

## Idealistic Advice and Pragmatic Choice: A Psychological Distance Account

Shai Danziger  
Tel-Aviv University

Ronit Montal and Rachel Barkan  
Ben Gurion University of the Negev

In 6 studies, we found that advice is more idealistic than choice in decisions that trade off idealistic and pragmatic considerations. We propose that because advisers are more psychologically distant from the choosers' decision problem, they construe the dilemma at a higher construal level than do choosers (Trope & Liberman, 2003, 2010). Consequently, advisers are more influenced by idealistic considerations that are salient at a high-level construal, whereas choosers are more influenced by pragmatic considerations that are salient at a low-level construal. Consistent with this view, Studies 1 and 2 demonstrate that compared with choosers, advisers weigh idealistic considerations more heavily and pragmatic considerations less heavily, place greater emphasis on ends (*why*) than on means to achieve the end (*how*), and generate more reasons (pros) in favor of acting idealistically. Studies 3 and 4 provide converging support for our account by demonstrating that making advisers focus on a lower construal level results in more pragmatic recommendations. In Study 3, we manufactured more pragmatic recommendations by priming a low-level implementation mind-set in a purportedly unrelated task, whereas in Study 4 we did so by reducing advisers' psychological distance from the dilemma by asking them to consider what they would choose in the situation. The results of Study 4 suggest advisers do not spontaneously consider self-choice. Finally, in Studies 5 and 6, we demonstrate the choice–advice difference in consequential real-life decisions.

*Keywords:* decision making, idealism and pragmatism, advice giving, construal level theory

Go confidently in the direction of your dreams!  
—Henry David Thoreau, U.S. Transcendentalist author (1817–1862)

Consider that you always wanted to study medicine but majored in biology when the medical school did not accept you. Recently, you reapplied to medical school, and the school placed you on the acceptance waiting list. In the meantime, you went on the job market and successfully landed a position in a major pharmaceutical company. After you landed the position, the medical school accepts you. What a dilemma! Should you follow your lifelong dream and study medicine, or should you be pragmatic and accept the lucrative job? After much deliberation, you take the job. Now consider advising a friend or acquaintance faced with this exact dilemma. Will this role change sway your decision and lead you to recommend medical school? Before advising, will you consider

what you would do if you faced the same dilemma? Will accepting the role of adviser influence how you mentally represent the dilemma? This research addresses these questions.

Thoreau's instruction is consistent with popular recommendations people often rephrase with inspirational aphorisms such as *pursue your dream* or *do what feels right*. Such recommendations, however, often fail to materialize because of the daily obstacles faced by those who wish to live the dream. Why then do advisers often seem blind to choosers' obstacles? We propose that this is because advisers typically do not consider what they would choose in the situation. Instead, they provide recommendations through a distanced and broad perspective. More specifically, following construal level theory (CLT; Trope & Liberman, 2003, 2010), we argue that because people give advice from a greater psychological distance than that from which they make a choice, they mentally construe decision problems at a higher level than they do when making a choice. Consequently, advisers assign more weight to values associated with a high-level construal, such as personal values and idealistic considerations, whereas choosers assign more weight to values associated with a low-level construal, such as pragmatic considerations, including feasibility of implementation.

We organize the rest of the article as follows: First, we review research on advice giving. Then, we briefly review findings showing effects of psychological distance on mental construal. Next, we propose that because advisers are more psychologically distant from the decision dilemma, they construe it more abstractly than choosers. As in our opening example, we focus on decisions

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Shai Danziger, The Leon Recanati Graduate School of Business Administration, Tel-Aviv University, Israel; Ronit Montal and Rachel Barkan, Department of Business Administration, Guilford Glazer Faculty of Business and Management, Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Israel.

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Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Shai Danziger, Faculty of Management, Tel-Aviv University, Israel 69978. E-mail: shaid@post.tau.ac.il

involving an idealistic–pragmatic tradeoff. Consistent with our CLT account, we hypothesize that advice is more idealistic (less pragmatic) than choice. Last, we present six studies that support this conceptualization.

