Relationship Pathways

From Adolescence to Young Adulthood

Brett **Laursen**
Florida Atlantic University

W. Andrew **Collins**
University of Minnesota

Editors

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Transformations in Friend Relationships Across the Transition Into Adulthood

Chong Man Chow

Holly Roelse

Duane Buhrmester

Marion K. Underwood

Intimate exchanges of self-disclosure and support represent the central features of friendship during adolescence and young adulthood (Berndt, 1982; Buhrmester & Furman, 1987; Fehr, 2004). Through intimate conversations, best friends share their secrets, problems, and feelings, as well as provide each other with validation and emotional support. Indeed, there is considerable research demonstrating that close

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This is dedicated to Duane Buhrmester, our dearest mentor, colleague, and friend.

friends are among the most common partners adolescents and young adults turn to when distressed (Fraley & Davis, 1997; Trinke & Bartholomew, 1997) and that receiving social support from friends has important implications for multiple domains of individual and social adjustment (Friedlander, Reid, Shupak, & Cribbie, 2007). Given the significance of intimate friendships, it is not surprising that the dynamics and development of friendship have attracted considerable attention from both developmental and social psychologists.

Existing studies on adolescent and young adult friendships are broadly organized by two approaches: (1) *developmental* and (2) *individual differences*. Researchers who adopt a developmental approach are typically interested in *how* and *why* intimate friendship changes over the course of adolescence and young adulthood. This body of literature focuses on developmental changes in perceived closeness and intimacy, self-disclosure, and social support that occur in friendships over time. Developmental research also emphasizes that the developmental changes that occur in friendships over time are partially explained by changing social needs and involvement in different relational roles. Researchers who adopt an individual differences approach, in contrast, are typically interested in the different levels of disclosure and support/validation that occur between friends, as well as the behavioral interdependence of disclosure and support in friendships. Together, the developmental and individual differences approaches offer distinctive, yet complementary perspectives on friendship intimacy in adolescence and young adulthood by addressing the overall changes that typically occur in adolescent friendships as well as the interactions that occur between the specific individuals in a friendship.

The focus of this chapter is on intimate friendships during adolescence and early adulthood (Arnett, 2000; Smetana, Campione-Barr, & Metzger, 2006), where friendship intimacy is broadly defined as subjective perceptions of closeness and intimacy, as well as the intimate behavioral exchanges of self-disclosure and coping/support (Reis & Shaver, 1988). The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section outlines the major theories that pertain to the development of and individual differences in friendship intimacy during adolescence and young adulthood. The second section highlights existing research that resides within the developmental and individual differences frameworks. Last, the third section provides suggestions for future directions in friendship research based on existing approaches.

CONCEPTUAL APPROACHES TO FRIENDSHIP INTIMACY

Developmental Approaches to Friendship Intimacy

Developmental approaches to friendship intimacy focus on th changes that occur in friendships over the course of adolescence an young adulthood. Developmental theorists are often concerned with ho and why friendships change during this important period in life. Th most prominent theoretical perspectives on the development of intimat friendships are Harry Stack Sullivan's (1953) interpersonal theory an those of writers who have elaborated on his seminal work (e.g Buhrmester & Furman, 1986; Youniss, 1980). According to Sullivan, earl adolescence is an important turning point when the *need for intimat exchange* begins to emerge. This is a period when adolescents are mot vated to establish social relationships beyond family bonds in order t fulfill their intimacy needs. The egalitarian nature of adolescent frienc ship provides an ideal context for the expression of intimacy, where th mutual disclosure of feelings, secrets, and personal vulnerabilitie becomes the prominent dyadic process.

Coupled with increased self-disclosure, friends are also expected t take on a support-giving (or caregiving) role with each other. As Sulliva (1953) contended, rather than the egotistical attitude of "what should do to get what I want," adolescents begin to develop an attitude of "wh should I do to contribute to the happiness or to support the prestige an feeling of worth-whileness of my chum" (p. 245). Friends are asked to b sensitive and compassionate to their friends' needs in times of distre and are even called upon to sacrifice altruistically personal needs for th sake of their friends. Sullivan believed that mature, intimate friendshi involve a mutual form of love where partners reciprocally provide suppo to and seek support from one another.

