
DOES INTERPERSONAL EMOTION REGULATION REALLY HELP?! INTERPERSONAL EMOTION REGULATION AND AFFECT THROUGH THE LENSE OF A DAILY DIARY INVESTIGATION

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Abstract

The present work investigated the dynamic relations between affect, with both its positive and negative dimensions, and interpersonal emotion regulation. Drawing from a sample of 220 participants completing surveys on four consecutive days, we used the random intercept cross-lagged panel model (*RI-CLPM*) to investigate the associations between positive and negative affect and interpersonal emotion regulation. The results of *RI-CLPM* demonstrated a bidirectional association between positive affect and interpersonal emotion regulation. Interpersonal emotional regulation did not predict the next day's negative affect. However, negative affect predicted future deployment of interpersonal emotion regulation strategies. Use of interpersonal emotion regulation at one time point predicts its subsequent use. Our findings highlight the importance disentangling the within-person effects when examining the relationship between positive and negative affect and interpersonal emotion regulation.

Keywords: positive affect, negative affect, interpersonal emotion regulation, daily reciprocal associations, random-intercept cross-lagged panel model.

Emotion regulation (ER) was defined as the capacity to influence affective experience through up-regulating, down-regulating or maintaining certain emotions or moods (Gross, 1998; Niven et al., 2009). Understanding how people regulate their

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moods and affect, both positive and negative, has important theoretical and practical implications across many areas of applied psychology, impacting mental health and well-being across countries and cultures (Chen et al., 2025; Gross et al., 2019). In this study, we add to the ER literature by investigating the interplay between a relatively novel ER strategy, interpersonal emotion regulation (IER; Zaki & Williams, 2013), and affect through the lenses of a daily diary investigation.

IER refers to the processes by which individuals seek to influence others' emotional states (extrinsic IER) or rely on others to regulate their own emotions (intrinsic IER) within social contexts. Unlike intrapersonal emotion regulation, which focuses on self-directed strategies, IER emphasizes the relational and interactive aspects of managing emotions, often driven by goals such as enhancing social bonds, reducing distress, or increasing positive affect (Niven et al., 2009). Some empirical investigations reported that IER was more effective compared to intrapersonal ER in regulating emotions under certain specific contexts (Levy-Gigi & Shamay-Tsoory, 2017; Sahi et al., 2023). Various IER strategies, such as co-rumination and co-distraction, play a distinct role in shaping affective and physiological responses to stress, revealing that support from others can modulate stress recovery in ways that differ meaningfully from intrapersonal regulation approaches (Bataglini et al., 2025). Recent neuroimaging research shows evidence of IER effectiveness in down-regulating negative emotion and supporting relationship closeness through enhanced interpersonal brain synchronization (IBS) of the prefrontal and temporal areas among friends (Zhu et al., 2025). Extant research suggests that people engage in extrinsic IER more frequently than intrinsic IER, primarily aiming to increase positive emotions during social interactions (Mikkola et al., 2023), an effect that can be explained through a pro-hedonic tendency towards harmonious and shared positive affect (Gross & John, 2003; Zaki & Williams, 2013). Research also suggests that people often turn to others for help with regulating their emotions, highlighting the significance of social interactions in emotional processes (Tran et al., 2021). From a theoretical standpoint, the effectiveness of IER in regulating emotion is supported by the Social Baseline Model (Beckes and Coan, 2011), model arguing that when employing IER, individuals draw not only from their own resources, but also from those of their partners, assertion supported by empirical investigations (e.g., Sahi et al., 2023). While a lot of ink has been spilled to describe the pivotal role of ER in respect to various outcomes, ranging from well-being to psychopathologies or personality disorders, the potential implications of IER is a relatively novel territory of ER research. This relatively new area of investigation is characterized by conflicting findings.

