



A Social Identity Approach to Postnatal Depression

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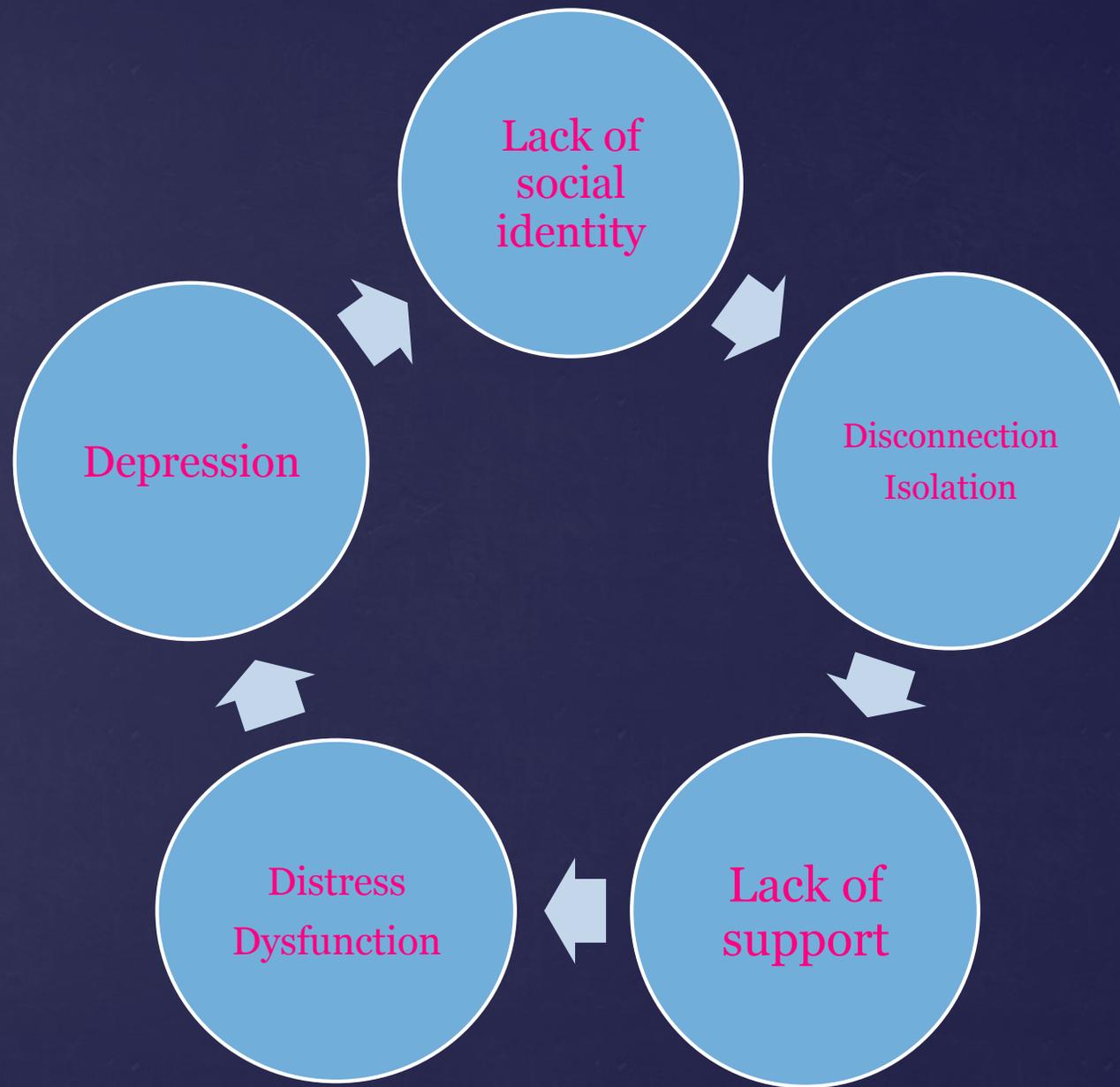
Tegan Cruwys