Although Sullivan's (1953) framework (Buhrmester & Furman, 198 provides a rich account of the development of same-sex friendships durir early and middle adolescence, this perspective does not adequately addre the transitional period from late adolescence to early adulthood (i.e 17 to 25 years). In contrast, contemporary theorists have begun to addre the developmental pathways of friendship through early adulthood (e.g Carbery & Buhrmester, 1998; Johnson & Leslie, 1982), focusing on chang

in the features and functions of friendship that parallel changes in social role involvement.

One notable perspective is Carbery and Buhrmester's (1998) *family role involvement* perspective. Unlike Sullivan's (1953) theory that focuses on chronological maturation, this perspective suggests that features and functions of friendships are integrally connected to the broader organization of adolescents' and young adults' networks of close relationships, including those with parents, romantic partners, and even their own children. According to this perspective, the transition from adolescence to young adulthood is a period of considerable change in the organization of social networks, which is reflected by individuals' participation in different relational roles. Thus, the nature and functional significance of friendships is better understood in relation to that of other significant relationships.

Borrowing ideas from sociological work (e.g., Fischer & Oliker, 1983), Carbery and Buhrmester's (1998) perspective considered three major phases of family role involvement that are likely to occur in the transitional period from late adolescence to young adulthood: (1) the single uncommitted phase, (2) the married-without-children phase, and (3) the married-with-young-children phase. They sought to explain how young adults' time and emotional investment in friendships, as well as the functional significance of their friendships, may vary depending on their involvement in other relational roles. According to this perspective, different family role commitments are likely to affect the amount of time and emotional energy available to invest in friendships, which in turn, influence the degree of interdependence and intimacy between friends. In addition, taking on new family roles (e.g., spouse, parent) can create new sources of support, thereby reducing the pragmatic necessity of friends for the fulfillment of intimacy needs (e.g., disclosure, support). Similar arguments have also been offered by Johnson and Leslie's (1982) *Dyadic Withdrawal* hypothesis such that when individuals become more involved in romantic relationships, less emotional and physical investment will be put into friendships. Taken together, these role involvement perspectives on friendships differ from Sullivan's (1953) developmental theory in two major ways. First, these perspectives do not have a rigid definition of development stages. Unlike Sullivan's definition of stages based on age differences, these perspectives emphasize shifts in different relational roles that may occur in the transition to young adulthood but at different times for different individuals.

Second, these perspectives emphasize the transformation of friendship in relation to other social networks, describing the roles of friends in relation to other significant social relationships.

Individual Differences Approaches to Friendship Intimacy

Individual differences approaches focus on describing intimate friendship in terms of perceived intimacy and closeness, as well as the behavioral exchanges of disclosure and support that occur between friends (Chow & Buhrmester, in press; Grabill & Kerns, 2000; Shulman, 1993). Attachment theory serves as the most prominent approach to describing individual differences in friendship intimacy (Furman & Wehner, 1994; Kerns, 1996). Friendship researchers utilize insights from traditional attachment theory (e.g., Bowlby, 1982) in order to describe different orientations toward self-disclosure and support-giving and how these orientations are systematically driven by relational views, or mental representations, that adolescents derive from past and current relationship experiences. For instance, Furman and Wehner (1994) argued that individual differences in self-disclosure and caregiving behaviors (e.g., compassion and responsiveness) that are expressed in friendships can be conceptualized by a classification system similar to the categorical system utilized by attachment researchers. More specifically, they suggest that these behaviors can be conceptualized in a manner similar to the secure, dismissing (avoidant), and preoccupied (ambivalent) attachment classifications of individuals denoted by attachment researchers. Adolescents with a secure orientation of friendships feel comfortable seeking comfort and support from friends in times of distress; as caregivers, they are also expected to be more sensitive and responsive to their friends' needs. Adolescents with a dismissing orientation, in contrast, will be uncomfortable with closeness and reluctant to seek for support from friends in times of distress; as caregivers, they are not sensitive to their friends' feelings and tend to be aloof and cold when their friends are in need of comfort or support. Finally, adolescents with a preoccupied orientation have an intense need for attachment and closeness; as caregivers, they tend to be emotionally overinvolved in their friends' distress.

