next, we conducted an experience sampling methodology (ESM) study with dyadic data from employees and their partners to test the competing mechanisms through which partner-instigated incivility (as rated by the partners) relates to helping. This *in situ* method allows us to test our linkages via resource drain or reactive compensation, as well as the role of perspective taking. Further, utilizing experience sampling allowed us to consider within-person variability in our effects, capturing the

downstream experiences of what happens on days in which employees experience higher (or lower) levels of incivility from their partners' average enactment. This aligns conceptually with our assertion that partner-instigated incivility is a salient daily shock and utilizes multi-source ratings of partner-instigated incivility (partner-reported) to mitigate potential same-source biases. Combined, our studies capture both perceived partner-instigated incivility from the victim (Study 1; University of Arizona IRB#2103567893, Title: "University of Arizona Relationships Study") and enacted partner-instigated incivility from the instigator (Study 2; Southern Methodist University IRB#H17-142-BUTM, Title: "Working Couples Daily Experience"). Available study manipulations and measures are in the Appendix.⁴ These studies were not pre-registered, and Study 2 was part of a larger data collection effort studying the dynamics between dual career couples. Although data is not available, syntax and results for our main analyses are in an Open Science repository: https://osf.io/xejk9/?view_only=e5913884fd214bed938226bad48469dd.

Study 1 Method

Sample and Procedure

We used a critical incident technique in which we manipulated partner-instigated incivility by asking participants to recall an exchange with their partner that was either uncivil or civil (cf. Mitchell et al., 2015). To recruit participants for our study, we used Prolific Academic (<https://www.prolific.co/>), a platform designed to match researchers and participants within the social sciences and has been increasingly used in studies in the organizational sciences using critical incident or recall techniques (e.g., Isaakyan et al., 2021; Sherf & Morrison, 2020; Taylor et al., 2021). Prolific allowed us to use multiple screening criteria to ensure that we (a) could

⁴ Full scales for items taken from Mackinnon et al. (1999) and Fedor et al. (2001) are not included due to copyright concerns; sample items are provided in-text. For more information concerning these items, please contact Mahira Ganster at mganster@arizona.edu.

reach a wide range of adults and (b) include only those within the intended population of our study. Participants recruited through Prolific completed a screening survey in which we collected demographic information and assessed their eligibility to participate in our study. Participants were required to: (1) work full-time (31+ hours per week); (2) reside with their partner in the U.S.; (3) and report experiencing at least one instance of partner-instigated incivility and one instance of partner-instigated civility prior to the start of the workday during the past month. Having the latter criteria ensured that participants had a recent interaction to describe for the critical incident study when randomly assigned to conditions.⁵

Of the 1,898 participants who completed the screening survey, 338 met the eligibility criteria and were invited to complete the critical incident study. Our final sample included 226 participants who passed all attention checks.⁶ The sample was 43.8% female, with 59.3% of participants having at least one child at home ($M = 1.08$; $SD = 1.09$); 77.9% of participants were married, 15.9% were in a long-term relationship, and 6.2% were engaged. Most identified as White (87.2%; Hispanic/Latino/a = 9.3%; Asian/Pacific Islander = 7.1%, Black or African American = 4.0%; Native American = 1.3%; other = 1.3%; Middle Eastern/West Asian = .4%),⁷ and had partners who were also employed (80.7%). Participants had an average age of 37.17 years, an average job tenure of 4.80 years, and an average organizational tenure of 6.60 years. They worked an average of 42.68 hours a week and in a variety of industries, including: finance,

⁵ Participants were not informed of the inclusion criteria for the recall study during the screening survey to prevent participant misrepresentation and self-selection bias (Hauser et al., 2019). Only participants who said yes to experiencing an uncivil and civil event with their partner (see Appendix) were invited to participate in the recall study. Of a pool of 7,609 participants eligible for the screening study on Prolific, 1898 completed it (response rate = 24.94%). After removing those who failed attention checks and did not meet our additional screening criteria, we invited 338 participants to participate in the recall, with 226 (66.86%) completing the recall portion of the study.

⁶ Thirteen participants (10 from the screener survey and 3 from the critical incident survey) were removed for failed attention checks (e.g., “Please select ‘Strongly disagree’ for this question.”) embedded in the surveys to help ensure high quality data.

⁷ Percentages sum to more than 100, as some participants selected more than one race with which they identified.

real estate, manufacturing, education, construction, retail, healthcare, telecommunications, government, military, engineering, information technology, food and beverage, and legal. Example jobs included teachers, administrators, healthcare practitioners, and IT professionals.

Participants were randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions. In the partner-instigated incivility condition ($N = 111$), participants were asked to think of a time during the past month when their spouse/partner “behaved in an uncivil manner to you before you started your workday. That is, they were rude or discourteous (e.g., condescending, showing little interest in your opinion, ignoring you, or doubting your judgement)—displaying a lack of regard for you—rather than polite or courteous to you before your workday began.” In the partner-instigated civility condition ($N = 115$), which mirrored the incivility condition, participants were asked to think of a time during the past month when their spouse/partner “behaved in a civil manner toward you before you started your workday. That is, they were polite or courteous (e.g., respectful, showing interest in your opinion, paying attention to you, or trusting your judgement)—displaying regard for you—rather than rude or discourteous to you before your workday began.” These prompts were developed using descriptions of uncivil behavior frequently found in the literature (e.g., Lim & Cortina, 2005; Rosen et al., 2016).

Participants were asked to write as detailed of a description of what happened as possible; to craft their responses so that someone reading them “might feel what you felt from learning about your experience;” and to “try to relive the experience as you write, pretending you are actually there and remembering how you felt during the experience and the details of the scene” (e.g., Oc et al., 2020; Simon et al., 2021). Given that directing participants to remember specific details of an event facilitates recall (Robinson & Clore, 2001), we prompted participants to write as much as possible, quoting their partner’s words and behaviors. After detailing the interaction,

participants rated their cognitive depletion and negative mood and answered questions about the interaction (e.g., clarity of recall, perceived incivility). Participants were paid \$4.96 USD.

Measures

Cognitive depletion. Depletion of cognitive resources was assessed with five items ($\alpha = .94$) by Twenge et al. (2004). Participants rated the extent to which they experienced each item (e.g., “My mental energy is running low”) “right now” from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*a great deal*). Participants were asked how they felt “right now” rather than on the day of the incident when assessing cognitive depletion (and negative mood as detailed below), given that true experiments require the manipulation of the independent variable *before* assessing change in the dependent variable to establish temporal precedence (Chambliss & Schutt, 2018).

Negative mood. We assessed negative mood using Mackinnon et al.’s (1999) 5-item ($\alpha = .91$) measure. Participants rated the extent to which they were experiencing each item (e.g., “distressed”) “right now” using a 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*a great deal*) response scale.

Manipulation check. Participants completed two manipulation checks. First, following their recall, participants completed four items of incivility from Lim and Cortina (2005; $\alpha = .89$). Participants rated the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that their partner engaged in each item (e.g., “Put me down or was condescending toward me”) during the recalled event using a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) response scale. As a second manipulation check, participants used a 1 (*not at all uncivil*) to 5 (*extremely uncivil*) response scale to rate the item: “In the interaction you just described, how uncivil was your spouse/partner toward you?”

Control variables. We controlled for gender, given that it has the potential to influence relationship dynamics such as gendered expectations (Perrin et al., 2011) and, therefore, partner-instigated incivility perceptions as well as our dependent variables. For example, women are

often stereotyped as more communal and, as such, are expected to be warm, caring, and nurturing (Ellemers, 2018). Thus, it is possible that deviations from these expectations are more likely to stand out as counter-normative, and therefore, to be perceived as uncivil and/or to generate stronger negative reactions from partners. Gendered expectations might also result in women taking on a larger share of informal caregiving and household responsibilities (Ellemers, 2018; Navaie-Waliser et al., 2002) and in shouldering a disproportionate amount of “emotion work” (e.g., providing emotional support to coworkers) on the job (Hurst et al., 2017; Stengård et al., 2022). Given that these activities are mentally and emotionally taxing (Cameron et al., 2019; Ellemers, 2018), engaging in them could impact cognitive depletion and negative affect. Further, we also controlled for clarity of recall using three items ($\alpha = .82$) adapted for spousal interactions to align with our manipulation from Fedor et al. (2001; e.g., “I can still remember all that happened during this interaction with my spouse/partner”), as it is possible that the clarity with which one is able to recall the interaction would influence the strength of the manipulation.