Alex Haslam

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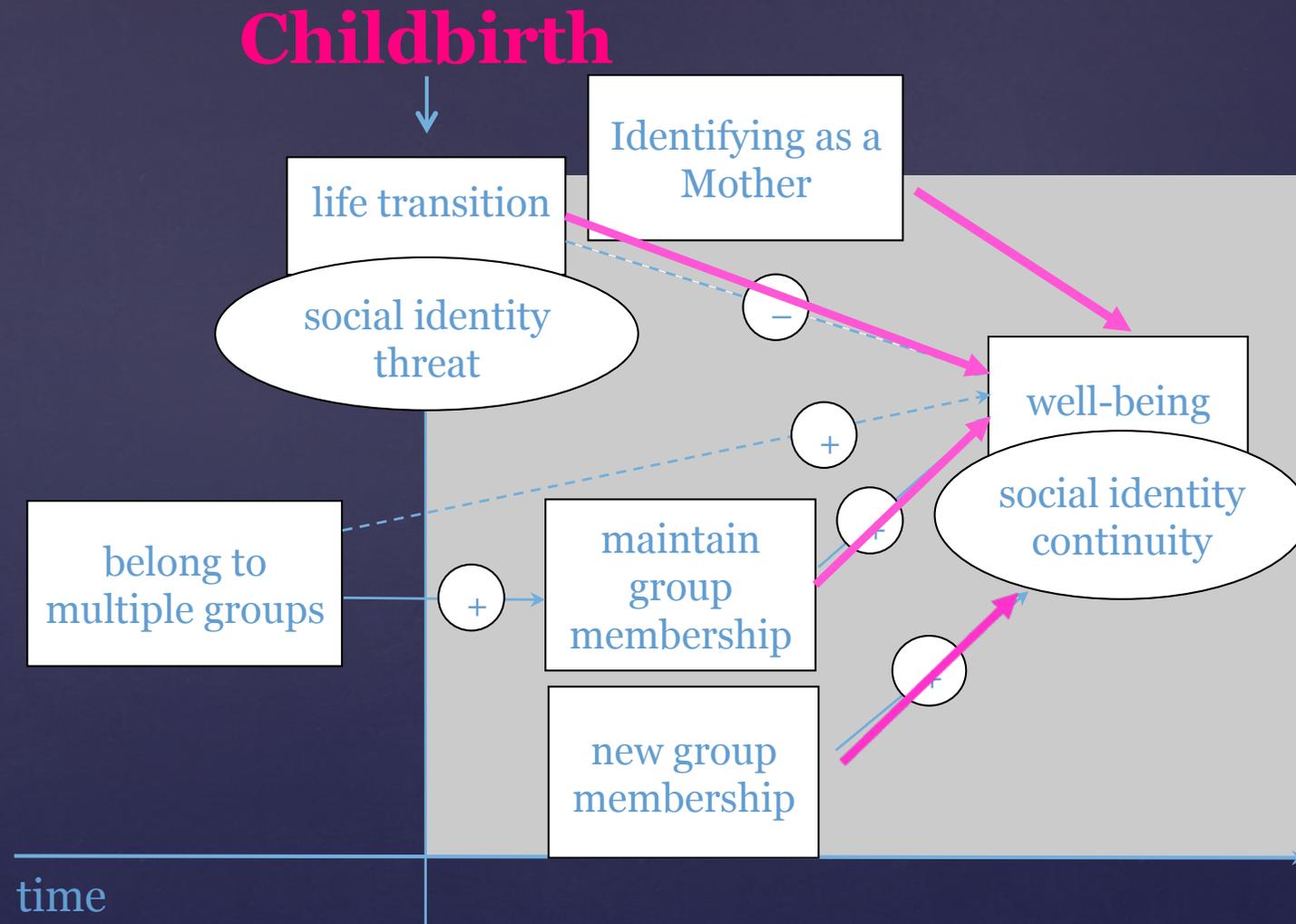
THE UNIVERSITY
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(Cruwys, Haslam, Dingle, Haslam, & Jetten, 2014)

**Pregnancy is not just a life transition,
but an *identity* transition**

Hypotheses



Social Identity Model of Identity Change as applied to pregnancy

Method



$N = 387$ (baby < 12 months)

	<i>M(SD)</i>
Age	29.87 (5.07)
Parity	260 primiparous (67%)
Marital Status	279 married (72%)
SES (1 to 7)	4.94 (1.87)
Ethnicity	277 Caucasian (72%)