Some theories further describe friendship intimacy by considering individual differences in self-disclosure and support that occur between friends at the dyadic level. For instance, Shulman (1993) drew on family

systems theory and characterized friend dyads based on their closeness and intimacy. This approach views a dyadic friendship as a system that includes two interdependent individuals. Three types of friendship systems have been proposed: (1) *interdependent,* (2) *disengaged,* and (3) *enmeshed.* Interdependent friends are close to each other; however, although intimacy is emphasized in interdependent friendships, it is achieved without costing either friend their autonomy. Disengaged friends emphasize individuality; these friends prefer compulsive self-reliance and are unable to form collaborative and interdependent relationships with each other. Enmeshed friends overly emphasize intimacy and closeness; such tendencies lead friends to insist on each other's availability in all circumstances.

Through the integration of attachment theory and coping/support research (Furman & Wehner, 1994; Kunce & Shaver, 1994; Mikulincer & Florian, 2001), another dyadic model of friendship has emerged. Chow and Buhrmester (in press) recently proposed the Coping-Support Interdependence Model (CSIM) for characterizing how young adult friend dyads jointly respond to stressful events. Much like Furman and Wehner's (1994) conceptualization, the CSIM has identified three prototypic ways of coping that are likely to occur between friends: (1) *distancing,* (2) *adaptive,* and (3) *overwhelmed.* The first prototypic way of coping involves a distancing pattern that focuses on controlling the primary appraisal of a stressor (through selective inattention, minimization, denial, suppression, distraction, and escape) in order to short-circuit the perception of threat. The second prototypic pattern of adaptive coping involves the realistic appraisal of stressors, problem-focused coping efforts, and a willingness to turn to partners for assistance in dealing with the problem and any accompanying emotional distress. The adaptive pattern is characterized by the sharing of emotions and the seeking of comfort, reassurance, sympathy, advice, and tangible assistance. Finally, the overwhelmed pattern involves intense and prolonged emotional experiences in response to stressful situations and a tendency to ruminate and self-blame. In response to a distressed friend, three prototypic ways of offering support are likely to occur: (1) *disengaged,* (2) *responsive,* and (3) *overinvolved.* The disengaged prototypic pattern is characterized by discomfort and disinterest in helping a partner and typically involves withdrawal, limited involvement, and the rejection of neediness. In contrast, the responsive prototypic support-giving pattern is characterized by empathetic sensitivity and by a willingness to provide comfort, reassurance, and affection. Finally, the overinvolved prototypic pattern is characterized

by a self-focused need for excessive involvement in the partner's pro lems and typically involves criticism, controlling behavior, overinvolv ment, and enmeshment.

The important distinction between Furman and Wehner's (1994) co ceptualization and the CSIM is that the latter emphasizes the behavior dependency of coping and support-giving between friends (Chow Buhrmester, in press). This framework further characterizes friend dya based on joint-coping exchanges. Specifically, the characterization dyads in terms of their coping/support patterns yields a 3x3 matrix typo ogy of dyadic pairings that capture the important patterns manifest i intimate friendships (see Figure 5.1). The vertical axis of Figure 5 describes Friend 1's prototypic coping at the individual level whereas t horizontal axis describes Friend 2's prototypic support at the individu

Figure 5.1 Chow and Buhrmester's Coping-Support Interdependence Model (CSIM)

		Friend 2 Support-Giving		
		Disengaged	**Responsive**	**Overinvolved**
Friend 1 Coping	**Distancing**	***Distancing Disengaged***	Distancing Responsive	**Distancing Overinvolved**
	Adaptive	Adaptive Disengaged	***Adaptive Responsive***	Adaptive Overinvolved
	Overwhelmed	**Overwhelmed Disengaged**	Overwhelmed Responsive	***Overwhelmed Overinvolved***

SOURCE: Chow & Buhrmester (in press).

level. The combinations of both friends' behaviors constitute the dyad interdependent patterns of coping and support-giving, which are usefu for characterizing intimate friendships in adolescence and young adul hood. Although nine combinations have been proposed, this model pr dicts that five major patterns of interaction are particularly prominer and frequent. The first three (shown in bold italics in Figure 5.1) a *corresponding* pairings: (1) *distancing–disengaged*, (2) *adaptive–responsiv* and (3) *overwhelmed–overinvolved*. The distancing–disengaged pairir occurs when one friend copes with stress by utilizing distancing strategi