For example, recent investigations show that supportive IER predicted lower depression and anxiety rates and higher quality of life in cancer survivors (Zeng et al., 2025). Moreover, IER contributed to enhancing the romantic relationship quality

(e.g., Lemay et al., 2025). Extant research suggests that IER has far reaching implications for outcomes such as physical health and psychological well-being (e.g., Debrot et al., 2013; Niven, 2017). Specific IER strategies were differentially linked to depressive symptoms in parent–adolescent dyads (Gadassi-Polack et al., 2025). At the same time, recent investigations relying on longitudinally intensive designs, such as experience-sampling, reveal strategy-specific and sometimes null effects on momentary mood—for example, partner-initiated distraction boosted positive affect, whereas advice-giving or encouraging suppression worsened it (Pauw et al., 2024). Moreover, suggest that IER might impact affect directly, but also via indirect pathways (Berkowitz et al., 2025). Intrinsic IER was found to predict subsequent emotional states and regulatory strategy selection in naturalistic contexts, such that IER engagement was associated with elevated negative affect and reduced positive affect (Berkowitz et al., 2025). Yet other investigations analyzing the IER in the parent-adolescent dyads reported that engagement in IER strategies was associated with increased depression in the regulator (Gadassi-Polack, et al., 2023).

These mixed findings matter because affect is both the primary target of emotion regulation (Gross & John, 2003) and the gateway through which broader influences unfold: successfully reducing negative affect can partly alleviate symptoms of depression and anxiety (Gross, 2015), enhance positive affect and promote life satisfaction and resilience (Fredrickson, 2001). Moreover, influential theories such as the binary model of distress (Ellis, 1994) distinguish functional negative emotions (e.g., sadness, concern) from dysfunctional ones (e.g., depression, anxiety), describing their role as key mechanisms for various disorders. Various empirical investigations confirming confirm that the two classes differ both in respect to their antecedents and consequences (David, et al., 2004; David, et al., 2005). Regulating emotions in social contexts can strengthen the relational bonds and buffer stress, thereby bolstering well-being (Niven et al., 2012). Consequently, we contribute to the literature by clarifying whether and how IER impacts positive and negative affect at the daily level. Addressing this gap will shed light onto one of the potential mechanisms linking IER with its distal psychological benefits (Williams et al., 2018; Zaki & Williams, 2013). We tackle this gap by modelling within-person associations between discrete IER and subsequent affect as captured in a daily diary investigation.

I(ER) Research and Longitudinal Designs

Much of the knowledge describing how ER strategies (including IER) relate to different consequential outcomes has been derived mostly from experimental, cross-sectional or longitudinal designs. However, as outlined by Becker et al. (2019),

understanding how these strategies unfold over shorter time frames (e.g., over the course of a day or a week) is instrumental to understand how the intertwining between ER and affect unfolds in everyday life, rendering ER research more relevant to various areas of applied psychology.

Therefore, in order to fully capture both the persistence of affective states and the dynamic and evolving nature of interpersonal emotional regulation, longitudinal designs are essential, and two methodological approaches have been prominent choices in studies: Ecological Momentary Assessment (ESM) and Daily Diary Studies (DDS). Both approaches share the goal of capturing emotional experiences as they unfold in naturalistic contexts, yet they differ in their temporal resolution, data collection processes, and focus.

ESM is a real-time data collection technique that captures emotions at multiple moments throughout the day, typically through smartphone apps or other digital devices. ESM is regarded as particularly effective for identifying short-term fluctuations in affective states and emotional inertia (e.g., Kuppens et al., 2010). It is also widely used to assess the effects of environmental or social interactions on emotional fluctuations (Trull & Ebner-Priemer, 2013). Recent experience-sampling evidence reflects the suitability of ecological momentary assessment (EMA) in uncovering within-person emotion-regulation dynamics. A multicultural EMA (United States and China) showed that greater ER-flexibility (context sensitivity & strategy repertoire) predicted lower momentary distress across cultures (Chen et al., 2024). An eight-day EMA with outpatients at early psychosis clinics found that higher ER-flexibility buffered negative-emotion volatility and accelerated affective recovery (Li et al., 2024). Pauw et al. (2024) researched IER combining six random prompts per day with end-of-day reports and highlighted the differential effectiveness of IER strategies in daily life. Methodologically, EMA minimizes recall bias and links psychological states to real-time contexts (Mengelkoch et al., 2024), yet typical compliance rates hover around 75 % and missing-data patterns require specialized modelling (Jain & McCabe, 2024). A recent systematic review of EMA resilience studies likewise highlights strong ecological validity alongside participant burden as the main limitation (Schwarz et al., 2025).

