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ZORA URL: <https://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-130308>

Book Section

Accepted Version

Originally published at:

Kuhn, Rebekka; Hilpert, Peter; Bodenmann, Guy (2016). Dyadic Coping among Swiss Couples. In: Falconier, Mariana Karin; Randall, Ashley K; Bodenmann, Guy. Couples coping with stress : a cross-cultural perspective. New York: Routledge, 86-104.

**THIS CHAPTER WAS PUBLISHED IN:
COUPLES COPING WITH STRESS – A CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE**

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**CHAPTER 6
DYADIC COPING AMONG SWISS COUPLES**

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Introduction

Switzerland is a small, but wealthy country with approximately 8 million inhabitants located in the middle of Europe. It shares three of the four national languages (German, French, Italian) with its neighboring countries. Switzerland benefits from a politically stable situation (direct democracy) and a good health care system. In international comparisons, Switzerland ranks very high in income, social security, life satisfaction, and general well-being (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2013). Switzerland's economic prosperity is characterized by the following: strong economic power, a very good education system, a high degree of modernization, a low rate of unemployment, a low level of corruption, and low rates of poverty (7,7% in 2012 with rates declining; Federal Statistical Office, 2014).

Many people are attracted by the prosperity, high living standards and socio-political stability of the country. In 2013, about 25% of the Swiss population were foreigners (Bundesamt für Statistik [BFS], 2013). The cultural influence of the migrant population contributes to Switzerland's diversity. Indeed, this melting pot is renowned for its peaceful cohabitation of different cultures, languages, and religions (Rutherford et al., 2014).

Similar to other Western countries, the Swiss population is categorized as individualistic according to the individualism-collectivism continuum (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). As also described in Chapter 2, individual goals are thus valued more than the goals of the entire society (Hofstede, et al., 2010; Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, & Lucca, 1988). The importance of independence and autonomy (i.e., making life decisions individually and freely) implies that one should be able to master life well without others. Therefore, it is claimed that Swiss individuals often emphasize their own goals above a common group endeavor.

A corresponding characteristic of Switzerland's individualistic society is a deep respect

for privacy and personal discretion (Katz, 2006). Business and private life are usually separated; as such, the Swiss tend to be quite cautious and reserved during social interaction until a certain level of trust has been established. Although Switzerland can be categorized as a low-context society in which communication is more direct and less oriented towards nonverbal behavior and contextual cues (Katz, 2006; see Chapter 2), Swiss people communicate less directly than Germans (Katz, 2006; Diehm, Pill, & Baumann, 2013). In addition, values such as politeness, harmony, and consensus allow Swiss people to avoid conflicts and strive for compromise (Diehm, et al., 2013).

Despite economic prosperity and high living standards, Swiss people complain of high work and time pressure. Worryingly, reports about work stress show an upward trend. According to a stress study with Swiss employees, a third of the working population reports being stressed often to very often (State Secretariat for Economic Affairs [SECO], 2011). Compared to 2000, this is an increase of 30%. The more the respondents reported experiencing stress, the lower they estimated their coping competences ($r = -.23$). In turn, the lower their appraisal of their coping competences, the more they felt emotionally exhausted ($r = -.36$), which is closely associated with burnout. Employees reporting higher coping competences were more satisfied with their work conditions ($r = .17$) and were in better general health ($r = .25$). The most common stressors were frequent interruptions, continuous work with high speed and constant time pressure. Roughly half of the respondents claimed to have worked while sick, a phenomenon called presenteeism. Experiencing stress is positively correlated with presenteeism ($r = .27$).

We can conclude that stress in Switzerland usually refers to minor, everyday stress, for example at work (time pressure, high performance standards, professional competition). Major

stressors such as poverty, unemployment, racial discrimination that threaten not only individual but familial well-being are not commonly experienced by the Swiss. However, because this minor stress experienced in Switzerland is often chronic and accumulates, it also influences well-being and social interactions including the intimate relationship.

Couples' Relationships in Switzerland

In international comparisons, Swiss couples are among the oldest couples when they first get married (average age 30-32 years; BFS, 2014), as well as when having their first child (average age of maternity 31.8 years; BFS, 2014). Furthermore, a decline in marriages over the last 30 years and in divorce rates since 2010 has been observed, with the divorce rate reaching 40.3% in 2014 (BFS, 2014).