Study 1 Results and Discussion

Descriptive statistics are in Table 1. We first conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using Mplus 8.1 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2017) to assess whether cognitive depletion, negative mood, and clarity of recall variables were distinct. To evaluate model fit, we used the following statistics: a comparative fit index (CFI) $\geq .90$, a Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) $\geq .95$, and a Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) and a Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) $< .08$ (Hooper et al., 2008; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2015). Fit indices initially suggested suboptimal model fit: $\chi^2_{(62)} = 459.67$, CFI = .85, TLI = .82, RMSEA = .17, SRMR = .10. However, after allowing the error terms between the similarly worded items “distressed” and “upset” and the similarly worded items “afraid” and “scared” to covary (as

suggested by model modification indices), the model fit well: $\chi^2_{(60)} = 140.30$, CFI = .97, TLI = .96, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .05. This model exhibited a better fit for the data than alternative models in which: (a) cognitive depletion and negative mood were collapsed into a single factor: $\chi^2_{(62)} = 292.95$, CFI = .92, TLI = .89, RMSEA = .13, SRMR = .08, $\Delta\chi^2_{(2)} = 152.65$, $p < .001$; and (b) all three variables were modeled as a single factor: $\chi^2_{(63)} = 559.88$, CFI = .82, TLI = .77, RMSEA = .19, SRMR = .13, $\Delta\chi^2_{(3)} = 419.58$, $p < .001$. These results supported the pre-specified structure of our constructs and illustrated that cognitive depletion and negative mood are distinct.

After verifying that our variables were distinct, we assessed the effectiveness of our manipulation. Independent sample *t*-tests revealed significant differences between the incivility and civility conditions for both manipulation checks. Specifically, for the single-item measure, the average rating in the civility condition was $M = 1.15$ ($SD = .63$), whereas the average rating in the incivility condition was $M = 3.13$ ($SD = .96$; $t_{(188)} = 18.24$, $p < .001$). Likewise, for the four-item incivility scale (Lim & Cortina, 2005), the average rating in the civility condition was $M = 1.28$ ($SD = .51$), and the average rating in the incivility condition was $M = 3.51$ ($SD = .63$; $t_{(211)} = 29.14$, $p < .001$). Together, these results suggest that our manipulation was successful.

We tested our hypotheses by conducting two hierarchical regression analyses in SPSS 26—one for cognitive depletion (Hypothesis 1) and one for negative mood (Hypothesis 4). We entered control variables (gender, clarity of recall) as predictors of cognitive depletion or negative mood at Step 1. At Step 2, we added the experimental condition ($0 = civil$, $1 = uncivil$). As shown in Table 2, the experimental condition positively predicted cognitive depletion ($B = .94$, $p < .001$) and negative mood ($B = .95$, $SE = .11$, $p < .001$). The experimental condition explained unique variance in each outcome, over and above the control variables ($\Delta R^2_{depletion} =$

.18, $p < .001$; $\Delta R^2_{\text{negative mood}} = .26, p < .001$),⁸ offering initial support for Hypotheses 1 and 4.

Overall, our findings offer preliminary evidence that experiencing incivility from one's partner can result in cognitive depletion and negative mood. Further, the randomized, controlled design of this study enabled us to minimize alternative explanations, allowing for relatively strong causal inferences (Shadish et al., 2002). Study 1 thus provided initial evidence supporting the internal validity of the relationship between partner-instigated incivility and its effects on cognitive depletion and negative mood and meets the three criteria for establishing causality—covariation, temporal precedence, and lack of spuriousness (Chambliss & Schutt, 2018).

It is important to note, however, that our manipulation relied on retrospective recall. Although this permitted us to focus on a single episode of partner (in)civility, it is susceptible to memory bias (Robinson & Clore, 2001). Another limitation is that because we suspected it would be challenging for participants to recall a purely “neutral” interaction (i.e., an interaction devoid of, and therefore uncontaminated with, any emotion or [un]civil behavior), we compared reactions to partner-instigated uncivil and civil interactions rather than neutral ones. We recognize that this aspect of our study, while allowing for more precision, may have increased the strength of our manipulation. Finally, and importantly, through this critical incident experimental study, we were unable to examine three key aspects of our model: (a) potential indirect effects of partner-instigated incivility on work behavior via cognitive depletion and negative mood, (b) how perspective taking impacts employees' responses, and (c) how and whether employees subsequently repaired their mood. Testing these additional relationships is necessary to gain a more complete picture of the effects of partner-instigated incivility at work.

To address these limitations, we conducted a second study that used an ESM design.

⁸ To assess the robustness of our model, we conducted analyses without the controls. The results of the experimental condition remained significant for both cognitive depletion ($B = .95, p < .00$) and negative mood ($B = .92, p < .00$).

ESM reduces memory bias and enhances ecological validity by capturing daily experiences near when they occur in participants' natural environments (Beal, 2015). As such, using multiple daily measures allowed us to test the linkages from partner-instigated incivility (as rated by the partners) to employee-rated cognitive depletion and emotional states at work, as well as the downstream effects of these states on employees' daily helping. Additionally, the design of Study 2 allowed us to measure partner-instigated incivility on a unipolar continuum (i.e., lower vs. higher incivility) rather than contrasting partner-instigated incivility and civility.

Study 2

Participants and Procedure

In order to obtain working couples from a variety of backgrounds and industries, advertisements were posted online through professional and social media networks (e.g., LinkedIn).⁹ Participants were told that we were recruiting individuals and their partners for a two-week study on the daily experiences of working couples. To be eligible, we required both members of the couple (hereafter referred to as the “focal employee” and “partner”) to be working full-time (i.e., at least 32 hours per week in a fairly typical work schedule) to ensure similarity across participants and some uniformity of experiences within the family unit, creating greater consistency in participants' day-to-day rhythms (for similar inclusion explanations, see: Shockley & Allen, 2013). In addition, we required that all participants work in the U.S. and live together. To enroll, focal employees first completed an opt-in survey, in which they reported demographic information, completed a measure of perspective taking, and provided the name and email address of their partner with their partner's consent. We then contacted the partner and asked them to complete an opt-in survey with demographics. Couples could earn up to \$120

⁹ This study was part of a larger data collection effort completed prior to the COVID-19 stay-at-home orders.

USD, depending on their level of participation. In total, 111 couples fully enrolled.

Approximately two weeks later, the daily surveys began. The surveys were sent via email at pre-specified time points, with each survey closing after two hours to prevent participants from completing the survey outside the window.¹⁰ The partner received their survey at 9:30AM, reporting their level of incivility instigated toward the focal employee that morning before they left for work. At 4:00PM, the focal employee received their afternoon survey, assessing their cognitive depletion and negative mood, as well as their helping enacted towards coworkers and their workload (a control variable).¹¹ Finally, to test our mood repair effects, at 8:00PM the focal employee received their evening survey asking them to report their negative mood.

In order to appropriately model within-person variability, we retained data from couples who provided complete assessments for at least three days; we also had the focal employee verify that they were working on the days of the study and excluded any days in which the focal employee did not actually work (Gabriel et al., 2019). This resulted in a final sample of 92 couples (82.8% retained) who provided 743 complete days of data out of a possible 920 days (80.8% completion rate; 8.08 days per couple).¹² Focal employees largely identified as female (81.5%) and were an average of 37.0 years of age with a job tenure of 5.61 years and organizational tenure of 6.19 years. Focal employees worked an average of 42.3 hours per week

¹⁰ Given the requirements of the study, a two-hour window was selected to ensure that each survey signal itself was not another stressor for our study participants. For a review on ESM study design decisions, see: Beal (2015).

¹¹ We focused on assessments from the focal employees at work (as opposed to at home) as we were focused on partner-instigated incivility spillover to the work domain. Further, given that each survey was open for two hours, we wanted to ensure that the focal employee survey was completed after the partner morning survey.

¹² We also compared our final sample with the couples who were not retained in the final analysis. Results indicated no significant differences between the two groups on focal participants' age ($t_{(109)} = -1.748, p = .083$), gender ($\chi^2 [1, 111] = 2.024, p = .155$), race ($\chi^2 [6, 111] = 7.344, p = .290$), average working hours per week ($t_{(109)} = .972, p = .333$), organizational tenure ($t_{(109)} = -1.427, p = .157$), and the average relationship length with their partner ($t_{(109)} = -.631, p = .530$). Similarly, there were no significant differences in partners' age ($t_{(109)} = .135, p = .893$), gender ($\chi^2 [1, 111] = .234, p = .628$), race ($\chi^2 [6, 111] = 3.770, p = .708$), average working hours per week ($t_{(109)} = 1.758, p = .077$), and organizational tenure ($t_{(109)} = .933, p = .353$). In sum, there were no significant differences.

and largely identified as White (79.3%; Asian/Pacific Islander = 8.7%; African-American = 4.3%; Hispanic/Latino/a = 3.3%; Middle Eastern/West Asian = 2.2%; multi-racial = 1.1%; other = 1.1%). Partners largely identified as male (20.7%)¹³ and were an average of 37.8 years of age, working 5.11 years in their current job and 6.03 years in their organization. Partners worked 44.0 hours per week and largely identified as White (81.5%; African-American = 6.5%; Asian/Pacific Islander = 4.3%; Hispanic/Latino/a = 4.3%; multi-racial = 1.1%; Middle Eastern/West Asian = 1.1%; other = 1.1%). Couples were primarily married (87.0%; 12.0% in a long-term relationship; 1.1% engaged) with 1.17 kids, and had been with their partner for 10.10 years. Examples of focal employees' jobs include pharmacists, librarians, attorneys, human resource practitioners, teachers, and programmers, mirroring the variety of jobs we observed in Study 1.