In contrast, daily diary methodologies collect data at the end of each day, with participants retrospectively summarizing their emotional experiences, significant events, and regulatory efforts (e.g., Bolger et al., 2003). This approach provides a broader view of day-level emotional patterns and can capture the cumulative effects of experiences stacked over longer timeframes (Nezlek, 2012). This approach has been used to examine how day-level fluctuations in affect and its regulation are related to mental health outcomes, relational or life satisfaction (e.g., Katan & Kelly, 2021; Svaldi et al., 2020).

While ESM provides real-time insights, DDS (daily diary surveys) are particularly suited for examining the cumulative and cross-day effects of ER strategies. DDS uniquely allow for capturing these temporal patterns, offering a structured yet ecologically valid method to examine the persistence of IER effects beyond immediate contexts, although they do face some limitations in that they can elicit reactivity altering the very experiences being tracked, and often suffer from non-random missing data. All of these may distort rapid emotion-regulation cycles and bias estimates, but they can be addressed by complementing higher-frequency methods and rigorous data handling (Gochmann et al., 2022; Griffiths et al., 2022). To date, research has demonstrated that such designs effectively track how ER strategies interact with daily stressors, resilience, and affective outcomes (Braet et al., 2024, Svaldi et al., 2020). For instance, DDS has been used to show that the effectiveness of cognitive reappraisal and distraction depends on stressor intensity and controllability (Braet et al., 2024), that adaptive ER strategies weaken the relationship between negative affect and binge eating (Svaldi et al., 2020), that resilience moderates the relationship between emotion-focused coping strategies and negative affect (Lu & Shi, 2024), or that ER efforts shape next-day mood stability and stress levels, underscoring the importance of assessing emotional carryover effects (Tran et al., 2021; Nezlek & Kuppens, 2008). Various empirical investigations reported that the indirect consequences of IER, such as mood stability, coping strategies, or negative affect might be carried over to the next day (e.g., Lu & Shi, 2024; Nezlek & Kuppens, 2008; Tran et al., 2021). The present investigation contributes to this emergent area of research by examining whether and how intrinsic IER strategies extend beyond momentary regulation, i.e., if they are carried over to the next day or whether they are confined to the immediate context in which the regulation occurs, leaving open questions about the temporal persistence and broader implications of such emotional strategies on daily emotional trajectories and well-being.

The Present Study

The main assertion of IER theory is that positive/negative affect is an outcome of IER processes, i.e., that it follows downstream from ER. To advance our understanding on the interplay between IER and affect, we employed a daily diary investigation to analyze and disentangle the daily level associations between IER (Zaki & Williams, 2013) and positive/negative affect. We hypothesize that:

H1a: IER has a significant and negative association with next day negative affect.

H1b: IER has a significant and positive association with next day positive affect.