(e.g., denial, compulsive self-reliance) and their friend is rather aloof or uncaring in his/her support-giving. The adaptive–responsive pairing occurs when one friend copes with stress effectively through the use of problem solving strategies or social support-seeking and their friend reacts sensitively and supportively in his/her support-giving. The overwhelmed–overinvolved pairing occurs when one friend is emotionally overwhelmed and unable to cope constructively and their friend is also affected emotionally (empathic distress) and is unable to offer adequate support. Although these descriptions are of coping-support interactions, the dyadic dynamics are similar to Shulman's (1993) conceptualization of the disengaged, interdependent, and enmeshed typologies of friendships.

Chow and Buhrmester (in press) further proposed that there are *noncorresponding* dyadic friendship pairings. Two of these noncorresponding pairings, shown in bold in Figure 5.1, are of particular interest because, at least in theory, they represent incompatible demand–withdraw patterns of coping with stress (Christensen, 1988). The overwhelmed–disengaged pairing occurs when one person responds to stress by becoming overwhelmed (e.g., ruminating, excessive reassurance seeking) while their partner is disengaged in their support-giving (i.e., uncaring, detached); the pressing nature of the overwhelmed person's response may prove especially inconsistent with (or even aversive to) the disengaged partner's desire to avoid involvement, which might exacerbate his/her disengagement. The distancing–overinvolved pairing seems equally problematic. The stressed person's distancing style (e.g., denial, behavioral disengagement from stressors) seems evasive to the overinvolved partner, which may spurn the latter to heighten efforts to get the person to "face up to" the problem and deal with unexpressed feelings.

EMPIRICAL STUDIES OF FRIENDSHIP INTIMACY

The Developmental Approach

Research on Change in Friendship in Early and Mid-Adolescence

Most of the existing research on normative change in friendship during adolescence focuses on developmental changes in friendship intimacy—typically assessed with changes in disclosure and support—that occur with

age. Research on development in early and mid-adolescent friendship appears to be relatively consistent, suggesting that mutuality, self-disclosure and intimacy increase markedly during adolescence (e.g., Berndt, 1982 Buhrmester & Furman, 1987; De Goede, Branje, & Meeus, 2009; Furman & Buhrmester, 1992; Poulin & Pedersen, 2007). Not only do adolescents disclose more to and become more dependent on their friends for support but they also become more supportive of their friends. The overall perceived quality of friendship also improves from early to mid-adolescence (Way & Greene, 2006). These findings support Sullivan's (1953) notion that adolescents begin to utilize friendships as a means to fulfill their needs for intimate exchange and that friendships provide an ideal context for the intimate exchange of self-disclosure, support, and validation.

Research on Change in Friendship in Late Adolescence and Young Adulthood

Whereas the research on friendship development during early and mid adolescence appears to be relatively consistent, the research on friendship in late adolescence and early adulthood seems to be mixed. For instance some studies indicate that late adolescents and young adults engage in more self-disclosure (Radmacher & Azmitia, 2006), become more supportive (De Goede et al., 2009), and experience more intimacy in their friendships (Reis, Lin, Bennett, & Nezlek, 1993) compared to their younger counterparts. Other studies, however, suggest that intimacy (Updegraff, McHale, & Crouter, 2002), as well as commitment and satisfaction (Oswald & Clark, 2003) in friendships, decreases during the transition to late adolescence. Borrowing ideas from Carbery and Buhrmester (1998), there are two possible reasons for this discrepancy in the literature. First, friendship is typically studied in isolation from other types of relationships (e.g., De Goede et al., 2009; Poulin & Pedersen, 2007 Radmacher & Azmitia, 2006). Thus, findings typically offer limited insight into how young adults' friendships change when additional social roles (e.g., involvement in a romantic relationship) become more prominent. Second, life stages are often loosely defined in terms of chronological maturation rather than by shifts in social role participation, which may not coincide perfectly with age. Thus, these studies may fail to detect the consistent patterns of change in friendships in late adolescence and young adulthood. In other words, what might be perceived as inconsistency in the literature may just be a failure to detect how other relationships (e.g., romantic relationships) differentially affect intimacy

support, disclosure, and satisfaction in friendships depending upon the extent to which an individual is involved in these other relationships.

