The extant literature on self-esteem reveals that self-esteem predicts affect regulation. Those high in self-esteem seek to maintain positive affect and repair negative affect, while those low in self-esteem seek to do the inverse. This pattern is indicative of the self-verification motive (Swann, 1997), in which people seek to confirm their self-views. This likely occurs in the affective component of the self-concept, leading those low in self-esteem to be motivated to experience negative affect and to avoid positive affect. Indeed recent findings indicate that familiarity with an emotion positively predicts the desire to experience that emotion (Ford & Tamir, 2014). Overall this analysis indicates that those low in self-esteem may be dispositionally motivated to feel bad. Therefore the goal of this study is to test this possibility.

Participants ($N = 131$) completed a measure of self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965) and our instrument, the Affect Regulation Scale, that measures two affect regulation motive styles: a hedonic motive style involving dispositional motives to increase positive and decrease negative affect, and an antihedonic motive style involving the inverse. Multiple regression analyses revealed that the hedonic and antihedonic affect regulation motive styles were significantly simultaneous predictors of SE (standardized betas = .21 and -.51, respectively, $ps < .05$, $R^2 = .31$) such that those high in SE were (dispositionally) motivated to seek positive and avoid negative states, while those low in SE were (dispositionally) to do the inverse. Overall these findings replicate past work and extend the self-verification motive to affective components of the self-concept.