

Buchwald, P. (2003). The Relationship of Individual versus Communal State-Trait Coping and Trust, Empathy, and Responsibility. *Anxiety, Stress, and Coping, 16*, 307-320.

## **ABSTRACT**

Prior research and theoretical considerations revealed important information about the role of *individual* state-trait coping and *personal* resources for coping with an examination. However, the relationship between *communal* coping strategies and *interpersonal* resources has yet to be investigated. In order to understand the relationship between state-trait coping and interpersonal resources, several statistical analyses were used. The German Strategic Approach to Coping Scale (GSACS, GSACS-Exam), the Interpersonal Trust Scale (ITS), and exam-specific Empathy and Responsibility Scales (RESP-Exam, EMP-Exam) were combined for collecting data from a sample of 122 examiner-examinee-dyads. Data on empathy and responsibility of examiners were gathered as well as dispositional coping styles and trust of examinees eight weeks prior to an oral examination. Dispositional coping predicted comparable situational coping, reported immediately after the examination at a low-moderate level. Communal coping strategies tended to vary more than individual ones. Interpersonal resources were found to predict specific communal coping responses and a path model revealed the mediating effect of interpersonal trust. The results are discussed in the light of communal coping theory and educational significance.

*Keywords:* State-trait coping; Communal coping; Trust; Empathy; Responsibility; Oral examination