In order to address the possibility that friendship development is dependent upon individuals' involvement in other relationships, contemporary researchers have argued that a broader social network of relationships should be considered, in order to better understand friendship development in late adolescence and young adulthood (e.g., Carbery and Buhrmester, 1998; Johnson & Leslie, 1982; Laursen & Williams, 1997; Meeus, Branje, van der Valk, & de Wied, 2007). Because both friendships and romantic relationships are generally thought of as the most prominent relationships during late adolescence and young adulthood (e.g., Collins & Madsen, 2006), a handful of studies have addressed the nature of friendships in adolescence in relation to the nature of concurrent romantic relationships (Carbery & Buhrmester, 1998; Connolly & Johnson, 1996; Johnson & Leslie, 1982; Laursen & Williams, 1997; Reis et al., 1993; Seiffge-Krenke, 2003). Overall, these studies suggest that when late adolescents and young adults become involved in romantic roles, the necessity of friends for the fulfillment of intimacy needs is lessened, and romantic partners emerge as the major figure of intimacy. For example, adolescents with romantic partners spend significantly less time with family and friends than adolescents without romantic relationships (Laursen & Williams, 1997). Additionally, upon entering young adulthood, the proportion of individuals who choose romantic partners as their closest friends nearly doubles, whereas the proportion of participants who choose nonromantic friends as their closest friends significantly declines (Pahl & Pevalin, 2005). Late adolescents and young adults also rate intimacy with romantic partners as significantly higher than intimacy with friends (Salas & Ketzenberger, 2004), emotional closeness in romantic relationships as more important than in friendships (Fuhrman, Flannagan, & Matamoros, 2009), and relational commitment as stronger in romantic relationships than friendships (Meeus et al., 2007). Late adolescents and young adults also mention intimacy and support more often as rewards of romantic relationships than of friendships (Hand & Furman, 2009) and report that they are more likely to utilize a romantic partner or parent as an attachment figure (i.e., a person whom they can seek comfort in when distressed, count on always, and see and talk to regularly) than they are a best friend (Trinke & Bartholomew, 1997). In general, these findings suggest that as late adolescents and young adults become involved in romantic relationships, they become less involved and intimate with

friends, possibly because they are fulfilling their needs for intimac with their romantic partners and because they now have less time t spend with friends.

Surprisingly, some studies suggest that romantic involvement in itse has little impact on friendship quality (e.g., Connolly & Johnson, 199(Reis et al., 1993). For instance, Connolly and Johnson (1996) found tha late adolescents do not differ in the amount of social support receive from their best friend depending on whether they are romanticall involved or not. Similarly, Reis et al. (1993) found that married an single adults do not differ in their perception of friendship intimac These inconsistent findings may be attributable to the fact that the cla sifications of "involved" versus "not involved" may oversimplify th conceptualization of romantic status; instead, degree of involvement i a romantic relationship (e.g., duration, commitment) may be mor indicative of changes in friendship intimacy (Johnson & Leslie, 1982 For example, a study examining the association between different level of romantic involvement (e.g., from casual dating to marriage) an friendship qualities found that when compared to less romantically com mitted young adults (e.g., casual daters), young adults who were highl committed to their partner (e.g., married) perceived of existing friend ships as less important, and disclosed less to friends about persona matters (Johnson & Leslie, 1982). These findings suggest that as adoles cents and young adults become more involved and committed in thei romantic relationships, they become less intimate in their friendship because their romantic involvement begins to take the place of thei friendship involvement.