Swiss attitudes towards marriage have changed during the last decades similarly to other Western countries (Bernardi, Ryser, & Le Goff, 2013). Before the 1960s, attitudes towards marriage were traditionally patriarchal in which men's and women's roles were defined with men being the providers and women being the caregivers (Höpflinger, 1987). With the political protests of 1968 and the introduction of women's voting rights at the federal level in 1971, attitudes towards marriage and family changed considerably (Höpflinger, 1987). The stronger focus on women's emancipation in upcoming generations led to relatively high gender equality and shared household roles as long as no children were present (Bernardi, et al., 2013). An extensive international survey by Kelso, Cahn, and Miller (2012) compared opinions about gender equality across Switzerland and the United States. Results showed that Switzerland was more supportive of gender equality than the United States but less gender egalitarian than other Western European countries.

When couples become parents, however, a shift towards more traditional roles is found

with the woman typically holding feminine roles, assuming more relational, domestic, and nurturing functions within the family, whereas men hold more masculine roles, such as providing financial support for the family (Bernardi, et al., 2013). This tendency is even more prevalent when couples have more than one child. Since childcare is seen as the main responsibility of the mother, a heavy work-family burden is placed on women, who often also try to keep a professional position while taking care of the household (Bernardi, et al., 2013). Usually, women reduce their working hours during the child-rearing phase (Levy, Gauthier, & Widmer, 2006; Bernardi, et al., 2013). Among Swiss women, 57% work part-time compared to 13% of Swiss men (Kelso, Cahn, & Miller, 2012). Although part-time work and job sharing are growing, these work patterns are still seen as being inconsistent with management positions, and women's vocational choices are therefore often based on more pragmatic issues (OECD, 2013). Statistics show that women also earn much less than men (OECD, 2013). The poor availability of childcare services in Switzerland (Branger, et al. 2008) and the restriction of maternity leave to 14 weeks place a further constraint on Swiss families. These obstacles seem to be more prevalent than in other European countries, such as Germany or Netherlands and especially Scandinavia (Brauchli, Bauer, & Hämmig, 2011). In conclusion, childbearing is a challenge for the couple and - given the background of an individualistic society - experienced as a threat to a woman's independence (Bernardi, et al., 2013).

Many marriages (48%) are bi-national marriages, meaning that only 52% of marriages per year are among a Swiss woman and a Swiss man. Due to the increased immigration rate, the number of such marriages is very high in comparison to other European countries. One of the most common foreign nationalities is German (BFS, 2013) – it is therefore not uncommon that relationships are formed between a Swiss and a German. Given the differences in

communication described above (direct vs. indirect, resolving conflicts vs. consensus, etc.), these bi-national couples might face difficulties in their communication.

An even stronger cultural influence on communication is observed when people from individualistic and collectivistic cultures form intimate relationships. Gagliardi, Bodenmann, and Bregy (2010) compared bi-national Swiss-Thai couples with mono-national Swiss couples. Swiss-Thai couples communicated differently about their stress, and displayed different supportive behaviors. In addition, bi-national couples often face a unique set of challenges in regard to cultural adaptation of the migrating partner. Adaptation to the new cultural environment, learning a new language, or the distance to the family of origin are sources of stress that might lead to additional relationship conflicts.

Couples' Coping with Stress

The systemic-transactional model (STM; Bodenmann, 1995; see Chapter 1) does not only aim to define what kinds of stressors couples experience, and how this stress spills over and affects the relationship but also under which conditions they engage in coping when extra-dyadic stress spills over into the dyad. An overview of studies examining stress and its consequences in Swiss couples is presented in Table 1. Most of the studies have focused on different kinds of stress, but mainly on daily hassles (e.g., work stress) since the STM was originally developed in this context. In fact, results reveal that Swiss people are mainly suffering from work stress or other daily hassles. Bodenmann (2000) showed that high workload and other daily hassles were the most prominent stressors for couples from a community sample ($N = 600$ couples). This result is supported by findings of an ongoing longitudinal study with 368 Swiss couples,¹ as