However, affect is not only a target of ER process, but also one of the triggers that sets in motion engagement in IER, i.e. it also precedes IER (upstream) in a spiral effect. Both positive and negative affect are key predictors of engagement in emotion regulation (ER) strategies, as individuals are motivated to regulate their emotions based on their current affective states. Functionalist theories hold that emotions are action-readiness signals that motivate behavior aimed at meeting adaptive goals (Frijda, 1986, 2007; Keltner & Gross, 1999). Thus, within the more general control-process model of self-regulation (Carver & Scheier, 1998), negative affect often triggers the use of regulation strategies aimed at alleviating distress, such as suppression or reappraisal (Gross & John, 2003), whereas positive affect can drive regulatory efforts to sustain or enhance positive emotional experiences, as demonstrated by research linking positive affect to savoring strategies (Bryant, 2003). Fluctuations in affect, regardless of valence, can prompt individuals to seek interpersonal regulation, especially in contexts requiring emotional support or co-regulation with others (Williams et al., 2018; Niven et al., 2012). These findings emphasize the bidirectional relationship between affective states and emotion regulation behaviors, underscoring the dynamic interplay between what individuals feel and how they manage those emotions.

To shed light on this potentially intricate affect-IER relationship, we examined the cross-lagged associations between IER and both positive and negative affect by deploying a Random-Intercept Cross-Lagged Panel Model (RI-CLPM) analysis (Hamaker et al., 2015). Employing RI-CLPM enabled us to estimate the associations between IER and next day affect (positive/negative) and vice versa, while controlling for the auto-regressive effects. We contribute to the general domain of emotion regulation by shedding light on the temporal day-level associations between IER and affective outcomes. We therefore further hypothesize that:

H2: Negative (and not positive) affect has a significant relationship with next day engagement in IER.

Method

Participants and Procedure

The sample consisted of a total number of 220 participants (56% females) aged between 23 and 64 ($M = 42.01$; $SD = 11.12$) of which 113 (51%) graduated university and 102 participants had secondary or lower secondary education. A call for participants was advertised on a number of Romanian community websites. Only the first 240 participants who met the inclusion criteria of being available to complete the

survey within the specified time frame were enrolled in the study. Participants were included if they were adults aged 18 or older, fluent in the study language, and reported at least one meaningful social interaction per day during the assessment period. After completing an initial survey that collected demographic information, the participants completed daily surveys for four consecutive days. The survey links were sent out via email every day at 7 p.m. and remained active for 4 hours.

Measures

Positive and negative affect. Daily functioning with regard to positive and negative affect was assessed with the International Positive and Negative Affect Schedule Short Form (I-PANAS-SF; Thompson, 2007). Participants indicated on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always) the extent to which they feel each of the 5 positive affect statements (e.g., “Determined”) and of the 5 negative affect ones (e.g., “Upset”). The internal consistency across the four measurement occasions was .85 for Positive Affect and .81 for Negative Affect.

Interpersonal Emotion Regulation. Daily interpersonal emotion regulation was measured with a modified version of the 16 items Interpersonal Regulation Questionnaire (IRQ; Williams et al., 2018). The internal consistency for the IER across the four measurement occasions was .79. IRQ measures on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) the extent to which people recruit social resources to manage their emotions, on four dimensions: Negative Tendency (e.g. “When something bad happens, my first impulse is to seek out the company of others”), Negative Efficacy (“I appreciate having others’ support through difficult times”), Positive-Tendency (“When things are going well, I just have to tell other people about it”) and Positive Efficacy (“I really enjoy being around the people I know”).

Analytical Approach

The daily associations between positive and negative affect and interpersonal emotion regulation were analyzed via the Random Intercepts Cross-Lagged Panel Model (RI-CLPM). RI-CLPM was developed to investigate dynamic processes and the interplays between two constructs as they unfold over several measurement occasions (Hamaker et al., 2015). A conceptual overview of the hypothesized associations that we employed were included in Figure 1.