Between-Person (Level 2) Measures

Perspective taking (focal employee). During the opt-in survey, focal employees rated their perspective taking in general (i.e., representing a stable, trait-level tendency) using seven items (e.g., "I try to understand others by imagining how things look from their perspective") from Davis (1983; $\alpha = .75$) on a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*).

Within-Person (Level 1) Measures

Following guidance from Beal (2015; see also Gabriel et al., 2019), we used shortened scales when possible as a means of minimizing participant fatigue, particularly if the short-form of the construct had been assessed in prior experience sampling research. Additionally, per Beal (2015), we used the same 5-point rating scale for all items (1 = *not at all*; 5 = *a great deal*).

Partner-instigated incivility (partner; morning). Partners rated their incivility enacted

¹³ To be inclusive, we did not restrict recruitment and allowed both cross-sex and same-sex partnerships. We also did not require couples to be married, and could instead be in long-term domestic partnerships. From a theoretical perspective, we did not feel there was a strong justification to only focus on cross-sex and/or married couples.

towards focal employees before the focal employees went to work using four items (e.g., “I put down or was condescending to [Partner’s Name]”) from Lim and Cortina (2005; see Rosen et al. [2016] for a similar adaptation; estimated within-person reliability = .81).

Cognitive depletion (focal employee; afternoon). We used the same five items and instructions (e.g., “My mental energy is running low”) from Twenge et al. (2004) as detailed above in Study 1 (estimated within-person reliability = .91). Further, these items have also been used in prior within-person research on depletion (e.g., Barnes et al., 2015; Lanaj et al., 2014).

Negative mood (focal employee; afternoon and evening). In the afternoon and evening, employees rated their negative mood (estimated within-person reliability = .84 in the afternoon and .78 in the evening) using the three items from the Mackinnon et al. (1999) from Study 1.

Helping (focal employee; afternoon). We drew on items from Settoon and Mossholder (2002) to capture person- (3-items; estimated within-person reliability = .88) and task-focused (3-items; estimated within-person reliability = .86) helping. Specifically, focal employees rated the extent to which they engaged in person- (e.g., “Today, I took time to listen to a coworker’s problems and worries”) and task-focused helping (e.g., “Today, I took on extra responsibilities in order to help a coworker when things got demanding”) towards coworkers. Given that we did not want to overburden participants with Settoon and Mossholder’s (2002) full scale of 16 items (8 per dimension), we selected the three highest loading items per dimension (for recommendations for truncating scales for daily use with this approach, see: Gabriel et al., 2019).

Control variables. We controlled for several variables for theoretical and statistical reasons. First, given that workload has the potential to affect cognitive depletion and negative mood (e.g., Goh et al., 2015; Ilies et al., 2007b), as well as whether employees can engage in work-related “tradeoffs” to help (e.g., Koopman et al., 2016), in the afternoon focal employees

rated their workload using three items (e.g., “Today, my job required me to work very fast”) adapted for daily use from Spector and Jex (1998). We also controlled for time-related trends (e.g., sine, cosine, study day [Day 1 – 10], day of the week [Monday – Friday]) to account for spurious effects due to time (Beal & Weiss, 2003). Finally, we controlled for prior day levels of both forms of helping to help reduce concerns with reverse causality (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2019).¹⁴

Analytic Approach

Given the nested nature of our data, we used Mplus 8.1 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2017) to run a multilevel path analysis to test our hypothesized effects. Prior to testing hypotheses, we ran null models to calculate the percentage of within-person variance in each Level 1 variable. As shown in Table 3, all within-person variables had at least half of their variance attributable to within-person factors. We also conducted a multilevel confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), modeling items for partner-instigated incivility (4 items), cognitive depletion (5 items), negative mood (3 items), person-focused helping (3 items), task-focused helping (3 items), workload (control variable; 3 items), and evening negative mood (3 items) within-person centered at Level 1; at Level 2, we modeled perspective taking (7 items) items as grand-mean centered. Results indicated good fit: $\chi^2(245) = 404.88$, CFI = .97, TLI = .97, RMSEA = .03, SRMR_{within} = .03; SRMR_{between} = .05. We also ran two alternative multilevel CFAs. Similar to Study 1, we collapsed cognitive depletion and negative mood; this did not fit the data as well as our a priori model: $\chi^2(251) = 980.52$, CFI = .87, TLI = .85, RMSEA = .06, SRMR_{within} = .06; SRMR_{between} = .05, Satorra-Bentler $\Delta\chi^2(6) = 363.55$, $p < .001$. Thus, we continued to model cognitive depletion and negative mood as separate constructs. We also ran an alternative multilevel CFA in which

¹⁴ Given the necessity of modeling time-related covariates in within-person models (Beal & Weiss, 2003; Gabriel et al., 2019), we reran our model retaining our time-related trends, but removing daily workload and prior day levels of task- and person-focused helping. The results and conclusions of this model were qualitatively the same.

we collapsed both forms of helping; results indicated worse fit: $\chi^2_{(251)} = 968.81$, CFI = .87, TLI = .85, RMSEA = .06, SRMR_{within} = .06; SRMR_{between} = .05, Satorra-Bentler $\Delta\chi^2_{(6)} = 410.29$, $p < .001$. Thus, we retained our variables and proceeded with hypothesis testing.

In modeling effects, we followed Enders and Tofighi (2007) and within-person centered all Level 1 exogenous predictors and controls; we did not center the time-related controls to retain their original form. Perspective taking at Level 2 was grand-mean centered to help interpret cross-level interaction effects (Enders & Tofighi, 2007). Level 1 hypothesized and direct effects were modeled as random, with control variables modeled as fixed effects to reduce model complexity (e.g., Wang et al., 2011).¹⁵ Based on Kline (2005), we allowed residuals for variables at the same point in the model (e.g., cognitive depletion and afternoon negative mood; person- and task-focused helping) to covary to ensure proper model specification, as not doing so could result in standard errors that are biased. For indirect and conditional indirect effects, we used a Monte Carlo simulation and calculated 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals (CIs) following formulas from Efron (1987) building upon recommendations from Preacher et al. (2010) and Selig and Preacher (2008; see also: Wang et al., 2013). Conditional indirect effects were calculated at higher and lower perspective taking (1 *SD* above and below the mean).

Study 2 Results and Discussion

Descriptive statistics are in Table 4. Multilevel results are in Table 5. Hypotheses 1-3 focused on the resource drain pathway from partner-instigated incivility to both forms of helping. Supporting Hypothesis 1, there was a positive relationship between partner-instigated incivility and cognitive depletion ($\gamma = .20$, $p = .042$). However, cognitive depletion was not related to

¹⁵ Although within-person centering removes between-person factors (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2019), we recognize that gender of the focal employee could be another possible control variable we could include at Level 2. In a supplemental analysis, we included gender as a Level 2 predictor of cognitive depletion and afternoon negative mood; results were qualitatively unchanged with the inclusion of this variable.

person- ($\gamma = -.07, p = .179$) or task-focused helping ($\gamma = -.03, p = .590$), precluding support for Hypotheses 2 and 3. For completeness, the 95% CIs for the indirect effect of partner-instigated incivility to both forms of helping included zero (person-focused helping: estimate = $-.014$, 95% CI = $-.0481, .0028$; task-focused helping: estimate = $-.005$, 95% CI = $-.0322, .0112$).

Hypotheses 4-6 focused on the reactive compensation pathway via afternoon negative mood. In support of Hypothesis 4, there was a positive relationship between partner-instigated incivility and afternoon negative mood at work ($\gamma = .21, p = .009$). Supporting Hypothesis 5, afternoon negative mood was positively related to person- ($\gamma = .22, p = .006$) and task-focused helping ($\gamma = .18, p = .032$). Results also supported Hypothesis 6: the indirect effects of partner-instigated incivility to both person- (estimate = $.045$, 95% CI = $.0085, .1144$) and task-focused helping (estimate = $.038$, 95% CI = $.0020, .1168$) were significant, as the 95% CIs excluded zero.

Building on these effects rendering early support for mood repair, Hypotheses 7 and 8 focused on the effects of helping on evening negative mood. Hypothesis 7 specifically proposed that helping would be negatively related to negative mood in the evening at home. Results were partially supportive, as person-focused helping negatively related to evening negative mood ($\gamma = -.05, p = .044$), but task-focused helping was *positively* related to negative mood ($\gamma = .07, p = .018$). Hypothesis 8 focused on the negative serial indirect effect of partner-instigated incivility to negative mood in the evening at home via afternoon negative mood and helping. Results were again partially supportive—the serial indirect effect was significant and negative via afternoon negative mood and person-focused helping (estimate = $-.002$, 95% CI = $-.0077, -.0002$), but significant and *positive* via afternoon negative mood and task-focused helping (estimate = $.003$, 95% CI = $.0007, .0067$). These results suggest that mood repair occurred for employees after partner-instigated incivility when person-focused, but not task-focused, helping was enacted.