### Advice Giving

We often give advice. We advise family members, friends, colleagues, and incidental acquaintances on many matters, including romantic relationships, career choice, and product selection. Despite its pervasiveness, few academic studies have examined advice giving. In a comprehensive review of advice and decision making, Bonaccio and Dalal (2006) pointed out that the vast majority of experiments have examined how choosers use recommendations rather than examining advice characteristics. The few studies that have focused on advice giving suggest that recommendations differ from choices. First, studying career and academic course decisions, Kray and Gonzalez (1999) reported that choosers consider more information and weigh option attributes more uniformly than do advisers. Advisers tend to use a lexicographic decision rule, typically evaluating an option according to one (socially) important attribute or dimension. Second, Kray (2000) suggested choices reflect idiosyncratic/subjective preferences, whereas recommendations reflect the options advisers believe the majority of people will prefer. Third, in relationship scenarios, recommendations appear bolder than choices. Advisers are more likely to endorse an opposite sex interaction than are choosers to engage in them (Beisswanger, Stone, Hupp, & Allgaier, 2003; Stone, Yates, & Caruthers, 2002; Wray & Stone, 2005). Fourth, Jonas and Frey (2003; see also Jonas, Schulz-Hardt, & Frey, 2005) found that choosers are more likely than advisers to engage in confirmatory information search after an initial decision. Finally, potential victims (female choosers) are more sensitive than experts on sexual assault (male advisers) to the implementation cost they must pay to lessen the risk of sexual assault (Furby, Fischhoff, & Morgan, 1991; see also Fischhoff, 1992). Considered jointly, these findings suggest advisers emphasize general rules and goals and tend to focus on one decision dimension, whereas choosers ascribe more weight to means and instrumental issues and tend to weigh decision dimensions more uniformly. We offer that advisers' greater psychological distance from the chooser's dilemma underlies the use of different decision rules and/or weightings in advice and choice.

### Psychological Distance Underlies Different Perspectives in Choice and Advice

People make predictions, judge, evaluate, and make choices regarding objects and situations that differ in psychological distance (Lewin, 1951). Proximal decisions involve thinking about the self in the here and now, whereas distal decisions involve thinking about events and outcomes that are detached from direct experience in either time or person. According to CLT (Trope & Liberman, 2003, 2010), psychological distance influences how people mentally represent objects and situations. CLT postulates that proximal events are represented by low-level construals, whereas distal events are represented by high-level construals (Bar-Anan, Liberman, & Trope, 2006). Generally, high-level construals are goal-related, decontextualized representations that con-

vey the essence of the available information. They include abstract, general, and superordinate features of events, and they emphasize outcome desirability. In contrast, low-level construals are contextualized representations that include specific, concrete, and subordinate features of events, and they emphasize outcome feasibility (Trope & Liberman, 2003, 2010).

The effect of psychological distance on mental construal was originally demonstrated in the context of temporal distance, using various instantiations of construal, including abstraction versus concreteness, why versus how, desirability versus feasibility, and should versus want (Fujita, Eyal, Chaiken, Trope, & Liberman, 2008; Liberman, Sagristano, & Trope, 2002; Liberman & Trope, 1998). Later studies demonstrated that other forms of psychological distance, including hypotheticality (Todorov, Goren, & Trope, 2007; Wakslak, Trope, Liberman, & Alony, 2006), spatial distance (Fujita, Henderson, Eng, Trope, & Liberman, 2006), and social distance (Liviato, Trope, & Liberman, 2008), similarly impact the mental construal of objects and events.

Consistent with CLT thinking, we propose that the different roles of making a choice and giving advice determine the psychological distance from the decision problem, the representation of the dilemma, and thereby the resulting decision. Specifically, we propose that psychologically distanced advisers construe decision problems at a higher level than the chooser (for a similar proposal, see Liberman, Trope, & Stephan, 2007). Consequently, for decisions in which a low-level construal favors Option A but a high-level construal favors the competing Option B, we posit that choosers will show a relative preference for the former (A) and advisers for the latter (B). We test this proposition in decision dilemmas that trade off idealistic and pragmatic options.