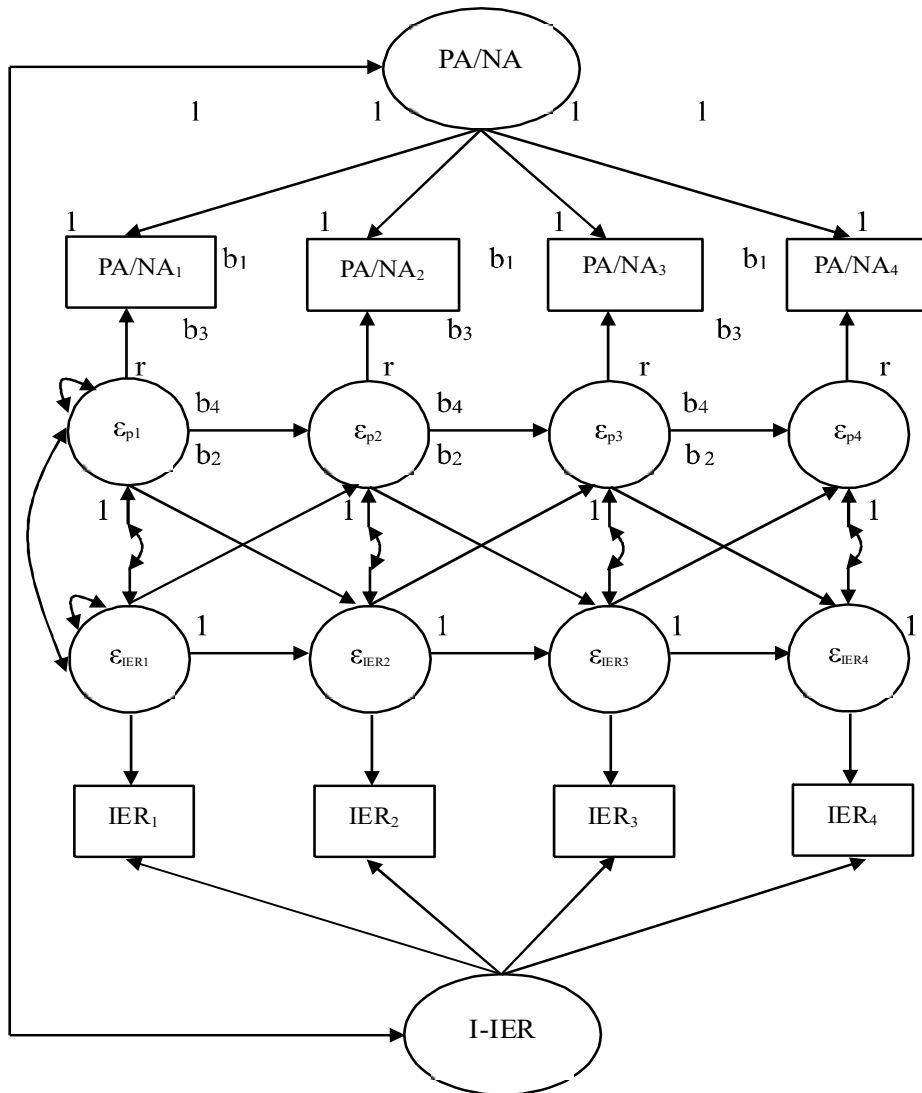


Figure 1. Conceptual representation of the random intercept cross-lagged panel model (RI-CLPM) of the daily associations between interpersonal emotion regulation, positive affect and negative affect

The latent random intercept component capturing the time-invariant component in interpersonal emotion regulation was labelled I-IER while the one capturing positive and negative affect, I-PA and I-NA, respectively. The temporal deviations from the individuals' general levels of interpersonal emotion regulation and both positive and negative affect were labelled ϵ_{IER} , ϵ_{PA} , and ϵ_{NA} , respectively.

The autoregressive paths (carry-over effects from the same construct domain) were named b1 and b2, while the cross-lagged effects (associations between interpersonal emotion regulation and both positive and negative affect) were named b3 and b4. Paths b3 and b4 indicate the extent to which the changes in one construct account for significant changes in the other construct on the next measurement occasion, while parceling out the autoregressive effects. All analyses were conducted using Mplus 8.5 (Muthen & Muthen, 2017).