Hypothesis 9 proposed that perspective taking would moderate the positive relations between partner-instigated incivility and both (a) cognitive depletion and (b) negative mood in the afternoon at work, such that the effects would be weaker at higher levels and stronger at lower levels of perspective taking. There was no interaction between perspective taking and partner-instigated incivility in relation to cognitive depletion ($\gamma = -.25, p = .203$), yet there was a significant interaction for afternoon negative mood ($\gamma = -.41, p = .008$). As shown in Figure 2, the within-person relationship of partner-instigated incivility and afternoon negative mood was positive at lower (simple slope = $.44, p < .001$), but not at higher (simple slope = $-.03, p = .860$), levels of perspective taking, supporting Hypothesis 9b, but not 9a.

Finally, Hypotheses 10-12 focused on conditional and serial indirect effects. Specifically, Hypotheses 10-11 explored the conditional indirect effects via cognitive depletion (Hypothesis 10) and afternoon negative mood (Hypothesis 11) at higher and lower perspective taking. As there was no interaction for cognitive depletion, Hypothesis 10 was not supported, and no conditional indirect effects are reported. In support of Hypothesis 11, the indirect effect of partner-instigated incivility on person-focused helping was significant and positive when perspective taking was lower (estimate = $.096, 95\% \text{ CI} = .0342, .1782$), but not higher (estimate = $-.005, 95\% \text{ CI} = -.0697, .0652$). Similarly, the indirect effect to task-focused helping was significant and positive at lower perspective taking (estimate = $.080, 95\% \text{ CI} = .0111, .1799$), but not at higher levels (estimate = $-.005, 95\% \text{ CI} = -.0558, .0602$). Hypothesis 12 then considered the serial indirect effects of partner-instigated incivility to negative mood in the evening after work. Beginning with the effects via afternoon negative mood and person-focused helping, the serial indirect effect was negative and significant for those lower in perspective taking (estimate = $-.005, 95\% \text{ CI} = -.0131, -.0004$), but non-significant for those higher (estimate = $.000, 95\% \text{ CI}$

= -.0027, .0052), supporting Hypothesis 12. For the effects via afternoon negative mood and task-focused helping, we again found that effects operated at lower (estimate = .005, 95% CI = .0015, .0123), but not higher (estimate = .000, 95% CI = -.0058, .0027), levels of perspective taking, albeit with the opposite sign given the positive effect of task-focused helping on evening negative mood. Combined, our results supported the idea of mood repair as a compensatory response to partner-instigated incivility when employees enact person-focused helping behaviors, with these effects occurring for those with lower (vs. higher) levels of perspective taking. Finally, we note that we also conducted several supplemental analyses to analyze the robustness of our conclusions; these analyses can be found in our online OSF repository.

General Discussion

Extrapolating ideas from Edwards and Rothbard (2000), as well as the literature on self-regulation (e.g., Johnson et al., 2018), we considered whether partner-instigated incivility could hinder (via a resource drain pathway involving depletion) or foster (via a reactive compensation pathway involving negative mood) the enactment of helping at work. In addition, we explored how perspective taking—an individual difference relating to one’s ability to understand others’ thoughts, behaviors, and actions (Davis, 1983)—might buffer the extent to which partner-instigated incivility in the home domain spilled into the work domain to affect depletion, negative mood, and helping. Across two complementary studies, our results indicated that although partner-instigated incivility has the potential to drain cognitive resources, such events also contribute positively to work behavior, such that recipients of partner-instigated incivility may be motivated to help others at work as a means of repairing their negative mood stemming from partner-instigated incivility (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Glomb et al., 2011). In further support of mood repair (e.g., Cialdini & Kentrick, 1976), analyses indicated that those who

engaged in more affiliative forms of helping (i.e., person-focused) returned home from work in a better mood. Finally, the effects of mood repair were weakened for those lower (versus higher) on trait perspective taking. Thus, our findings advance theory on how experiences in the home domain—namely, partner-instigated incivility—impact employees at work and at home.

Theoretical Implications

Our study contributes to the incivility literature by exploring the effects of partner-instigated incivility before the start of the workday on employees' cognitive resources, negative mood, and work behaviors. As noted by Lim and Tai (2014), incivility in the family domain differs in meaning from workplace incivility, as it violates family norms for mutual respect. Building upon Lim and Tai's (2014) theorizing, we hypothesized that partner-instigated incivility may specifically affect cognitive depletion (due to increased cognitive load to process the event), and negative mood (due to the threats this event carries towards one's daily relationship needs). Across two studies, we found both cognitive and mood-based effects on employees at work following partner-instigated incivility in the morning. By examining these effects within-person (or, in Study 1, isolating a particular instance of partner-instigated incivility), our research builds upon prior within-person tests of elements of Edwards and Rothbard's (2000) theory (e.g., Courtright et al., 2016) by comparing alternative mechanisms driving resource drain and reactive compensation stemming from a salient family-based event. Our test of cognitive depletion and negative mood mechanisms linking partner-instigated incivility to helping also delineates the complex ways incivility from the home domain may enter and impact the work domain.

Interestingly, Edwards and Rothbard (2000) noted that there are several ways that family events may enter the work domain. Here, we found stronger support for their idea of reactive compensation, as our findings supported the notion that employees may try and repair negative

mood across nonwork-work boundaries. This is consistent with self-regulation theory and research (e.g., Carver & Scheier, 1990; Tice & Bratslavsky, 2000), which has identified negative mood states as a motivational force that can promote helping acts in an effort to improve one's mood and relationships (e.g., Cialdini et al., 1973; Glomb et al., 2011). Thus, by considering the multiple strain reactions that employees can experience (i.e., both cognitive depletion and negative mood), the current research provides insight into how interpersonal stressors (e.g., partner-instigated incivility) can drive a variety of behaviors.

Given the effects that operated through the hypothesized reactive compensation (i.e., mood repair) pathway, our results regarding evening negative mood provided additional insight into the nuance of these effects. Although afternoon negative mood was positively related to both person- and task-focused helping, these helping behaviors had opposite effects on evening negative mood—whereas person-focused helping negatively related to evening negative mood, task-focused helping positively related to evening negative mood. In some ways, these results are consistent with Glomb et al. (2011) who noted that “more socially oriented forms of [helping]... are most likely to evidence mood changes” (p. 7). More person-focused forms of helping that are truly aimed at helping others with personal problems and showing concern may be more impactful in promoting the full mood repair cycle than simply helping with work responsibilities. Instead, it is possible that task-focused helping may increase employees' workload, which may spillover to increase negative mood at home (e.g., Bolino & Turnley, 2005; Ilies et al., 2007b).

Alternatively, as the mood repair effects stemming from helping behavior are socially conditioned (Cialdini & Kentrick, 1976), it may be that employees view task-focused helping as less altruistic (and more expected as part of organizational norms), and thus less beneficial. Further work on mood repair should explore both the potential mechanisms that drive mood

repair (e.g., needs for affiliation or relatedness, emotional awareness) and factors that determine when helping effectively improves or diminishes actors' mood (e.g., relatedness or competence need satisfaction, perceived prosocial impact). Indeed, whereas our work focused on a relational stressor (incivility), it may be that self and mood regulation varies depending on the initial stressor (e.g., relation vs. task-focused), affecting repair processes underlying employees' coping responses. Nonetheless, the current findings highlight how distinct helping responses carry unique mood-repairing benefits and extends work from Glomb et al. (2011) by identifying differential effects stemming from person- and task-focused helping.