Method

Mental Health measures:

DASS21

DASS 21 NAME _____ DATE _____

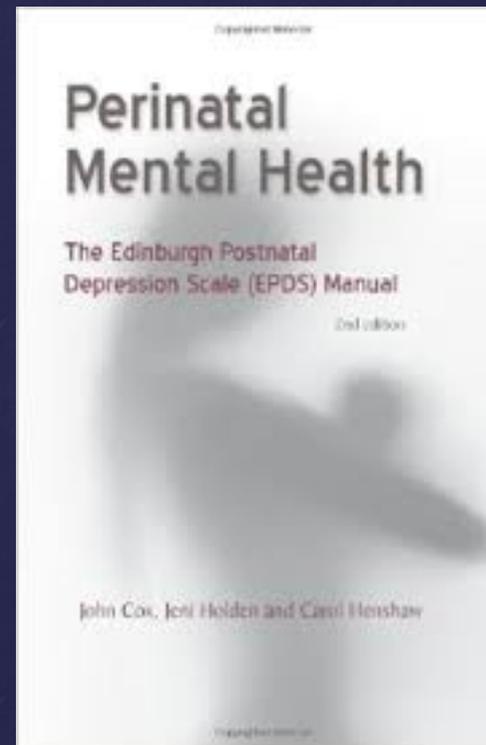
Please read each statement and circle a number 0, 1, 2 or 3 that best describes how much the statement applies to you over the last 7 days. There are no right or wrong answers. Please read each item as you understand it. Do not skip any items.

0 Did not apply to me at all
1 Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time
2 Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time
3 Applied to me very much or most of the time

	0	1	2	3	SCORED 0-3
1. I panic (feel as if I'm choking)					
2. I'm nervous all the time					
3. I feel I can't relax or enjoy anything					
4. I get most things I do wrong (eg. I make silly mistakes)					
5. I find it difficult to work up the energy to do things					
6. I avoid busy or noisy situations					
7. I get most things I do wrong (eg. I make silly mistakes)					
8. I find it difficult to get up in the morning					
9. I get most things I do wrong (eg. I make silly mistakes)					
10. I find it difficult to get up in the morning					
11. I get most things I do wrong (eg. I make silly mistakes)					
12. I find it difficult to get up in the morning					
13. I get most things I do wrong (eg. I make silly mistakes)					
14. I find it difficult to get up in the morning					
15. I get most things I do wrong (eg. I make silly mistakes)					
16. I find it difficult to get up in the morning					
17. I get most things I do wrong (eg. I make silly mistakes)					
18. I find it difficult to get up in the morning					
19. I get most things I do wrong (eg. I make silly mistakes)					
20. I find it difficult to get up in the morning					
21. I get most things I do wrong (eg. I make silly mistakes)					

SCALES

EPDS



Method

Social Identity measures:

