

Perceived Goal Ownership, Regulatory Goal Cognition, and Health Behavior Change

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Objective: To investigate the links among perceived goal ownership, regulatory goal cognition, and health behavior change. **Methods:** A sample of 390 college students completed measures of (a) perceived goal ownership for a goal related to a health behavior that they, their dating partner, or both were seeking to change, (b) 9 aspects of regulatory goal cognition, and (c) health behavior change. **Results:** As compared to

participants with self-set and joint-set goals, participants with partner-set goals reported less adaptive regulatory goal cognition and were less likely to report positive changes in health behavior. **Conclusion:** Efforts to change dating partner's health behaviors should be framed as joint-set goals.

Key words: goals, health behaviors, self-regulation

Am J Health Behav. 2007;31(1):98-109