In contrast to reactive compensation, our results provided partial support for the resource drain pathway. Although participants reported greater cognitive depletion after recalling (Study 1) or experiencing (Study 2) partner-instigated incivility, our results conflicted with prior work (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2018; Trougakos et al., 2015) that has found a negative relation between depletion-related effects and helping. Importantly, these non-significant effects occurred both with and without the inclusion of negative mood in our model. One explanation may be the countervailing strength of mood repair. Individuals are capable of overcoming depletion when they have sufficient motivation to do so (e.g., Muraven & Slessareva, 2003; Rosen et al., 2016), with relational forms of motivation being particularly strong (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007). As such, the compensatory effects of partner-instigated incivility, as a negative social event, may overpower the draining effects of partner-instigated incivility on helping behaviors via the depletion of self-regulatory resources. As an alternative explanation, our measure of cognitive depletion differed from measures used by Gabriel et al. (2018) and Trougakos et al. (2015), who used measures of emotional exhaustion to capture depletion-based effects (though, Koopman et al. [2020] used a measure similar to ours), which could partially explain these differences. Or, it

may be that the cognitive depletion-to-helping pathway is more complicated, as Halbesleben and Wheeler (2011) found emotional exhaustion *positively* relates to citizenship behaviors, arguing that employees may help with their remaining resources in the hopes the target reciprocates. Given these non-significant effects and theoretical possibilities, future research should explore the conditions in which resource drain effects from partner-instigated incivility occur.¹⁶

Finally, although Edwards and Rothbard (2000) noted that individual tendencies or characteristics may help individuals suppress spillover across work and home domains, little work to date has identified specific factors that might buffer such spillover effects. In the current research, our results indicated that perspective taking (Davis, 1983; Johnson, 1975) can suppress the negative mood effects of partner-instigated incivility at work. In so doing, we build on prior research on the social nature of perspective taking (e.g., Galinsky et al., 2008; Ku et al., 2015; Parker & Axtell, 2001), theorizing that those higher in perspective taking interpret the incivility episode as less threatening to their relational goals. The interactive effect that was found between partner-instigated incivility and perspective taking in relation to negative mood supported our theorizing that trait perspective taking helps individuals engage in effective sensemaking, reducing negative mood reactions and the need to engage in helping to repair one's mood. Yet, these results did not extend to the cognitive effects of partner-instigated incivility, as perspective taking did not moderate the spillover of partner-instigated incivility on depletion. As such, it may be that partner-instigated incivility is still cognitively depleting due to its ambiguous nature (Andersson & Pearson, 1999), but perspective taking weakens the effect on negative mood.

Practical Implications

¹⁶ For thoroughness, we did consider a model in which perspective taking also operated as a second-stage moderator on the relationship between cognitive depletion and both forms of helping, as well as negative mood and both forms of helping. No significant cross-level interactions at this stage of the modeled occurred, and the primary analyses reported in our main model were qualitatively unchanged. These results are available upon request.

Across studies, our findings indicated that partner-instigated incivility can negatively affect employees both in terms of depleting cognitive resources and the elicitation of negative mood states. Although cognitive depletion was unrelated to helping, such states may still have harmful effects (e.g., Christian & Ellis, 2011; Watkins & Umphress, 2020). Similarly, whereas the negative mood effects of partner-instigated incivility may promote daily helping behaviors, the emotional spillover of negative mood from home to work may also affect overall attitudes at work such as job satisfaction (e.g., Judge & Ilies, 2004). Thus, managers should be mindful of how incivility experiences at home might impact their employees' well-being and work. Of course, whereas partners should shoulder the responsibility of mitigating uncivil acts, employees' ability to cognitively reassess and make sense of the event may help buffer them. Our results regarding the effects of perspective taking suggest that individuals with higher levels of perspective taking may generally be better attuned to circumstantial factors surrounding the event, which may lessen the affective effects of incivility. Thus, letting employees know about the advantages of being higher on perspective taking, and encouraging employees to develop this relational capacity, can be fruitful.

Importantly, once employees experience the cognitive and emotional effects of partner-instigated incivility, there are steps that can be taken to diminish their potential effects as they are entering work, and perhaps support the potential upside given our findings of partner-instigated incivility being linked to increased helping behavior via negative mood. Indeed, our findings suggest that an unpleasant experience at home and the subsequent spillover into the workplace provides an opportunity for an employee's manager and/or coworkers to offer social support and interpersonal connections that help foster an environment of helping behavior. Further, engaging in helping behaviors can be emotionally restorative. Indeed, our findings

around the mood repair effects of person-focused helping are consistent with broader research suggesting that positive social interactions generate restorative and positive emotional effects (Heaphy & Dutton, 2008). However, whereas employees may be motivated to engage in both task- and person-focused helping, our results suggest that helping others by picking up additional tasks may further upset rather than restore emotional well-being.

Finally, our findings suggest that managers can take steps to minimize the effects of partner-instigated incivility on employee work behaviors by, for example, encouraging recovery once at work (e.g., Bennett et al., 2020; Hunter & Wu, 2016), or psychological detachment from home life while at work (e.g., Demsky et al., 2019). Organizations should also take a proactive stand to promote and protect the well-being of employees, both at work and at home. Research on the role of organizations in mitigating domestic violence—which is more egregious than partner-instigated incivility—has noted that organizations can implement policies to help curtail domestic violence, including offering flexible work arrangements to limit exposure to hostile exchanges (Wilcox et al., 2021). Other work has suggested that supervisor and coworker social support are important in alleviating the spillover of mistreatment at home (in the form of intimate partner aggression) into the workplace (Deen et al., 2022; O’Leary-Kelly et al., 2008; Tolentino et al., 2017). Thus, although our focus was on how perspective taking can help alleviate the extent to which partner-instigated incivility affects employees, prior scholarship still suggests that organizational support is likely to be impactful in this context. We thus encourage such supports, as well as more research on the topic of partner-instigated incivility.

Limitations and Future Directions

Although the current research has many strengths, findings should be considered in light of its limitations. First, in Study 2, the focal employee participants provided ratings of the

hypothesized mechanisms (cognitive depletion, negative mood) and helping in the same survey. We attempted to address this issue in terms of our theory, statistical approach, and supplemental analyses (posted online). Theoretically, we grounded our research in ideas from Edwards and Rothbard (2000) that served to identify depletion and negative mood as resource drain and compensatory pathways, respectively, which should relate to behavioral reactions as opposed to the alternative causal ordering. This also aligns with classic tenets of mood repair (Cialdini et al., 1973; Cialdini & Kenrick, 1976) that have been applied to the study of helping behaviors at work (e.g., Glomb et al., 2011). Statistically, we controlled for the prior day's ratings of both forms of helping behavior to further account for auto-regressive effects in our model to the best of our ability, and to model change from the day before, thus reducing reverse-causality concerns (Gabriel et al., 2019). And, analytically, we considered a reverse causal model, with results failing to support the alternative ordering of variables in our model. Nonetheless, our work could be strengthened by research that temporally separates depletion and negative mood from helping.

Study 2 used partner-ratings of partner-instigated incivility. Our choice of perpetrator-based ratings was used to minimize potential same source biases (Podsakoff et al., 2012). However, examining the victim's perspective is important to understand how incivility is appraised. For example, employees may appraise additional behaviors from their partner as uncivil, whereas their partner does not appraise it as such (e.g., reading the news on their phone while at the breakfast table). Likewise, some of partners' uncivil behavior may not be visible or noticed by their partners (e.g., Carpenter et al., 2017) creating differences between partner and focal employee ratings. Although our Study 1 recall method complements this limitation by focusing on the focal employee's experiences of partner-instigated incivility, further work should consider the alignment between instigators and recipients of partner-instigated incivility.

Across both studies, we ascribed to the definitions of incivility put forth by Lim and Cortina (2005) that focused on whether partners were rude and discourteous. Yet, there may be aspects of incivility that are relatively more or less damaging. Prior work on customer aggression has distinguished effects stemming from customers' use of aggressive words, second-person pronouns (e.g., you), and interruptions when understanding how customer aggression affects employees (Walker et al., 2017). Although we do not expect this to substantially change our results, future work that delineates the depleting and negative mood-inducing aspects of partner-instigated incivility can unpack this critical phenomenon. Further, understanding if there are elements unique to incivility at home compared with incivility at work could be fruitful. For example, future research should explore how partner-instigated incivility manifests in more diverse samples across different socioeconomic statuses and countries in which there may be differences in family norms. Similarly, as hybrid and work-from-home arrangements become more commonplace, further tests of how individuals cope with partner-instigated incivility while working should examine whether the mechanisms outlined by Edwards and Rothbard (2000) vary between work arrangements. As such, we encourage future researchers to explore the ways in which partner-instigated incivility may manifest in the family domain.

Likewise, our paper focused on how employees coped with one specific type of negative family interaction—partner-instigated incivility. However, other forms of mistreatment at home exist, including intimate partner violence (Deen et al., 2022) and family undermining (Hoobler & Brass, 2006). Much like the diversity of mistreatment events employees may experience at work (Herschovis, 2011), the characteristics distinguishing how employees respond to types of family mistreatment and their downstream effects may vary between types of partner mistreatment. Further, whereas mistreatment often focuses on a unidirectional negative relational experience,

other partner-related variables may have lasting effects on how employees engage in their work. For example, partners often need to negotiate ongoing demands, such as child custody and care, domestic chores, or care for one another's health (e.g., adult or eldercare). Whereas we found that partner-instigated incivility operated primarily through reactive compensation means (and theorized the mood repair effects would be driven by relatedness needs), perhaps stressors in which partners are collaborating or conflicting jointly would have different spillover effects.