¹Data presented here are unpublished results from an ongoing study funded by the Swiss National Fond (SNF: CRSI11_133004 / 1). In this 5-year longitudinal study, 368 German-speaking Swiss heterosexual couples provide self-reports and videotaped observations (e.g., communication behavior, dyadic coping) each year. Thus far, data of the first three waves are available. The sample consists of three age cohorts. In the following, we will refer to data

shown in Figure 1. Stress related to work is perceived as the highest stressor among both women and men. Swiss women report significantly more stress in general. Daily hassles are prevalent in all three age groups as shown in Figure 2. Older couples experience less stress than either of the other two age groups across all domains except for daily hassles. Among the different external stressors, daily hassles are the best predictor of relationship satisfaction.

There is consistent evidence for detrimental long-term effects of chronic minor stress on relationship satisfaction in Swiss couples (e.g., Bodenmann, Pihet, & Kayser, 2006; Bodenmann, Meuwly, & Kayser, 2011). Furthermore, couples with high stress and low dyadic coping are more likely to end in divorce (Bodenmann & Cina, 2005). Research has identified one of the mechanisms of how stress is linked to negative relationship outcomes. Daily hassles have been found to spill over into the relationship, meaning that stress that originates outside of the relationship affects partners' behaviors and increases couple's conflicts by eroding partners' communication skills. Bodenmann, Ledermann and Bradbury (2007) found evidence for this stress spillover in a sample of 396 Swiss couples. Higher levels of daily stress predicted higher levels of tension within the dyad, and in turn, lower levels of relationship satisfaction. This is in line with international findings on spillover (e.g., Bolger, DeLongis, Kessler, & Wethington, 1989; Neff & Karney, 2004; Repetti, 1989). Increased levels of stress have been found to be negatively associated with positive communication patterns (e.g. constructive problem solving) in couples (Hilpert, Bodenmann, Nussbeck, Bradbury, 2013).

As the STM proposes, contextual factors such as culture play an important role in the couples' coping process (see Chapter 2). The coping process is initiated by stress communication being followed by the support from the partner. Swiss people usually express their stress

gathered in this study by "Bodenmann, Brandstätter, Nussbeck, Martin, & Bradbury, unpublished" and "Bodenmann, et al., unpublished" accordingly.

verbally and explicitly, as might be expected in a low-context individualistic society. Gender equality allows that both men and women can freely express their stress. Stress communication in bi-national couples might be different, especially when coming from very different cultural backgrounds. Close relationships in Switzerland are viewed as an exclusive unit where individuals are able to share difficulties and personal stress. In fact, the partner is the greatest source of support, and people usually turn to their partner first in times of stress (Bodenmann, 2000). Support, in turn, is expected to follow after explicit stress communication and is often more problem-focused than emotion-focused (Bodenmann, 2000). Gender equality facilitates reciprocal receiving and giving support or engaging in common dyadic coping, and it is expected that men and women solve their problems mutually.

Table 2 presents an overview of the main findings of studies investigating coping in Swiss couples. Studies have consistently shown that communication in the couple and hence dyadic coping can falter under conditions of stress (e.g., Hilpert et al., 2013; Hilpert, Kuhn, Anderegg, & Bodenmann, in press). There is strong empirical evidence that dyadic coping is not only closely linked to marital outcomes such as relationship satisfaction (e.g., Bodenmann, et al., 2006) and stability (e.g., Bodenmann & Cina, 2005), but does also play an important role for couples suffering from psychological disorders or health problems (e.g., Bodenmann et al., 2011; Bodenmann, Widmer, Charvoz, & Bradbury, 2004; Jenewein, Meier, & Bodenmann, 2011).

Two mechanisms explain the positive impact dyadic coping has on the relationship (Bodenmann, 2005). On the one hand, dyadic coping alleviates the impact of chronic external stress on chronic internal stress, thus helping to prevent spillover. For example, the buffering effect on stress reported by Bodenmann and colleagues (2007) was replicated by Merz, Meuwly, Randall, and Bodenmann (2014), which shows that dyadic coping is negatively associated with

chronic internal stress, and positively associated with relationship satisfaction. On the other hand, dyadic coping strengthens feelings of we-ness, mutual understanding, trust, intimacy, and attachment.