Studies that focus on the stage of young adulthood in which indi viduals get married and begin to have children are also supportive c the *family role involvement* perspective (Carbery & Buhrmester, 1998 in that they suggest that as individuals begin to have children wit their spouses, friendships decrease in number and importance. Fo instance, from the period of pregnancy to postpartum, women repor a decrease in the number of friends and an increase in the number c family members in their primary social network; they also rate thei emotional and instrumental support from friends as lower and thei support from family as higher (Gameiro, Boivin, Canavarro, Moura Ramos, & Soares, 2010). Similarly, new parents report a decline i their number of friends after the birth of a child, and they repor spending more time with family members and spouses (Bost, Cox Burchinal, & Payne, 2002). These findings may be due to a change i

relational needs in that new parents may need help and advice raising their child, which may be more available from their spouses, parents, and other family members (Gameiro et al., 2010). Additionally, as individuals have children, they experience a change in the number of roles that they must take on as new parents, which may prohibit them from maintaining friendships to the same extent and number as before they had children (Carbery & Buhrmester, 1998). These findings are supportive of the notion that as young adults enter into marriage and early parenthood, their social networks undergo an important reorganization because their new responsibilities as spouses and parents leave them less time for friendship. Additionally, friendships have less to offer these young adults in terms of support for dealing with emotional stressors that accompany marriage and parenthood or in terms of relational intimacy, which can now be found by confiding in their spouse.

The Individual Differences Approach

Attachment Styles and Individual Differences in Friendship Intimacy

Attachment research typically focuses on adolescents' and young adults' perceptions of their friendship intimacy, which is often defined by levels of disclosure and social support. According to attachment theory, highly anxious individuals are preoccupied by needs for intimacy; such tendencies lead them to perceive friends as less supportive and to perceive their relationships as less intimate (Fraley & Shaver, 2000). Existing studies on adolescents' and young adults' friendships, however, have provided mixed findings for this proposition. Whereas some researchers find that attachment anxiety is associated with perceptions of lower relationship intimacy or closeness (Bauminger, Finzi-Dottan, Chason, & Har-Even, 2008), others have failed to find such an association (Fraley & Davis, 1997; Furman, 2001; You & Malley-Morrison, 2000). One possible explanation for these mixed findings is that individuals who are high in attachment anxiety hold complex views of their partner (Mikulincer, Shaver, Bar-On, & Ein-Dor, 2010). On the one hand, anxiously attached individuals may perceive that their partner hardly meets their intense desires for proximity, and this lack of fulfillment leads them to perceive of their relationship as less close and intimate. On the other hand, anxiously

attached individuals also tend to focus on the potential rewards of i macy and, thus, hold positive and hopeful attitudes toward their relati ships. Therefore, these conflicting relational views and attitudes, *relational ambivalence*, toward partners quite possibly explain the mi findings in the literature.

In contrast to preoccupied individuals, avoidant individuals tend feel uneasy with intimate relationships and actively suppress their ne for support or comfort from their attachment figure, placing emphasis independence and interpersonal distance (Furman & Wehner, 1994). S report studies that have examined the association between attachm avoidance and intimacy in friendship suggest that adolescents who p sess avoidant internal working models of friendships (as opposed secure working models of friendship) tend to describe their friends experiences as less warm and supportive and feel less intimate with tl best friend (Bauminger et al., 2008; Furman, 2001; Zimmermann, 20(Results from a longitudinal study examining adolescents from Grad to Grade 12 further suggest that avoidant attachment and friends intimacy are reciprocally related (Chow, Roelse, & Buhrmester, 20 Specifically, avoidant attachment is predictive of subsequent friends intimacy whereas friendship intimacy is also predictive of the emerge of avoidant attachment.

Characterizing Friend Dyads by Individual Differences in Friendship Intimacy

Contemporary researchers have argued that it is important to consi friendship intimacy at the dyadic level. Emphasizing interdependence friendships, this line of research focuses on characterizing friendsh based on the intimate exchanges that occur within the dyad. For instar borrowing ideas from family systems theory, Shulman (1993) sugges that there are three major types of adolescent friendships: (1) *disengag* (2) *interdependent*, and (3) *enmeshed*. In order to investigate this assur tion, studies have observed adolescents' behavioral interactions durin problem solving task, examining the extent to which the proposed dya friendship types manifest themselves behaviorally (Shulman, 1993; Shulm Laursen, Kalman, & Karpovsky, 1997). Partially supporting Shulma hypothesis, two major types have emerged: (1) interdependent a (2) disengaged. Interdependent dyads are characterized by high level coordination and joint effort when engaging in the problem-solving ta

In contrast, disengaged dyads are characterized by high levels of individuality and a lack of coordination, even when they have been explicitly encouraged to consult with each other (Shulman, 1993; Shulman et al., 1997). These two types of friendship can be further distinguishable by their concepts of intimacy. Specifically, when compared to disengaged dyads, interdependent dyads' concepts of intimacy involve a better balance of closeness and individuality (Shulman, 1993), as well as higher levels of emotional closeness and respect (Shulman et al., 1997). Overall, these observational studies suggest that interdependent friendships that are characterized by joint effort and closeness as well as disengaged friendships that are characterized by individuality and a lack of coordination can both be found in adolescence.