CLT is not the only theory that predicts choice–advice differences. Research documenting actor–observer differences has indicated that experiential processes (hot-state feelings such as embarrassment, anxiety, and disgust) weigh more heavily in actor decisions than in observer judgment (Borresen, 1987; Hsee & Weber, 1997; Loewenstein, Weber, Hsee, & Welch, 2001; Wray & Stone, 2005). Research suggests that this difference emerges because actors have privileged access to their affective reactions, whereas observers base their judgments only on what they can observe (Bem, 1972; Gopnik, 1993; Jones, 1979; Jones & Nisbett, 1972; Knobe & Malle, 2002; Pronin, 2008). Applied to the context of choice versus advice, the prediction resulting from the actor–observer literature is that in decisions that evoke a visceral reaction in choosers, the visceral reaction will affect choice but not advice. Consistent with this expectation, Wray and Stone (2005; see also Beisswanger et al., 2003) found greater risk aversion in choice than advice in scenarios involving romantic relationships (asking someone to go out on a date). They found that anxiety and threat to self-esteem mediate choice but not advice.

Note, however, that this line of research does not predict and cannot account for choice–advice differences when the decision problem does not evoke a visceral reaction in choosers and/or when choosers and advisers consider identical information. In the present study, we test whether choice and advice differ in these latter situations. Unlike the research on self–other differences, CLT predicts that different representations of the decision problem will lead to choice–advice differences, even when the dilemma is not emotionally charged and information is identical.

### Decision Dilemmas That Trade Off Idealistic and Pragmatic Considerations

Kivetz and Tyler (2007) examined the effects of temporal distance on the activation of idealistic and pragmatic selves. They proposed that a focus on the here and now activates a pragmatic self, whereas a focus on a more distal time perspective activates an idealistic self. Following Webster's *New World College Dictionary* (1999), Kivetz and Tyler defined the idealistic self as "a mental representation that places principles and values above practical considerations and seeks to express the person's sense of true self" (p. 201) and the pragmatic self as "an action oriented mental representation that is primarily guided by practical concerns" (p. 201). Consistent with these predictions, Kivetz and Tyler found that temporal distance enhances preference for identity attributes (intrinsic reinforcements such as moral values that support one's true self) over instrumental attributes (benefits such as money that enable obtaining other positive outcomes), and they found that self-activation mediates the effect of time perspective on preference.

The tradeoff between idealistic and pragmatic considerations touches on related tradeoffs between *feasibility* and *desirability* (Lieberman & Trope, 1998) and *should* and *want* (Rogers & Bazerman, 2008). In a seminal study, Lieberman and Trope (1998) proposed that desirability is salient at a high-level construal that tends to characterize goals and plans, whereas feasibility is a salient low-level construal that refers to the means and activities needed to attain the abstracted goal. Consistent with temporal construal theory predictions, Lieberman and Trope found an increase in the weight of desirability considerations with temporal distance and a decrease in the weight of feasibility considerations with temporal distance.

Rogers and Bazerman (2008) examined temporal distance effects on preference for *want* versus *should* options. They found that the further into the future individuals expect choices to be implemented, the more likely it is that they will select options that serve the *should* self. In contrast, for choices that individuals expect will be implemented immediately, *want* considerations prevail. Consistent with a CLT explanation, Rogers and Bazerman demonstrated that the *should* self operates at a higher level construal (abstract and superordinate) than the *want* self and that this difference partly mediates the effect of temporal distance on *should* choices.

In sum, the aforementioned studies indicate that temporal distance leads to preference reversals in dilemmas characterized by pragmatic-idealistic tradeoffs, feasibility-desirability tradeoffs, and *should-want* tradeoffs. The studies indicate greater weight of idealistic, desirability, and *should* considerations in distal temporal decisions and greater weight of pragmatic, feasibility, and *want* considerations in proximal temporal decisions.

In our research, we focus on dilemmas that present a tradeoff between idealistic and pragmatic considerations. Our main reason for doing so is that people often solicit advice when confronted with such decisions. Although outside the scope of the present investigation, we predict that advisers will place greater weight than choosers on any value that is salient at a high-level construal and lesser weight on any value that is salient at a low-level construal.