In longitudinal studies, dyadic coping served to be an important predictor of relationship outcomes. In a five-year prospective longitudinal study (Bodenmann & Cina, 2005), higher levels of supportive and common dyadic coping were found among “stable-satisfied couples”, whereas couples that were divorced after five years displayed less of these behaviors. It was possible to predict 62.1% of the relationship outcomes after two years correctly only by using the level of dyadic coping as a predictor. Even after ten years, dyadic coping of men served as a predictor for their relationship satisfaction (Ruffieux, Nussbeck, & Bodenmann, 2014).

Dyadic Coping across the Lifespan

To our knowledge, Switzerland may be the only country where the impact of dyadic coping in older couples has been examined. Landis (2013) studied older Swiss spouses (*M* age = 68 years) in long-term marriages to disentangle the secret of stable long-term relationships. Consistent with findings of studies with younger couples (e.g., Bodenmann, 2000), older spouses’ dyadic coping is significantly associated with relationship satisfaction.

One study by Bodenmann and Widmer (2000) demonstrated that older couples (aged between 51 and 81) show higher values in stress communication but lower values in positive dyadic coping compared to younger couples. The lack of coping in older couples could be explained by a cohort effect. For example, relationships might be perceived as more functional by old couples while younger generations might see the partner as a source of emotional support. However, Landis (2013) found that, although objective dyadic coping might be low, it is the subjective perception of the coping that is crucial for relationship satisfaction. How partners

perceived spousal coping was a stronger factor than their self-reported coping in determining relationship satisfaction. Therefore, dyadic coping might have a stabilizing function for long-term relationships.

Implications for Practice

Based on findings of stress and coping, Bodenmann developed the Couples Coping Enhancement Training (CCET; Bodenmann & Shantinath, 2004), an evidence-based and widely evaluated relationship education program. Its major aim is to improve stress-related self-disclosure and foster mutual dyadic coping in couples. Couples are taught these skills in a 15-hours workshop and are being prompted during exercises within the 3-phase method (phase 1: one partner self-discloses about a stress experience, the other one listens empathically, phase 2: the former listener provides dyadic coping to the stressed partner, phase 3: the stressed partner gives a feedback to the supporting partner of how effective his/her support was). Different formats of the CCET have been developed in Switzerland over the last decade, such as a program focusing more on commitment, a program for couples in the transition to parenthood and a program for couples dealing with work-life-balance issues.

The enhancement of dyadic coping was also effective in couple therapy. In the coping-oriented couple therapy (COCT; Bodenmann, 2010), one core element is the strengthening of couples' coping by means of the 3-phase method (Bodenmann, 2010). In a study with 60 couples in which one partner was diagnosed with a medium to severe depression, coping-oriented couple therapy performed comparably in reducing depressive symptoms to cognitive behavioral therapy or interpersonal therapy but was more effective in reducing relapse in patients who were treated by COCT (Bodenmann et al., 2008). Table 3 presents findings on the effectiveness of CCET and COCT with Swiss couples. Research on CCET and COCT has found a significant improvement

of relationship functioning after participation in either program (also see for an overview Halford & Bodenmann, 2013). A recently published study shows that also a self-directed form during which couples train with a DVD of the CCET is effective (Bodenmann, Hilpert, Nussbeck, & Bradbury, 2014). The dyadic coping-oriented interventions (CCET and COCT) prove to be effective, possibly because of their correspondence with Swiss values, attitudes and behaviors within the culture and specifically the intimate relationship. However, more specialized training programs could be implemented for sub-groups of couples, e.g. homosexual or bi-national couples, and thereby practitioners could take into account that stress communication or supportive behaviour might be different.

Implications for Research

Although a great deal of research on dyadic coping has been conducted in Switzerland, results are mostly generalizable to Swiss heterosexual middle-class couples and not aforementioned subgroups. Therefore, studies should start to focus more on different groups of couples in order find out whether these subgroups are benefiting from different intervention trainings. For example, one study currently examines dyadic coping in young couples (aged 16-21 years), and the STM is thus tested in adolescent couples for the first time. Furthermore, research has started to investigate the effectiveness of intervention trainings for Swiss couples that are expecting their first child.