Although the enmeshed friendship type did not emerge in Shulman's studies (1993; Shulman et. al., 1997), another line of friendship research has provided tentative support for this typology. Specifically, Rose (2002) observed a tendency for co-rumination between some friends. This co-rumination can be conceptualized as a dyadic phenomenon in which friends extensively discuss and revisit their problems, with a focus on their negative feelings. Co-rumination appears to resemble the features of enmeshed friendship described by Shulman's (1993) theory. Because Shulman (1993; Shulman et al., 1997) assessed friendship typologies with a problem-solving task, it is possible that the nature of this task may not have been "emotionally driven" enough to capture enmeshed friendship, which involves excessive levels of emotional intimacy.

Attachment researchers also examined different pairings of friendships based on their attachment styles and how these different pairings are reflective of friendship intimacy. For instance, using a categorical approach for measuring attachment styles, Weimer, Kerns, and Oldenburg (2004) identified three types of friendship pairings based on the attachment styles of the individuals in a friendship: (1) secure–secure, (2) secure–insecure, and (3) insecure–insecure. They examined the extent to which these different pairings differed in terms of their closeness and their intimate behavioral exchanges. They found that the three pairings did not differ in terms of their self-reported friendship closeness. However, when compared to dyads in which one or both of the friends were insecure, the secure–secure dyads tended to display more behaviors that are likely to promote a sense of connection within the friendship, such as higher levels of intimate disclosure and supportiveness, as well as lower levels of superficial disclosure when engaging in discussions. A study assessing attachment styles through the use of two attachment dimensions

(avoidance and anxiety) found similar results (Grabill & Kerns, 2000). Specifically, dyads in which both friends were high in attachment avoidance reported lower self-disclosure in their friendship; individuals within this type of dyad reported feeling as though they were not validated or supported by their friend. Contrary, dyads in which both friends were high in attachment anxiety reported greater self-disclosure than dyads not as high in attachment anxiety. Taken together, this body of literature suggests that the different pairings of attachment styles present in friend dyads may have important effects on the intimacy and closeness in these friendships.

A separate line of research also discusses the dynamics of intimate behavioral exchanges between friends, focusing on the interdependence of self-disclosure as well as support-seeking and support-giving in close friendships. For instance, Chow and Buhrmester (in press) examined the interdependence of coping and support among young adult friends. This study found a strong association between the extent to which one friend sought emotional/instrumental support and the extent to which the other friend responded with sensitive support. Consistent with Reis and Shaver's (1988) intimacy model, this study suggests that individuals who routinely experience sensitive and responsive support from friends are more confident about their friends' availability and are, therefore, more comfortable relying on them for instrumental and emotional support.

Interestingly, Chow and Buhrmester (in press) also found a positive association between individuals' distancing coping and their friends' disengaged support-giving. These findings suggest that the avoidance of support-givers in times of distress is an emotion regulation strategy (i.e., compulsive self-reliance and suppression of attachment needs) used to cope with an uncaring/unsupportive friend. It is equally possible, however, that when an individual copes with stress by denying or dismissing the importance of the stressor, his/her avoidance puts little direct impetus on the partner to provide a supportive response. That is, if the friend does not want to acknowledge that he/she has a problem, the partner is, to an extent, implicitly asked not to offer support. Thus, it is equally possible that a person's distancing coping may cause their friend to react with disengagement or that a friend's disengaged support-giving may cause an individual to utilize avoidance as a coping strategy.