ExITs - Identity *Loss* and Identity *Gain*

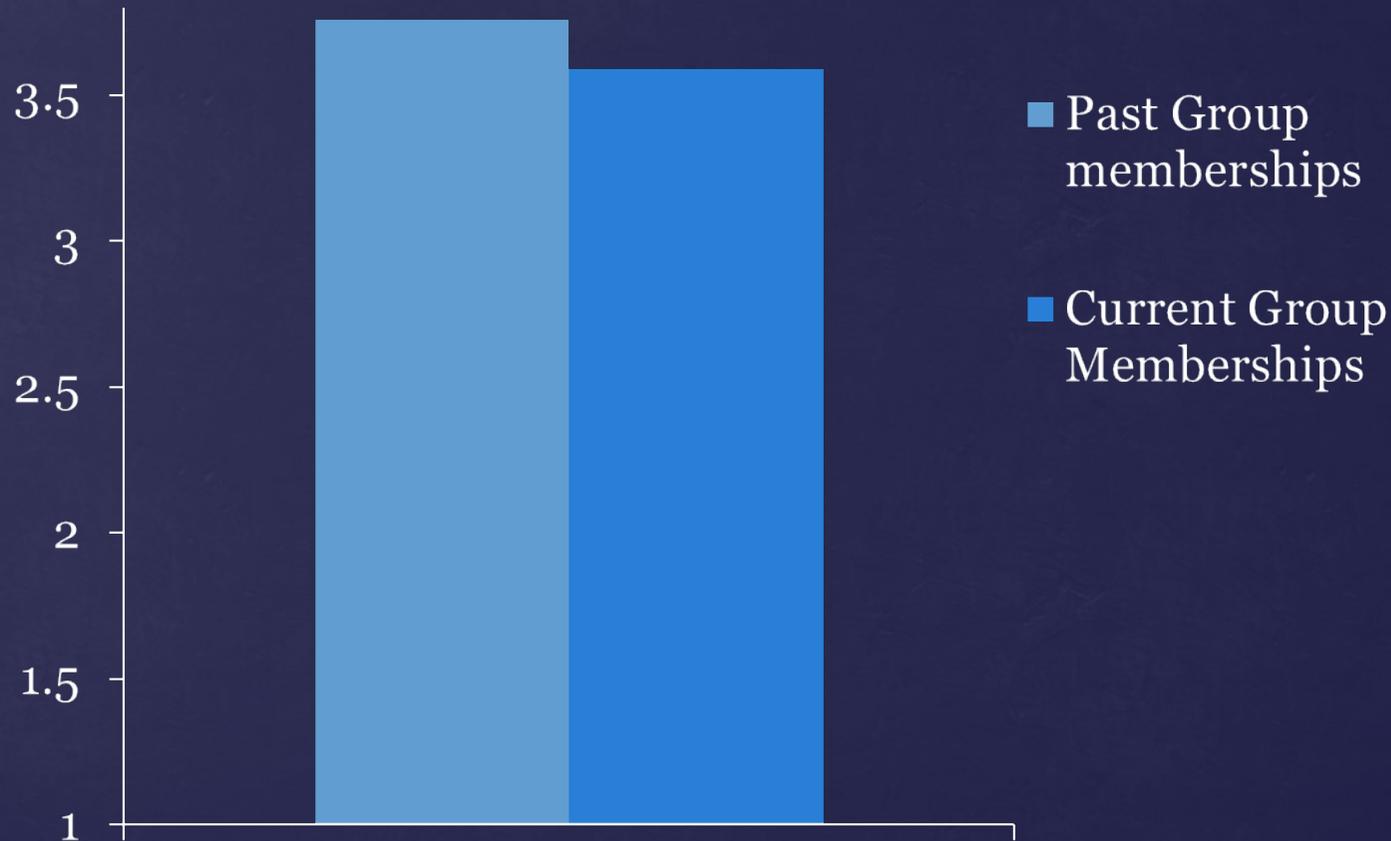
1. Past group memberships: “*Before* having a baby I had strong ties with lots of different groups”
2. Current group memberships: “I have strong ties with lots of different groups”
3. Continuity of group memberships: “After having a baby I continue to have strong ties with the *same* groups as before having a baby”
4. New group memberships: “After having a baby, I have strong ties with one or more *new* groups”

FISI- Identification as a *mother*

5. “Being a mother is an important part of how I see myself”

Results

Overall, women reported significant changes in their group memberships



-t-test: past group memberships ($M=3.76$, $SD=1.79$), and current group memberships ($M=3.59$, $SD=1.63$); $t(386)=2.53$, $p = .012$.

Results

Changes in women's group memberships predicted mental health

		DASS21		EPDS	
		β	<i>p</i>	β	<i>p</i>
Step 1	Past Group Memberships				
Step 2	Current Group Memberships	-.22*	.002	-.27*	<.001

Results

Maintaining existing group memberships and gaining new group memberships will be predictive of lower depression

		DASS21		EPDS	
		β	<i>p</i>	β	<i>p</i>
Step 1	Past Group Memberships				
Step 2	Continuity of Group Memberships	-.16	.003	-.24	<.001
	New Group Memberships		ns		ns