In addition, new measurement methods (e.g., face recognition, voice intonation, implicit diagnostics) in combination with sophisticated statistical models (e.g., latent differential equation modeling) might broaden the current knowledge on dyadic coping research. This would allow us to facilitate large-scale analyses where we could also examine dyadic coping as a process over time.

Conclusion

Couples in Switzerland mainly undergo stressors such as work stress or daily hassles. The STM suggests that such stressors can spill over into the relationship and impede couples' communication skills. In the last decades, Bodenmann and his team extensively studied these spillover and coping mechanisms in Switzerland. The results show that dyadic coping is effective in reducing the negative consequences of stress spillover and therefore relevant for relationship maintenance. One reason for the beneficial effects of dyadic coping might be the Swiss cultural background characterized by individualism and egalitarian relationships.

Given this relevance of dyadic coping in stabilizing the couple, the CCET was developed in order to prevent couples from faltering under high conditions of stress. The implementation of the CCET and the COCT proves to be effective for Swiss couples. Future research, however, should (i) use new technological developments to study how coping processes unfold over time as a dynamical process within couples, and (ii) focus on different subgroups (e.g., bi-national, couples with low financial or educational resources), as it is reasonable to assume that they might not only face more or different stressors but also have a different conceptualization of dyadic coping processes.

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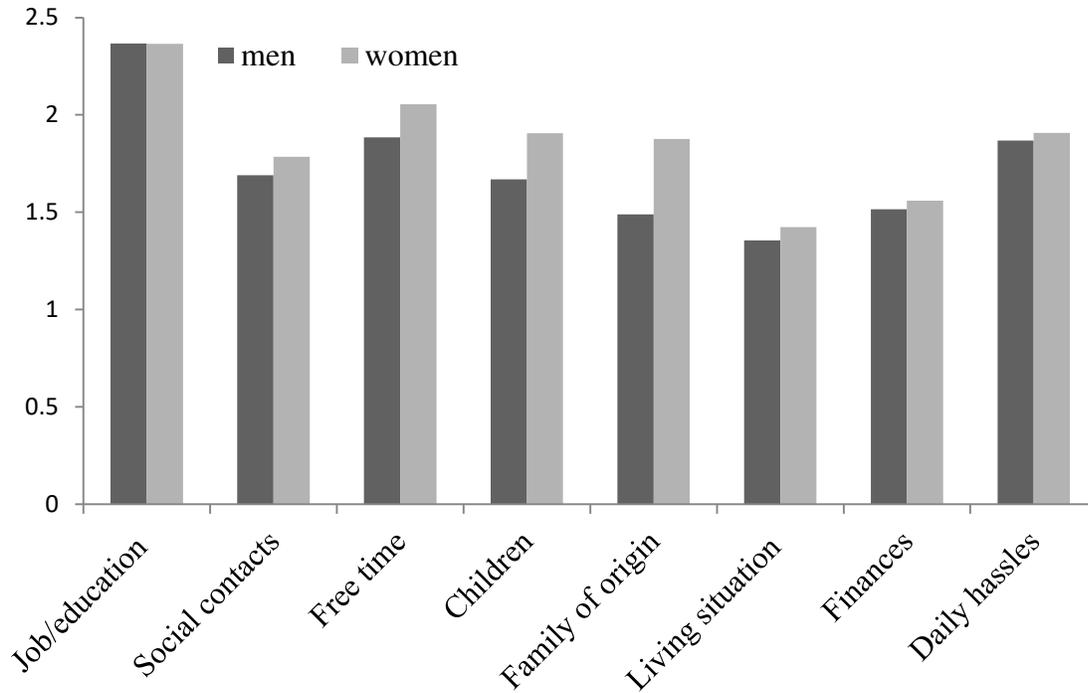


Figure 1. Chronic external stressors for men and women, range 1-4 (1 = not at all, 4 = strong).