Our analyses illustrated how certain forms of helping behaviors (i.e., person-focused helping) might facilitate focal employees' mood improvement, yet we were not able to explore whether returning home in a better mood repaired the relationship between the dyads in our study. Testing the downstream relational dynamics between partners can extend the current research, and within-person methods incorporating dyadic ratings would likely be best suited for such an exploration. Relatedly, although perspective taking was our focal moderator, relational variables such as employees' compassionate love for their partner could affect whether they cope with and resolve the partner-instigated incivility episode prior to work, as compassionate love is related to greater support provision and prosocial behaviors (Sprecher & Fehr, 2005; Stollberger et al., 2022). Likewise, psychological hardiness or self-esteem may decrease sensitivity to partner-instigated incivility. Additionally, Edwards and Rothbard (2000) argue that both resource drain and compensation effects may be weakened by efforts to separate work and family life. As such, segmentation preferences (Kreiner, 2006) may weaken the effects of partner-instigated incivility on employee depletion and negative mood, as well as the subsequent effects of helping at work on evening negative mood. Interestingly, as Study 2 was part of a larger investigation, we did have segmentation preferences available in our focal employee Level 2 data, and did not

find moderating effects.¹⁷ Nonetheless, additional theory-based moderators tapping into the work-family interface specifically should be considered going forward.

Related, although our results indicated that employees tend to help others to “repair” from partner-instigated incivility rather than “retreat,” future work should consider when compensation versus resource drain effects on helping behavior are more salient. For example, individuals with greater needs for affiliation may be more emotionally sensitive to the relational violation of partner-instigated incivility (Veroff & Veroff, 1980; Wiesenfeld et al., 2001), and be more likely to help others due to the interpersonal characteristics of helping (e.g., Lanaj & Jennings, 2020) rather than perform more maladaptive forms of mood repair (e.g., drinking, Tice & Bratslavsky, 2000; maladaptive shopping, Song et al., 2018). Individuals may also vary in their resilience to resource-loss, affecting the strength of resource drain effects. For example, more conscientious employees may be less susceptible to resource drain effects (Wagner et al., 2012), as they may have a greater capacity to help, even when cognitively depleted. As a final example, employees may be more likely to help despite being cognitively depleted when there are opportunities for reactive helping (i.e., receiving help requests; Spitzmuller & Van Dyne, 2013), as these may consume relatively fewer self-regulatory resources compared to seeking out helping opportunities (i.e., proactive helping) in which resource drain effects may be stronger.

Finally, given that the mood repair pathway garnered more support, a natural question emerges—who did employees choose to help, and was the help proactive or reactive? Although we distinguished between person- and task-focused helping behaviors from an empirical perspective (e.g., Settoon & Mossholder, 2002), it is unclear whether employees were asked for help, or if they took initiative to help others in order to feel better affectively. Our findings also

¹⁷ These results are available from the authors upon request.

indicated that although negative mood was related to both forms of helping, only person-focused helping repaired negative mood states whereas task-focused helping exacerbated it. Future research studying helping and mood repair should explicitly consider these possible differences.

Conclusion

Incivility may have harmful effects not only when experienced at work, but when it is experienced at home from one's partner prior to the start of the workday. Results across two complementary studies helped illustrate how partner-instigated incivility can affect employees' depletion and negative mood—whereas cognitive depletion was unrelated to daily helping acts, partner-instigated incivility at home had a positive indirect effect on helping behaviors via negative mood. These effects were qualified by perspective taking, such that individuals with higher perspective taking better suppressed the effects of partner-instigated incivility on negative mood. Taken together, our findings introduce partner-instigated incivility as a daily family stressor that may impact workplace behaviors and motivate employees' need to compensate for the negative experience through pursuing more desirable relations at work via helping behaviors.

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Table 1*Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Study 1 Variables*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Gender (1 = Female, 0 = Male/Other)	0.44	0.50	--						
2. Age	37.17	8.43	-.06	--					
3. Race	0.87	0.34	-.01	-.05	--				
4. Clarity of Recall	4.29	0.65	.05	-.05	.00	(.82)			
5. Experimental Condition (1 = Uncivil, 0 = Civil)	0.49	0.50	-.07	-.03	.17 *	-.13	--		
6. Cognitive Depletion	2.08	1.10	-.07	-.09	.09	-.07	.43 **	(.94)	
7. Negative Mood	1.67	0.92	.01	-.06	.11	.05	.50 **	.70 **	(.91)

Note. $N = 226$. *SD* = standard deviation. Reliabilities are reported along the diagonal.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 2*Study 1 Hierarchical Regression Results*

Predictor	Cognitive Depletion (Step 1)		Cognitive Depletion (Step 2)		Negative Mood (Step 1)		Negative Mood (Step 2)	
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>
Intercept	2.14**	(.10)	1.66**	(.11)	1.67**	(.08)	1.17**	(.09)
Control Variables								
Gender (1 = Female; 0 = Male/Other)	-.14	(.15)	-.08	(.13)	.01	(.12)	.07	(.11)
Clarity of Recall	-.12	(.11)	-.03	(.10)	.07	(.09)	.16*	(.08)
Independent Variable (Manipulation)								
Condition (1 = Uncivil, 0 = Civil)			.94**	(.13)			.95**	(.11)
Variance Explained								
<i>R</i> ²		.01		.19**		.00		.27**
Change in <i>R</i> ²				.18**				.26**

Note. *N* = 226. *SE* = standard error. Coefficients are unstandardized.

* *p* < .05, ** *p* < .01

Table 3*Study 2 Variance Decomposition for Within-Person Variables*

Variable	Within-Person Variance (σ^2)	Between-Person Variance (τ_{00})	Percentage of Total Variance Within-Person
Partner-Instigated Incivility (Partner, AM)	0.104	0.044	70.27%
Cognitive Depletion (Focal, PM)	0.487	0.329	59.68%
Negative Mood (Focal, PM)	0.258	0.194	57.08%
Enacted Person-Focused Helping (Focal, PM)	0.649	0.541	54.54%
Enacted Task-Focused Helping (Focal, PM)	0.502	0.500	50.10%
Workload (Focal, PM)	0.759	0.746	50.43%
Negative Mood (Focal, EV)	0.232	0.161	59.03%

Note. AM = morning survey; PM = afternoon survey; EV = evening survey. Focal refers to the focal employee in the dyad. Percentage of total variance within-person was calculated as the following: $\sigma^2 / (\sigma^2 + \tau_{00})$. Estimates are based on the total Level 1 sample size before testing the lagged effects ($n = 743$).

Table 4*Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Study 2 Variables*

Variable	Within M	Within SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Level 1 Variables																			
1. Sine	-0.01	0.71	...	.01	-.34**	-.70**	.07	-.02	.02	.03	.01	-.06	.00	...	...	...	...	...	...
2. Cosine	-0.03	0.70	.19	...	.23**	.47**	.09*	-.15**	.07	.04	-.07	-.04	-.03	...	...	...	...	...	...
3. Day of the Study (Day 1 - 10)	5.40	2.85	-.28**	.27**	...	.48**	.01	-.07	-.05	.09*	-.10**	-.01	.02	...	...	...	...	...	...
4. Day of the Week (Monday – Friday)	2.96	1.39	-.49**	.46**	.50**	...	-.04	-.07	-.01	-.00	-.08*	.02	-.05	...	...	...	...	...	...
5. Partner-Instigated Incivility (Partner, AM)	1.17	0.38	-.16	-.01	.19	.16	...	.02	.09*	.15**	-.03	.02	.11**	...	...	...	...	...	...
6. Workload (Focal, PM)	2.64	1.23	.03	.03	.10	.02	-.03	...	.12**	.13**	.17**	.20**	.02	...	...	...	...	...	...
7. Cognitive Depletion (Focal, PM)	1.90	0.91	.11	-.00	.05	.00	.16	.13	...	.41**	.03	.06	.19**	...	...	...	...	...	...
8. Negative Mood (Focal, PM)	1.38	0.67	.04	.00	.13	.09	.47**	.24*	.57**	...	.11**	.10**	.25**	...	...	...	...	...	...
9. Person-Focused Helping (Focal, PM)	2.50	1.08	.04	.02	.04	-.17	.06	.11	-.15	.10	...	.41**	-.01	...	...	...	...	...	...
10. Task-Focused Helping (Focal, PM)	1.86	1.00	.03	.11	.15	.02	.29**	.41**	.01	.33**	.63**	...	.09*	...	...	...	...	...	...
11. Negative Mood (Focal, EV)	1.34	0.62	.17	-.00	.03	-.01	.47**	.26*	.55**	.89**	.05	.34**	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Level 2 Variables																			
	M	SD																	
12. Partner Gender (1 = Female)	0.21	0.41	.13	.15	-.01	.05	.28**	-.03	-.10	.06	-.13	.04	.15	...	...	...	...	...	...
13. Partner Age	37.78	7.77	-.13	.06	.21*	.16	-.08	.09	-.17	-.05	-.08	-.13	-.13	.07	...	...	...	...	...
14. Partner Race (1 = White)	0.82	0.39	.10	.09	-.16	-.20	-.05	.01	-.07	-.14	.12	-.02	-.14	.11	.06	...	...	...	...
15. Focal Employee Gender (1 = Female)	0.82	0.39	.01	-.07	-.07	-.10	-.29**	-.03	.11	.02	.08	-.06	-.01	-.86**	-.03	-.16	...	...	...
16. Focal Employee Age	36.99	8.05	-.11	.13	.12	.11	-.05	-.00	-.21*	-.02	-.00	.00	-.08	.32**	.82**	.10	-.28**	...	...
17. Focal Employee Race (1 = White)	0.79	0.41	.11	.03	-.04	-.09	-.05	.02	.10	-.09	.08	-.01	-.10	.13	.11	.59**	-.17	.14	...
18. Perspective Taking	3.71	0.58	-.02	.18	.40**	.15	-.08	-.11	-.10	-.19	.10	.03	-.22*	-.08	.04	-.18	.04	-.02	-.21*