Results

Social identification as a mother predicts lower depression

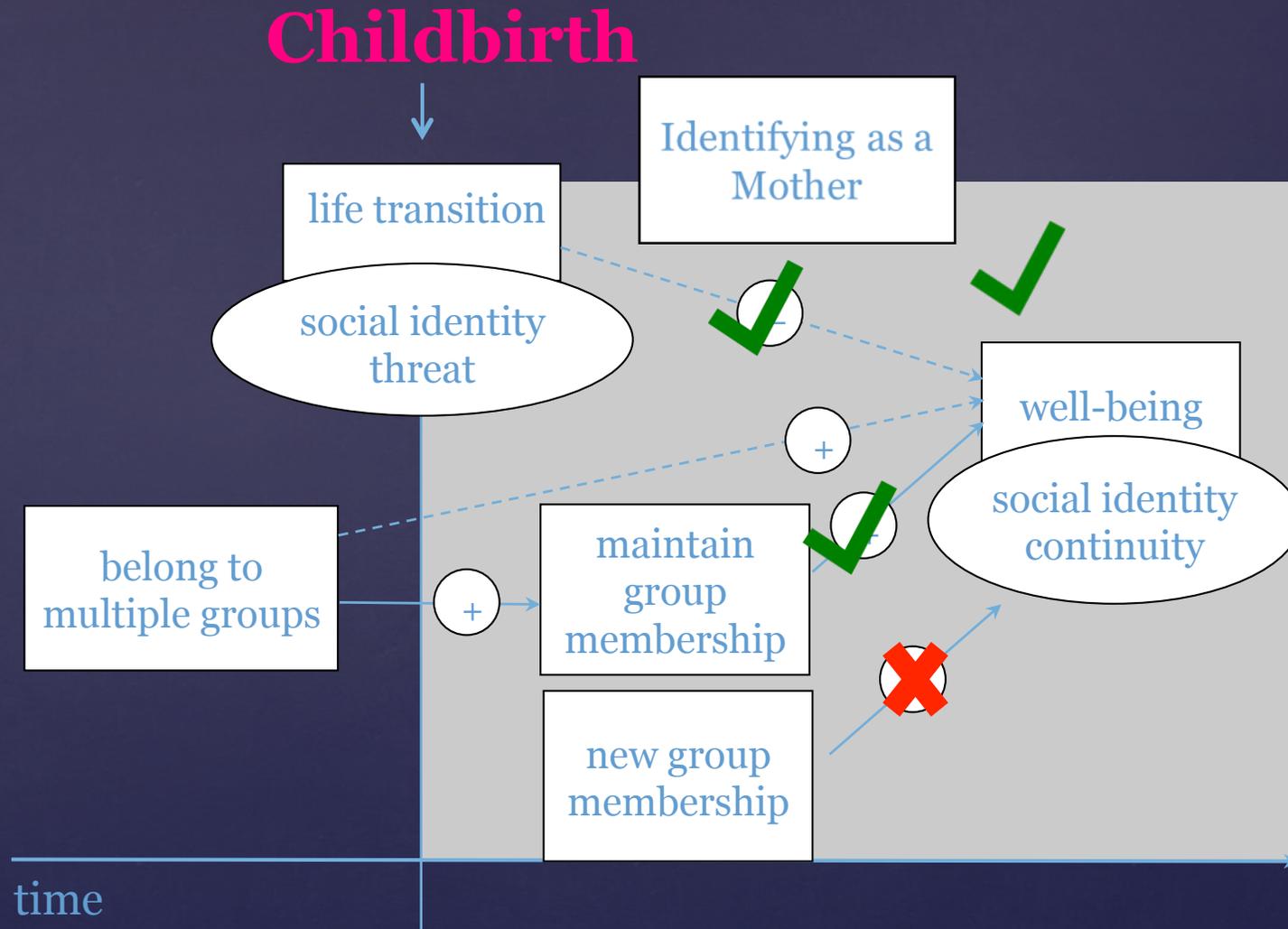
	DASS21		EPDS	
	β	p	β	p

Covariates:

Age, SES, marital status, and
previous history of depression

Identity as a mother	-.39	< .001	-.40	< .001
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Results



Pregnancy and childbirth are significant life events that mark a period of substantial social identity change for women.



Women who experience identity loss, a loss of group memberships, or a drop in social support after having a baby will be at increased risk of decline in mental health.



Women are at lower risk of postnatal depression...

a) the more they *identify as being as mother*



Women are at lower risk of postnatal depression...
b) if they stay connected with their important social networks.



