

Worthy M, Gary A L & Kahn G M. Self-disclosure as an exchange process.
J. Personal. Soc. Psychol. 13:59-63, 1969.
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The exchange of self-disclosures among people getting acquainted in a laboratory setting followed a norm of reciprocity. The intimacy level of the initial disclosure was based on a first impression of degree of liking for the other person. The level of subsequent disclosures made depended on the intimacy level of disclosures received from the other person. [The *SCI*® and *SSCI*® indicate that this paper has been cited in over 135 publications.]

discipline of psychology could earn scientific respect only by doing the slow, difficult work of creating theories based on careful laboratory experiments.² He saw humanistic psychology and its favorite concepts, such as "creativity" and "self-disclosure," as popular fads that might lead students away from serious scientific psychology. He was a powerful inspiration and taught me most of what I know about laboratory research.

I respected both men, and looking back now I suppose it was natural enough that when I was finally on my own as a professor at Georgia State University, doing my own research, I would try to reduce the internal dissonance by doing a study that would be respected by both of them. I believe that therein lies the explanation for why this study has been well received and often cited.

The research was done in collaboration with two undergraduate students, Al Gary and Gay Kahn, who wanted laboratory experience. Each went on to earn a doctorate in psychology. Our study dealt with a behavior, self-disclosure, that is a central component of human communication and a core concern of psychotherapists; it is not surprising that interest in this topic has been sustained.³ What was equally important, though, was that this study used a laboratory methodology that was "tight" in its controls, quantitative analyses, and ease of integration into a larger theoretical context (i.e., exchange theory).

Both of my mentors, Jourard and Wright, died as young men long before their own research careers were completed. I consider the influence of this study, whatever it may be, as a continuing legacy from them to those of us who are still trying to create a science of psychology.

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This study was done, at least in part, to make peace between two voices within me about what kind of research I should be doing. The internal voices were derived from two mentors I had had as a graduate student at the University of Florida in the early 1960s. Whereas I was greatly influenced by both, I often felt uncomfortable about the degree to which each viewed the other as misguided in his approach to psychological research.

The first mentor, Sidney Jourard, a charismatic Canadian, was a dyed-in-the-wool humanistic psychologist. He believed that psychological research should, above all else, be relevant to human interest, human values, and everyday human problems. He encouraged us to study those areas most dear to the human potential movement: "peak performance," "self-actualization," "creativity," and especially his own field, "self-disclosure."¹

The other mentor, my major professor, Jack Wright, was a hardheaded, very bright Oklahoman. He felt that the dis-

1. Jourard S M. *The transparent self: self-disclosure and well being*. Princeton, NJ: Van Nostrand, 1964. 250 p. (Cited 355 times.)
2. Wright J M & Worthy M. Volunteering as group spokesman as a function of task effectiveness, leader success, and task similarity. *Psychol. Rep.* 28:911-7, 1971.
3. Miller L C & Kenny D A. Reciprocity of self-disclosure at the individual and dyadic levels: a social relations analysis. *J. Personal. Soc. Psychol.* 50:713-9, 1986.