Results

Table 1 displays the means, standard deviations, internal consistencies and correlations between interpersonal emotion regulation (IER), positive affect (PA) and negative affect (NA) across the four measurement occasions. Next, using RI-CLPM models, we examined the dynamics between affect and interpersonal emotion regulation over the four-day period. The goodness of fit indices suggested reasonable to good fit for both models.

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, and correlations between the focal variables.

	M	SD	α	PA				NA				IER			
				1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
PA1	17.43	2.80	.85	-											
PA2	17.33	3.27		.50**	-										
PA3	17.15	3.55		.35**	.49**	-									
PA4	16.03	5.85		.34**	.30**	.30**	-								
NA1	9.19	3.61	.81	-.18**	-.03	-.03	.10	-							
NA2	8.99	3.90		-.17*	-.11	-.13*	.00	.57**	-						
NA3	8.97	3.85		.02	.03	.06	.03	.55**	-.67**	-					
NA4	8.16	4.61		.10	.09	.03	.50**	.39**	.48**	.50**	-				
IER1	70.4	17.74	.79	.18**	.26**	.06	.00	-.07	-.03	.08	.02	-			
IER2	69.64	18.15		-.01	.20**	.08	.02	.02	.02	-.06	.06	.64**	-		
IER3	70.16	19.93		-.05	.05	.27**	.00	-.04	-.11	-.05	-.03	.52**	.62**	-	
IER4	65.46	26.58		.09	.08	.15*	.68**	.08	-.03	.01	.39**	.24**	.35**	.39**	-

Note. PA = positive affect; NA = negative affect; IER = interpersonal emotion regulation; α = internal consistency reliability. ** $p \leq .001$; * $p \leq .05$.

Cross-lagged and auto-regressive effects

To investigate the temporal dynamics between affect and IER, we estimated Random Intercept Cross-Lagged Panel Models (RI-CLPMs) separately for NA and PA. Model fit indices indicated acceptable to good fit for both models. For the NA

model, fit indices were: Comparative Fit Index (*CFI*) = .916, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (*RMSEA*) = .159, and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (*SRMR*) = .059. For the PA model, the *CFI* was .890, *RMSEA* = .174, and *SRMR* = .078. Standardized path coefficients and standard errors for all cross-lagged and autoregressive effects were presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Standardized path coefficients in the RI-CLPM for the within-person relations between affect and interpersonal emotion regulation.

Predictor _T	Outcomes _{T+1}	Est.	S.E.	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR
T1	Negative Affect	.66*	.05	.916	.159	.059
	Interpersonal Emotion Regulation	.37*	.26			
	Interpersonal Emotion Regulation	.00	.01			
	Interpersonal Emotion Regulation	.62*	.06			
T2	Negative Affect	.69*	.05			
	Interpersonal Emotion Regulation	.56*	.25			
	Interpersonal Emotion Regulation	.02	.01			
	Interpersonal Emotion Regulation	.67*	.05			
T3	Negative Affect	.71*	.04	.890	.174	.078
	Interpersonal Emotion Regulation	.43*	.22			
	Interpersonal Emotion Regulation	.02	.01			
	Interpersonal Emotion Regulation	.66*	.06			
T1	Positive Affect	.66*	.04			
	Interpersonal Emotion Regulation	-.14*	.05			
	Interpersonal Emotion Regulation	.18*	.06			
	Interpersonal Emotion Regulation	.45*	.05			
T2	Positive Affect	.66*	.04			
	Interpersonal Emotion Regulation	-.09*	.05			
	Interpersonal Emotion Regulation	-.01	.06			
	Interpersonal Emotion Regulation	.47*	.04			
T3	Positive Affect	.75*	.03			
	Interpersonal Emotion Regulation	.04	.05			
	Interpersonal Emotion Regulation	.03	.06			
	Interpersonal Emotion Regulation	.52*	.05			

Note. * $p \leq .05$.