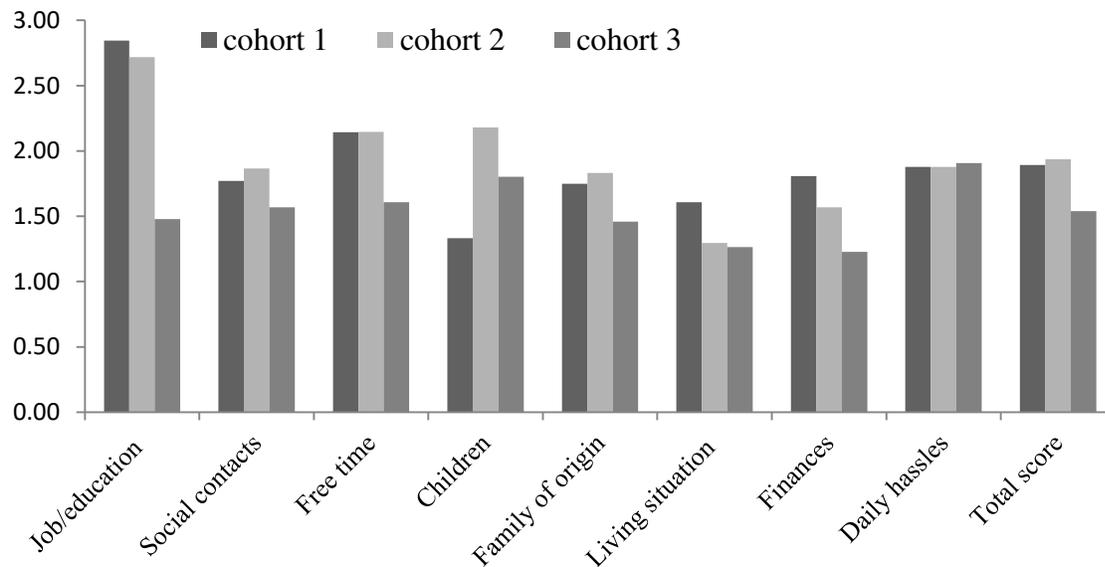


Figure 2. Chronic external stressors per age cohort (cohort 1 = 20 - 35 years, cohort 2 = 40 - 55 years, cohort 3 = 65-80 years), range 1-4 (1 = not at all, 4 = strong).

Table 1
Studies on Stress in Swiss Couples.

Authors	Sample size	Study design	Main findings
(1) Bodenmann (1997), (2) Bodenmann and Cina (1999)*	70 couples	questionnaires, longitudinal (2 y.(1) and 4 y.(2), behavioral observation data	(1) couples with a higher stress level experience greater reductions in relationship satisfaction and health; stress can be used as a predictive variable for dissolution after 2 years; (2) stress and coping play an important role for relationship stability even after 4 years
Bodenmann (2000)	different Swiss samples	questionnaires	work, daily hassles, and relationship conflicts are most common stressors; men report more work-related stress, whereas women report more stress with the family or household
Bodenmann and Cina (2005)*	62 couples	prospective longitudinal (5 y.), questionnaires	stable-satisfied couples were characterized by a lower level of stress, practiced less dysfunctional individual coping strategies, and relied more frequently on interpersonal (dyadic) coping when dealing with stress in comparison to stable-dissatisfied and divorced couples
Bodenmann et al. (2010)*	317 subjects	cross-sectional, questionnaires	individuals differed in verbal aggression when stress was low, but not when stress was high; effective individual coping and DC reduces the effects of stress on aggression
(1) Bodenmann et al. (2006); (2) Bodenmann et al. (2007b)	198 couples	cross-sectional, questionnaires	(1) primarily internal daily stress and in some cases critical life events rather than external daily stress are related to sexual problems; (2) relationship satisfaction and sexual activity are governed by hassles and problems experienced within the dyad that are in turn related to stress arising outside the dyad
Bodenmann et al. (2007a)*	663 subjects (Germany, Italy, Switzerland)	retrospective, questionnaires	accumulation of everyday stresses were perceived as a trigger for decision to divorce, and low commitment and deficits in interpersonal competencies (communication, problem solving, coping) were perceived as reasons for divorce
Bodenmann et al. (2010)	103 female students	longitudinal (3 m.), questionnaires and diaries	higher self-reported stress in daily life was associated with lower levels of sexual activity and satisfaction and a decrease in relationship satisfaction; dyadic coping was positively associated with sexual outcomes
Falconier et al. (2014)	110 couples	cross-sectional, questionnaires	daily hassles led to lower psychological and physical well-being and indirectly to lower relationship satisfaction through increased intradyadic stress; female extradyadic and intradyadic stress had partner effects on male intradyadic stress and male relationship satisfaction
Gabriel et al. (2006)*	83 pairs of parents	cross-sectional, questionnaires	parents of a child with inattention and conduct problems reported higher levels of stress and less competencies in DC
Ledermann et al. (2010)	345 couples	cross-sectional, questionnaires	intradyadic stress is more strongly related with one's own external stress than with the partner's external stress; importance of low relationship stress and a high level of positive communication