Note. Level 1 $n = 743$. Level 2 $n = 92$ (focal employee-partner dyads). *SD* = standard deviation. Day of the study represents a trend variable representing each day of the study. Day of the week represents a code for Monday (1) through Friday (5). AM = morning survey; PM = afternoon survey; EV = evening survey. Correlations amongst the Level 1 variables are within-person centered correlations and reported above the diagonal. Level 1 variables were aggregated to Level 2 in order to analyze correlations with our between-person variables, which are reported below the diagonal. Participant demographics are included for completeness. Reliabilities are reported along the diagonal (Level 1 reliabilities are estimated within-person reliabilities).

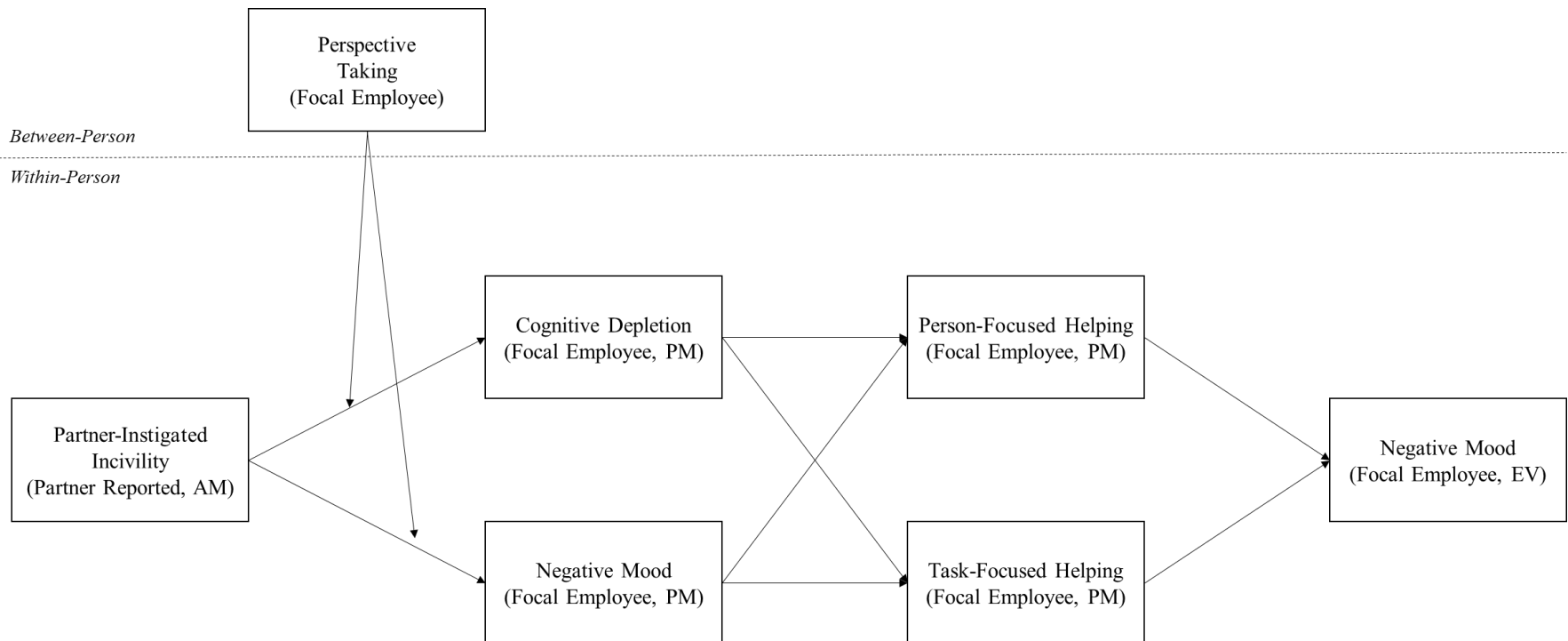
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 5*Study 2 Simultaneous Multilevel Path Analysis Results*

Predictor	Cognitive Depletion (Focal, PM)		Negative Mood (Focal, PM)		Person-Focused Helping (Focal, PM)		Task-Focused Helping (Focal, PM)		Negative Mood (Focal, EV)	
	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>
Intercept	2.03	(.13)	1.29	(.09)	2.62**	(.19)	1.69**	(.17)	.91**	(.20)
Level 2 Predictor										
Perspective Taking	-.10	(.12)	-.16	(.09)						
Level 1 Predictors and Control Variables										
Sine	-.03	(.06)	.03	(.04)	-.09	(.07)	-.07	(.06)	-.07	(.06)
Cosine	.10*	(.04)	.02	(.04)	.02	(.05)	-.01	(.05)	.02	(.05)
Day of the Study (Day 1 - 10)	-.01	(.01)	.02*	(.01)	-.02	(.01)	-.00	(.01)	-.00	(.01)
Day of the Week (Monday – Friday)	-.02	(.04)	-.01	(.02)	-.06	(.04)	-.01	(.03)	-.06	(.05)
Partner-Instigated Incivility (Partner, AM)	.20*	(.10)	.21**	(.08)	-.13	.10	-.01	(.11)	.07	(.08)
Workload (Focal, PM)	.10*	(.04)	.08*	(.03)	.14**	(.04)	.15**	(.05)	-.04	(.02)
Cognitive Depletion (Focal, PM)					-.07	(.05)	-.03	(.05)	.08*	(.03)
Negative Mood (Focal, PM)					.22**	(.08)	.18*	(.08)	.31**	(.05)
Prior Day Person-Focused Helping (Focal, PM)										
Prior Day Task-Focused Helping (Focal, PM)										
Person-Focused Helping (Focal, PM)					-.07	(.05)			-.05*	(.02)
Task-Focused Helping (Focal, PM)							-.05	(.04)	.07*	(.03)
Cross-Level Interactions										
Partner-Instigated Incivility * Perspective Taking	-.25	(.20)	-.41**	(.15)						

Note. Level 1 $n = 743$. Level 2 $n = 92$ (focal employee-partner/spouse dyads). *SE* = standard error. Day of the study represents a trend variable representing each day of the study. Day of the week represents a code for Monday (1) through Friday (5). AM = morning survey; PM = afternoon survey; EV = evening survey. Coefficients are unstandardized.

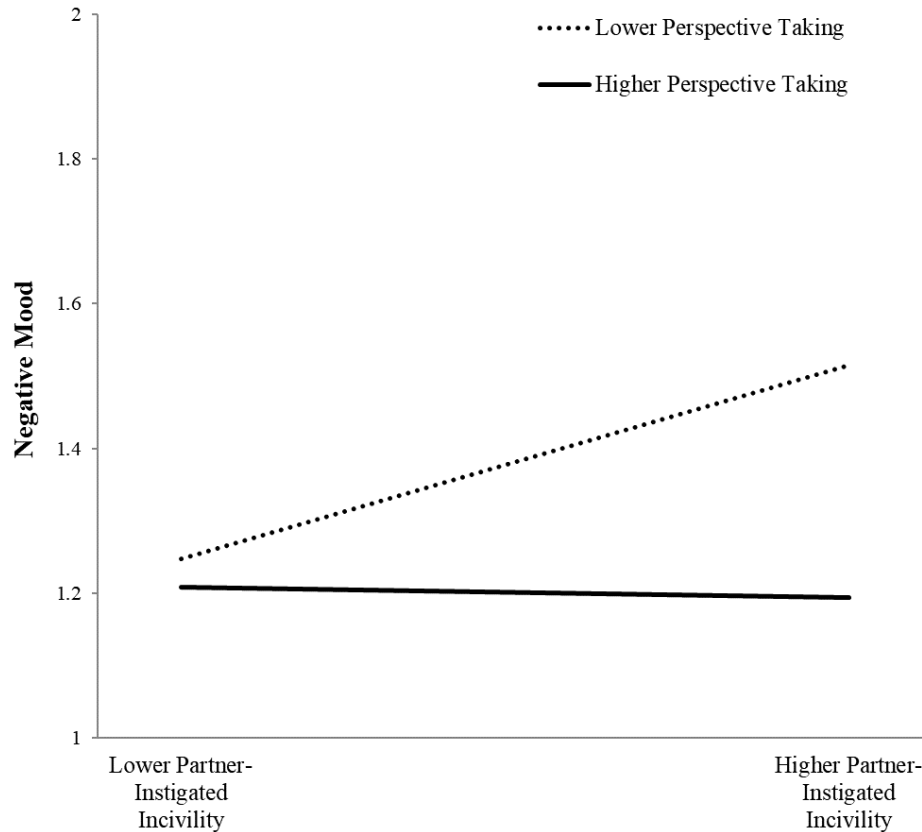
* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

Figure 1*Conceptual Model*

Note. Our conceptual model was examined with multisource data stemming from a focal employee and their partner. AM = morning survey sent at 9:30AM; PM = afternoon survey sent at 4:00PM; EV = evening survey sent at 8:00PM. For parsimony, we do not include control variables or direct effects; please see Table 5 for complete results reporting of all modeled relationships.