Autoregressive effects. All constructs showed significant temporal stability across the four-day period. NA demonstrated strong autoregressive paths across all lags (T1→T2: $\beta = .66$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$; T2→T3: $\beta = .69$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$; T3→T4: $\beta = .71$, $SE = .04$, $p < .001$). PA also exhibited high autoregressive stability (T1→T2: $\beta = .66$, $SE = .04$, $p < .001$; T2→T3: $\beta = .66$, $SE = .04$, $p < .001$; T3→T4: $\beta = .75$, $SE = .03$, $p < .001$). IER showed moderate to strong autoregressive effects (T1→T2: $\beta = .67$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$; T2→T3: $\beta = .43$, $SE = .22$, $p < .05$; T3→T4: $\beta = .47$, $SE = .04$, $p < .001$).

NA predicting IER. Supporting Hypothesis 3, NA significantly predicted higher next-day IER across all three lags. Specifically, NA at T1 predicted IER at T2 ($\beta = .37$, $SE = .26$, $p = .016$), NA at T2 predicted IER at T3 ($\beta = .56$, $SE = .25$, $p = .015$), and NA at T3 predicted IER at T4 ($\beta = .43$, $SE = .22$, $p = .022$). These were the strongest cross-lagged effects observed in the model.

PA predicting IER. Results provided only partial support for Hypothesis 2. PA negatively predicted IER across the first two lags, although the effects were small. PA at T1 predicted lower IER at T2 ($\beta = -.14$, $SE = .05$, $p = .004$), and PA at T2 predicted lower IER at T3 ($\beta = -.09$, $SE = .05$, $p = .041$). However, the T3→T4 path was not statistically significant ($\beta = .04$, $SE = .05$, $p = .381$), suggesting an inconsistent pattern.

IER predicting NA: Contrary to Hypothesis 1a, IER did not significantly predict next-day NA at any time point. The cross-lagged effects were near zero and non-significant (T1→T2: $\beta = .00$, $SE = .01$, $p = .842$; T2→T3: $\beta = .02$, $SE = .01$, $p = .087$; T3→T4: $\beta = .02$, $SE = .01$, $p = .082$).

IER predicting PA: Similarly, results did not support Hypothesis 1b. Although IER at T1 predicted a modest increase in PA at T2 ($\beta = .18$, $SE = .06$, $p = .003$), subsequent lags were not significant (T2→T3: $\beta = -.01$, $SE = .06$, $p = .846$; T3→T4: $\beta = .03$, $SE = .06$, $p = .612$). Overall, IER did not reliably enhance next-day positive affect.

Discussion

The present study analyzed the dynamic relations between interpersonal emotion regulation (IER) and affect, with both its positive and negative valence. Our findings revealed that the negative affect - next day IER was stronger than positive affect - next day IER or than IER and next day negative affect. Taken together, these findings suggest that negative affect is more likely to trigger next day involvement

in IER, albeit contrary to our hypothesis 1a, IER is not an efficient strategy for reducing next day negative affect or enhancing positive affect. From the perspective of the binary model of distress (Ellis, 1994), this pattern may indicate that the forms of negative affect most salient in daily life were functional (e.g., situational sadness) rather than dysfunctional (e.g., pervasive hopelessness). Functional negative emotions signal problems yet are compatible with adaptive coping, which might explain why they prompt IER (negative affect - next-day IER) but are not readily resolved by it. Future work should measure functional versus dysfunctional negative emotions explicitly to test this interpretation (e.g., David et al., 2004, 2005).

Our findings revealed several notable patterns. First, negative affect was a stronger predictor of next-day IER compared to positive affect, suggesting that individuals are more likely to engage in IER following experiences of distress. This pattern aligns with functionalist views of emotion - particularly, control-process theory (Carver & Scheier, 1998) and the laws of emotion proposed by Frijda (2007) - which posit that negative emotions serve as a motivational signal to seek external support or influence others' emotions as part of coping efforts (Barrera, 1986; Gross & John, 2003). However, we found no evidence that IER on a given day predicted subsequent reductions in negative affect, highlighting a potential limitation in the effectiveness of IER for alleviating distress within short temporal frames.