Note. DC = dyadic coping, y. = years, m. = months, * = coping variables also included.

Table 2
Studies on Dyadic Coping in Swiss Couples.

Authors	Sample size	Study design	Main findings
Bergstraesser et al. (2015)	46 married parents (23 couples)	interviews, questionnaires	DC played an important role in grief work and adjustment to bereavement, as aspects of common DC helped to work through grief individually and as a couple
Bodenmann (2008)	2399 subjects	validation study	results provide empirical evidence for the quality of the Dyadic Coping Inventory (DCI)
Bodenmann and Widmer (2000)	242 couples	cross-sectional, questionnaires	in the comparison of three age-groups, the oldest couples had the lowest values in positive DC
Bodenmann et al. (2001)	39 clinically depressed patients and 21 former depressed subjects	cross-sectional, standardized questionnaires	severely depressed patients have a severe lack of dyadic coping resources; remitted patients did not differ from controls in their coping, coping deficiencies do not represent a stable personality trait
Bodenmann et al. (2004)	106 depressed or formerly depressed patients and 106 matched controls	cross-sectional, questionnaires	deficits in DC are highest in the highly depressed group, depressed women reported less stress communication and supportive DC whereas men reported marginally more negative DC towards their partner
Bodenmann et al. (2006)	90 couples	longitudinal (2 y.)	DC was significantly associated with marital quality over two years
Bodenmann et al. (2011)	443 couples	cross-sectional, questionnaires	both DC measures (comparative approach and systemic model) were related to relationship quality and psychological well-being
Gagliardi et al. (2010)	225 Thai-Swiss couples and 234 Swiss couples	cross-sectional, questionnaires	bi-national couples showed less negative DC and stress communication than Swiss couples
Gagliardi et al. (2013)	304 couples (Swiss, German, Italian)	cross-sectional, questionnaires	securely attached couples reported better relationship quality as well as more positive and less negative DC compared to fearful-avoidant couples and couples with different attachment styles
Gmelch and Bodenmann (2007)	443 couples	cross-sectional, questionnaires	discrepancy indexes and equity index were related to relationship quality; women's appraisals of DC were slightly more relevant than the men's appraisal of DC
Hilpert et al. (2013)	1944 married individuals	cross-sectional, questionnaires	external stress is highly associated with an increase in negative interactions and a decrease in DC; being supported by the partner in times of need seemed to be particularly relevant for marital quality
Kramer et al. (2005)	18 persons having experienced a physical assault, 18 control persons	structural clinical interview, questionnaires	participants having experienced a trauma, compared to controls, report a general lack of DC and decreased individual coping