Figure 2

Cross-Level Interaction of Perspective Taking on the Within-Person Relationship Between Partner-Instigated Incivility and Negative Mood (Study 2)



Note. Partner-instigated incivility was captured in the morning survey as rated by the partner of the focal employee; negative mood was captured by the focal employee during their afternoon survey. Simple slopes indicated that the within-person relationship between partner-instigated incivility and negative mood was significant and positive at lower perspective taking ($\gamma = .44$, $SE = .09$, $p < .001$), but not higher perspective taking ($\gamma = -.03$, $SE = .14$, $p = .860$).

Appendix

Materials and Measures for Study 1 and Study 2

Study 1

Part 1: Pre-Screening Questionnaire

All interested participants saw the following information:

In this study, you will be required to complete a brief survey. You are **required to use a desktop or laptop computer to complete this survey**. Your submission could be rejected for careless or unreasonably fast responding or failure to complete the study. Based on your responses, you may be asked to complete a follow-up survey and online activity in approximately 1 – 2 weeks.

1. During the past month, has your partner ever acted in an **uncivil manner to you prior to when you started work for the day**? That is, were they ever rude or discourteous (e.g., condescending, showing little interest in your opinion, ignoring you, or doubting your judgement)—displaying a lack of regard for you—before your workday began? Yes/No
2. During the past month, has your partner ever acted in a **civil manner to you prior to when you started work for the day**? That is, they were polite or courteous (e.g., respectful, showing interest in your opinion, paying attention to you, or trusting of your judgement)—displaying regard for you—before your workday began? Yes/No

Those who selected “yes” to both questions moved to the next part of the study.

Part 2: Incivility/Civility Recall Manipulation

Participants in the civil condition were given the following instructions:

Please think of a time during the **past month** on a day that you worked when you were interacting with your spouse/partner, and they behaved in a **civil** manner toward you **before you started your workday**. That is, they were polite or courteous (e.g., respectful, showing interest in your opinion, paying attention to you, or trusting of your judgement) —displaying regard for you—rather than rude or discourteous to you before your workday began.

Participants in the uncivil condition were given the following instructions:

Please think of a time during the **past month** on a day that you worked when you were interacting with your spouse/partner, and they behaved in an **uncivil** manner toward you **before you started your workday**. That is, they were rude or discourteous (e.g., condescending, showing little interest in your opinion, ignoring you, or doubting your judgement)—displaying a lack of regard for you—rather than polite or courteous to you before your workday began.

Both participants were given the same instructions and subsequent questions:

In answering the questions that follow, please write as detailed of a description of what happened as possible. If you can, write your description so that someone reading it might feel what you felt from learning about your experience. Try to relive the experience as you write, pretending you are actually there and remembering how you felt during the experience and the details of the scene.

1. What led up to this interaction? That is, how did it come about?
2. What did your spouse/partner say and do? Try, as much as possible, to quote the exact words that your spouse/partner used and/or describe their specific actions, providing detailed information about the context of the particular situation.
3. How did this interaction with your spouse/partner affect you? How did it make you feel?

Manipulation Checks

Perceived Incivility of Interaction (Lim & Cortina, 2005)

Instructions: In the interaction you just described, please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree that your spouse/partner engaged in the following behaviors towards you.

(1 = *strongly disagree*; 2 = *disagree*; 3 = *neutral*; 4 = *agree*; 5 = *strongly agree*)

1. Put me down or was condescending to me.
2. Paid little attention to my statements or showed little interest in my opinion.
3. Ignored me.
4. Doubted my judgment on something.

Perceived Incivility of Interaction (ad hoc)

Question: In the interaction you just described, how uncivil was your spouse/partner to you?

(1 = *not at all uncivil*, 2 = *a little uncivil*, 3 = *moderately uncivil*, 4 = *quite uncivil*, 5 = *extremely uncivil*)

Control and Dependent Variables

Clarity of Recall (Fedor et al., 2001)

See Fedor et al. (2001) for exact items and instructions.

Cognitive Depletion (Twenge et al., 2004)

Instructions: Please rate the extent to which you are experiencing the following right now.

(1 = *not at all*; 2 = *a little*; 3 = *a moderate amount*; 4 = *quite a bit*; 5 = *a great deal*)

1. I feel drained.
2. My mind feels unfocused.
3. It would take a lot of effort for me to concentrate on something.
4. My mental energy is running low.
5. I feel like my willpower is gone.

Negative Mood (Mackinnon et al., 1999)

See Mackinnon et al. (1999) for exact items and instructions.

Study 2 Measures

Between-Person Measures (Level 2, Opt-in Survey)

Perspective Taking (Davis, 1983; focal employee)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item in general (not how you feel today, but how you usually feel about each item).

(1 = *strongly disagree*; 2 = *disagree*; 3 = *neutral*; 4 = *agree*; 5 = *strongly agree*)

1. Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place.
2. If I'm sure I'm right about something, I don't waste much time listening to other people's arguments. (R)
3. I try to understand others by imagining how things look from their perspective.
4. I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at them both.
5. I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the "other person's" point of view. (R)
6. I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.
7. When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his/her shoes" for a while.

Within-Person Measures (Level 1; Daily Surveys)

Partner-Instigated Incivility (Lim & Cortina, 2005; morning; partner)

Instructions: Thinking about your time *before work this morning*, please rate the extent to which you engaged in the following behaviors towards [Focal Employee].

(1 = *not at all*; 2 = *a little*; 3 = *a moderate amount*; 4 = *quite a bit*; 5 = *a great deal*)

1. I put down or was condescending to [Focal Employee].
2. I paid little attention to [Focal Employee]'s statements or showed little interest in his/her opinion.
3. I ignored [Focal Employee].
4. I doubted [Focal Employee]'s judgment on something.

Cognitive Depletion (Twenge et al., 2004; afternoon; focal employee)

Instructions: Please rate the extent to which you are experiencing the following right now.

(1 = *not at all*; 2 = *a little*; 3 = *a moderate amount*; 4 = *quite a bit*; 5 = *a great deal*)

1. I feel drained.
2. My mind feels unfocused.
3. It would take a lot of effort for me to concentrate on something.
4. My mental energy is running low.
5. I feel like my willpower is gone.

Negative Mood (Mackinnon et al., 1999; afternoon and evening; focal employee)

See Mackinnon et al. (1999) for exact items and instructions.

Person-Focused Helping (Settoon & Mossholder, 2002; afternoon, focal employee)

Instructions: Please rate the extent to which you engaged in the following at work today.

(1 = *not at all*; 2 = *a little*; 3 = *a moderate amount*; 4 = *quite a bit*; 5 = *a great deal*)

1. Today, I took time to listen to a coworker's problems and worries.
2. Today, I took a personal interest in a coworker.

3. Today, I showed concern and courtesy toward a coworker.

Task-Focused Helping (Settoon & Mossholder, 2002; afternoon, focal employee)

Instructions: Please rate the extent to which you engaged in the following at work today.

(1 = *not at all*; 2 = *a little*; 3 = *a moderate amount*; 4 = *quite a bit*; 5 = *a great deal*)

1. Today, I took on extra responsibilities in order to help a coworker when things got demanding at work.
2. Today, I helped a coworker with a difficult assignment, even if the assistance was not directly requested.
3. Today, I assisted a coworker with a heavy workload even though it was not a part of my job.

Workload (Spector & Jex, 1998; afternoon [control variable], focal employee)

Instructions: Please rate the extent to which you experienced the following at work today.

(1 = *not at all*; 2 = *a little*; 3 = *a moderate amount*; 4 = *quite a bit*; 5 = *a great deal*)

1. Today, my job required me to work very fast.
2. Today, my job required me to work very hard.
3. Today, my job left me with little time to get things done.