

A. Purpose. Existing research consistently demonstrates a positive relationship between authenticity and well-being. We predicted that authenticity and well-being would be less strongly related among people high on neuroticism. Indirect support for this idea comes from previous research showing that the association between authenticity and well-being is weaker among people high on Dark Tetrad personality traits.

B. Procedure. Study 1 (N=844) was a cross-sectional correlational study in which participants completed established measures of personality traits, authenticity, and well-being. We also measured belongingness and optimism as candidate mediators.

C. Results. Study 1 results showed that, as expected, authenticity was positively related to well-being,  $r=.57$ ,  $p<.001$ , and that neuroticism was negatively related to these,  $r's=-.61$ , and  $-.70$ , respectively, both  $p's<.001$ . Supporting our prediction, in a hierarchical regression model, neuroticism (main effect  $\beta=-.57$ ,  $p<.001$ ) significantly moderated the relationship between authenticity (main effect  $\beta=.23$ ,  $p<.001$ ; first step  $\Delta R^2=.53$ ,  $p<.001$ ) and well-being, interaction

$\beta=-.07$ ,  $p=.006$  (second step  $\Delta R^2=.004$ ,  $p=.006$ ). Decomposing this interaction showed that, among those low on neuroticism, authenticity was more strongly related to well-being,  $r(141)=.43$ ,  $p<.001$  than among those high on neuroticism, authenticity was unrelated to well-being,  $r(120)=-.11$ ,  $p=.22$ ,  $z=5.56$ ,  $p<.001$ . These results suggest being “who one really is” may be a less viable pathway to well-being among those who are highly neurotic. Follow-up analyses will probe whether this pattern is more relevant to certain facets of neuroticism (anxiety, hostility, depression, self-consciousness, impulsiveness, or vulnerability), or particular components of well-being (global meaning in life, significance, purpose, coherence, life satisfaction, or self-esteem) and whether belongingness or optimism show evidence of moderated mediation.

Two follow-up studies are currently being conducted.

D. Conclusions. Authenticity is clearly important to well-being, however, the present research indicates that being true to oneself is less strongly related to well-being for those who are highly neurotic.