Second, the relationship between positive affect and IER demonstrated bidirectional within-person associations. Positive affect predicted higher engagement in IER the following day, suggesting that individuals may leverage positive emotions to sustain or enhance social connections. Conversely, IER also predicted increased positive affect the next day, effect potentially explained by the fact that IER strategies are deployed as means for increasing individual well-being and fostering shared positivity (e.g., Mikkola et al., 2023; Zaki & Williams, 2013). These findings reinforce the reciprocal nature of positive affect and IER, aligning with theories emphasizing the role of positive emotional exchanges in maintaining relational bonds and promoting psychological well-being (Fredrickson, 2001; Williams et al., 2018).

Third, significant autoregressive effects were observed for positive affect, negative affect, and IER, indicating that deviations from baseline levels persisted across measurement occasions. These results are consistent with prior studies demonstrating the temporal stability of affective experiences and regulatory behaviors (Nezlek & Kuppens, 2008; Tran et al., 2021). Our findings suggest that affective states not only serve as proximal outcomes of IER but also act as antecedents, influencing the likelihood of engaging in IER over time. This dynamic interplay underscores the bidirectional nature of the affect-IER relationship, highlighting the need for longitudinal methodologies to capture its evolving patterns.

From a theoretical perspective, our results support the effective support mobilization framework, which posits that individuals facing adversity are more inclined to affiliate and seek interpersonal support to regulate their emotions

(Aneshensel & Frerichs, 1982; Barrera, 1986). However, the lack of evidence for within-person reductions in negative affect following IER suggests that such strategies may not always achieve their intended outcomes, particularly in alleviating distress. These findings raise important questions about the factors moderating the efficacy of IER, such as individual differences in emotional intelligence, the quality of social relationships, and the specific strategies employed (Williams et al., 2018).

Practically, our findings emphasize the importance of understanding the situational and contextual factors that influence the efficacy of IER. While IER appears to facilitate positive affect and relational bonds, its limited impact on reducing negative affect suggests that interventions targeting interpersonal regulation should incorporate complementary strategies aimed at directly addressing distress (negative emotions). Additionally, the bidirectional association between positive affect and IER underscores the potential of leveraging positive emotional states to promote adaptive social regulation processes and enhance overall well-being.

Future research should explore the conditions under which IER is most effective, examining the roles of strategy selection, relational context, and individual differences. It would also be valuable to investigate the temporal persistence of IER effects beyond short time frames, as well as the interplay between intrinsic and extrinsic IER strategies. Expanding on these questions will help clarify the mechanisms underlying the affect-IER relationship and inform interventions aimed at optimizing emotion regulation in social contexts.

In conclusion, this study advances our understanding of the day-level associations between affect and IER, highlighting the nuanced interplay between these constructs. By capturing the dynamic and bidirectional nature of these processes, our findings contribute to the broader literature on emotion regulation, emphasizing the importance of both positive and negative affect in shaping regulatory behaviors and their outcomes.

Limitations

One limitation of the current design is the absence of assessments for participants' broader mental health status or their typical emotion regulation strategies, which may have influenced both their use of interpersonal emotion regulation and its affective consequences. Including such variables could have provided a more nuanced understanding of individual differences in emotion regulation dynamics. The design captures significant unidirectional effects from negative affect to IER, but not vice versa. This asymmetry may reflect the tendency for individuals to seek interpersonal regulation primarily in response to distress, yet the model cannot fully account for potential bidirectional or feedback processes that might occur in shorter time frames or more dynamic contexts. The use of a once-daily assessment schedule may have missed shorter-term fluctuations or immediate

emotional consequences of IER use. It is possible that the effects of IER on affect unfold more rapidly or decay quickly, and thus may not be detectable across 24-hour lags.

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