Landis et al. (2013)	132 married couples (German, Swiss)	cross-sectional, questionnaires	partner's subjective perception of their spouse's supportive behavior was more strongly linked to their relationship satisfaction than to their self-reported support
Landis et al. (2014)	201 couples	cross-sectional, questionnaires	relationship satisfaction mediated the effects between commitment and DC; findings support the essentiality of commitment for consistency in long-term relationships
Ledermann et al. (2010)	216 German-, 378 Italian-, and 198 French-speaking participants (Swiss, Italy)	replication study, questionnaires	previous findings could be replicated in all three language groups, showing that aspects of DC were more strongly related to marital quality than to dyadic communication
(1) Meier et al. (2011); (2) Meier et al. (2012)	43 couples with COPD and 138 healthy couples	cross-sectional, patient and partner questionnaires	(1) a higher imbalance in delegated DC was associated with a lower quality of life; more negative and less positive DC were associated with lower quality of life and higher psychological distress in couples with COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease); (2) DC of couples with COPD is unbalanced and more negative compared to that of healthy couples
Merz et al. (2014)	131 couples	longitudinal (1 y.), questionnaires	DC was found to decrease the impact of chronic external stress on chronic internal stress (spillover), particularly in women
Meuwly et al. (2012)	123 couples	standardized public speaking task, questionnaires	Stressed individuals recovered faster from stress the more positive DC they received from the partner, with women high in attachment anxiety benefiting less from these behaviors
Meuwly et al. (2013)	82 Swiss women with either a male or a female partner	cross-sectional, questionnaires	homosexual women reported receiving better support from and experiencing less conflict with their female partners compared to heterosexual couples; the lesbian couples also showed a trend toward being more satisfied in their relationship
Ruffieux et al. (2013)	162 couples	longitudinal (10 y.), questionnaires	predictors of relationship satisfaction were relationship satisfaction in the beginning of measurement, and for men their dyadic coping competencies; predictors of relationship stability were relationship length and satisfaction, and women's positive communication

Note. DC = dyadic coping, y. = years.

Table 3
Intervention Studies with Swiss Couples.

Authors	Sample size	Study design	Main findings
Bodenmann et al. (2001)	143 couples	longitudinal (1 y.), questionnaires	CCET leads to significant increase in marital quality, couples appraise their relationship even after one year in other domains (communication, intimacy)
Bodenmann et al. (2002)	146 subjects (intervention), 140 subjects (controls)	longitudinal (2 y.), questionnaires	subjects participating in the program displayed better individual coping skills after the Coping Enhancement Training (CET); they relied upon dysfunctional coping strategies less often even after two years
Bodenmann et al. (2008) (1); Gabriel et al. (2008) (2)	60 (1) and 57 (2) couples with a depressed partner	longitudinal (1,5 y.), questionnaires, observational data	(1) COCT is as effective in improving depressive symptomatology as are the well-established, evidence-based CBT and IPT approaches; (2) from pre- to post-therapy, all three treatments (CBT, IPT, COCT) produced similar improvements in depression and observed DC of patients
Bodenmann et al. (2009)	109 couples	longitudinal (2 y.), questionnaires	over the course of the CCET, couples improved their problem-solving behaviors; wives and husbands increased their positive DC
Bodenmann et al. (2014)	330 couples	longitudinal (6 months), questionnaires	intimate relationships could, within limits, be positively influenced by a self-directed approach using a DVD based on the CCET
Bodenmann et al. (2006)	59 couples (intervention), 59 couples (control)	longitudinal (2 y.), questionnaires	short-term interventions with the CCET could improve marital quality, however, effects decreased after two years
Hilpert et al. (in press)	220 couples	longitudinal (1 y.), questionnaires	personal happiness could be increased through the CCET; change in personal happiness was predicted by an increase in skills and relationship satisfaction through the intervention; the least happy participants benefitted most from the intervention
Ledermann et al. (2007)	100 couples	longitudinal (1 y.), questionnaires	previous findings on the efficacy of the CCET were supported; positive effects of the program were noted among both women and men immediately after the training, with stronger effects noted among women
Pihet et al. (2007)	59 couples (intervention), 59 couples (control)	longitudinal (1 y.), questionnaires	the CCET is able to improve psychological well-being among both genders and life satisfaction among women
Schaer et al. (2008)	157 couples	longitudinal (1 y.), questionnaires	the CCET outperformed both the ICT (individual coping training) and the waiting-list control group; CCET participants scored higher in relationship and individual variables after the training
Widmer et al. (2005)	70 couples that received intervention	longitudinal (2 y.), questionnaires, observational data	couples who received the CCET reported a greater change in marital satisfaction, dyadic communication and coping; the improvement was also observed in the videotapes; women showed a higher increase in positive DC and a greater decline in negative DC

Note. CCET = Couples Coping Enhancement Training, COCT = Coping-Oriented Couple Therapy, CBT = Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy, IPT = Interpersonal Therapy, DC = dyadic coping, y. = years.