Chow and Buhrmester's (in press) study also provides insight into another type of coping-support dynamic: the overwhelmed–overinvolved pairing. This pattern closely resembles the enmeshed pattern of friendship (Shulman, 1993) as well as the co-rumination dynamics Rose (2002)

observed in friendships (especially those of females). Interestingly, Chow and Buhrmester (in press) found that overwhelmed coping was associated with disengaged support-giving behaviors. One possible interpretation of this finding involves the evolving process of coping and support-giving between friends. That is, when faced with a friend who is overwhelmed and not readily consoled, a friend may sequentially engage in more than one way of providing support. For instance, the friend may begin by offering support, but once they realize that the friend is unreceptive to the support, they may disengage.

Empirical studies that investigate individual differences in friendship intimacy using a dyadic approach suggest it is important to consider the characteristics and roles of both individuals involved in the friendship. For instance, although traditional research has consistently found an individual-level link between attachment security and friendship intimacy (Furman, 2001), more recent research also suggests that it is crucial to consider how different pairings of attachment security between friends may have an impact on perceptions of intimacy within the dyad (Weimer et al., 2004). Furthermore, research also suggests that individual differences in the expression of intimate behaviors (e.g., disclosure, support) are heavily dependent on another's friend's characteristics (Chow & Buhrmester, in press), arguing that friendship intimacy is established by the intimate behavioral exchanges between two friends.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Research from the developmental and individual differences perspectives of friendship development has revealed important features of friend relations in adolescence and young adulthood, but to understand real transformations in this developmental period, more work is needed on the time course of friendships, both chronologically and developmentally. Illuminating these transformations will require an integration of the developmental and individual differences perspectives.

Understanding the course that friendships take in real, chronological time requires knowledge of where, when, and how individuals find friends. As emerging adults move beyond compulsory schooling and are no longer forced into daily interaction with large numbers of peers, how do young adults initiate friendships? Where do they find friends, and what strategies do they use to initiate contact with new potential

friends? In addition to these questions, future research should exam ine the different types of social overtures that might be effective i initiating and strengthening friendships. Similarly, research shoul consider the different interactional processes that contribute to th strength and satisfaction of dyadic friendships, as well as the strate gies that young adults use to offer support and companionship t friends as the commitments to marriage and parenthood make dail contact with friends less likely. Another interesting perspective o friendships that has not been extensively considered is the manner i which adolescent and young adult friendships come to an end. D serious conflicts erupt that cause friends to "break up" as at earlie ages, or do problematic friendships in young adulthood slowly degrad and eventually break apart with time?

Future work should also examine transformations in relationship pro cesses that occur developmentally. As individuals mature into youn adulthood, are they more likely to have the capacity for interdependen friendships as opposed to enmeshed or disengaged relationships? D young adults learn from their experiences in friend relationships an become more likely to engage in solve and solace type interactions whe in distress, as opposed to dismiss or escape interactions? In light of Chow and Buhrmester's (in press) model, as a result of maturation, increase skill in emotion regulation, and experience in relationships, it seem quite plausible that young adults would become more likely to engage i adaptive coping with friends as they mature, as opposed to distancing o overwhelmed coping.

We concur with Carbery and Buhrmester (1998) that studying age differences in young adult friendships may be far less revealing than studying friendships in relation to other close relationships that accompany the major transition points in early adulthood, such as marriage and becoming a parent. Adults' friendships likely continue to evolve as the transitions continue. For individuals who become parents, children's changing social ecologies likely influence parents' relationships, as children begin school and bring their parents into contact with new networks, as older children become intensely involved in extracurricular activities, and as older adolescent children move away from home and parents find renewed energy and more time for friendships. Additionally, almost all adults experience transformations in relationships related to employment; new social challenges arise from moving to a new community to start a new job, being promoted and being asked to supervise peers, and losing a job.

Developmental psychopathologists studying risk and resilience have argued that for children resilience may be fostered by the "ordinary" magic of adaptive relationships (Masten, 2001). Friendships for young adults may be part of the ordinary magic that allows some to thrive in the face of adversity; these relationships may also be a source of pleasurable companionship and support. However, it is important to remember that the ordinary magic of friend relationships is not available to everyone. Both the developmental and individual differences theories seek to account for characteristics of existing friendships. Additional theoretical and empirical work will be important for understanding how exactly adolescents and young adults form and strengthen friendships, how friendships sometimes dissolve, and how young adults create the ordinary magic of friend relationships through the major transitions of adulthood.

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