### Research Hypotheses

We posit that advisers view choosers' decision problems from a distance, and rather than considering self-choice, they represent the dilemma at an abstract high level of construal. Consistent with CLT, we predict that recommendations are based on a high-level construal of the decision problem, whereas choices are based on a low-level construal of the same problem. These processing characteristics cause advice to differ from choice when competing alternatives consist of one option that is superior under a low-level construal and another option is superior under a high-level construal. We test this general hypothesis in the context of dilemmas that trade off pragmatic and idealistic considerations. We propose that the higher level construal of advisers leads them to adopt an idealistic perspective in which they place principles and values (i.e., the core characteristics of the dilemma) above practical considerations. In contrast, we propose that the lower level construal of choosers leads them to adopt a pragmatic perspective that is action oriented and guided by practical concerns (i.e., subordinate features of the dilemma). Formally, we hypothesize the following:

*Hypothesis 1:* Advisers are more likely to select an idealistic option than choosers.

*Hypothesis 2:* Advice is more idealistic than choice because advisers adopt a higher level construal of the dilemma than choosers.

*Hypothesis 3:* Shifting advisers' focus to a low-level construal results in more pragmatic recommendations that are similar to choice.

### Overview of Studies

Predictions were tested in six studies. Studies 1 through 4 used hypothetical scenarios to demonstrate that advice is more idealistic than choice. Consistent with a CLT account, we found that advisers weighed idealistic considerations more heavily and pragmatic considerations less heavily than choosers and consequently showed greater preference for the idealistic option than choosers (Study 1A). Importantly, we demonstrated that idealistic recommendations are not aimed to support or approve choosers' preferences and do not reflect a simple strategy of highlighting the other side of the coin to encourage deliberation (Study 1B). Studies 2A and 2B provided further support for a representational account of choice-advice differences by showing that advisers place greater emphasis on *why* considerations and generate more reasons in favor of acting idealistically (pros). Studies 3 and 4 provided further support for our conceptualization showing that shifting advisers' focus to a low-level construal leads to more pragmatic recommendations. In Study 3, advisers primed with implementation (*how*) considerations in a purportedly unrelated task provided more pragmatic recommendations. In Study 4, recommendations were more pragmatic after advisers' psychological distance from the dilemma was lessened by asking them to consider self-choice. The results of this study support our premise that advisers' high-level representation of the dilemma skips spontaneous consideration of self-choice. Finally, using two different methodologies, Studies 5 and 6 extended the observation of idealistic advice and

pragmatic choice to settings with real decision consequences and, in so doing, provided external validity for our findings.

### Study 1A

Study 1A had two goals. The first goal was to test the hypothesis that recommendations are more idealistic than choices, and the second goal was to gauge the importance that advisers and choosers assign to idealistic and pragmatic considerations. On the basis of CLT, we predicted an increase in the importance of idealistic considerations in advice relative to choice and a decrease in the importance of pragmatic considerations in advice relative to choice. We examined these questions using a hypothetical scenario in which participants were asked to choose (recommend) a partner for an academic assignment: Ben, who is superior on a pragmatic attribute (works efficiently), or Adam, who is superior on an idealistic attribute (respects the opinions of others; adapted from Kivetz & Tyler, 2007, p. 203). We used a hypothetical scenario to eliminate any contribution of visceral factors to the decisions of choosers and advisers.

### Materials Pretest

Twenty-three undergraduate participants (16 women, seven men) were given a description of two students: Ben, who completes his part in assignments on time, and Adam, who creates a positive atmosphere in which people feel comfortable expressing their views and opinions. Then they read definitions adopted from Kivetz and Tyler (2007) for an idealistic person (“a person that places principles and values above practical considerations,” p. 201) and a pragmatic person (“a person that is primarily guided by practical concerns,” p. 201) and rated Ben’s and Adam’s attributes on a 1 to 7 scale (1 = *more important to a pragmatic person*, 7 = *more important to an idealistic person*).

Ratings were compared with the scale midpoint (4). Participants rated creating a positive atmosphere as more important to an idealistic person ( $M = 6.30$ ,  $SD = 0.88$ ),  $t(22) = 12.62$ ,  $p < .001$ , whereas they rated completing assignments on time as more important to a pragmatic person ( $M = 1.43$ ,  $SD = 0.59$ ),  $t(22) = -20.86$ ,  $p < .001$ .

### Method

**Participants.** One hundred fifteen undergraduate students (40 women, 75 men) participated in exchange for payment.

**Design and procedure.** Participants were randomly assigned to choose or recommend a partner for a class assignment: Ben, who is superior on the pragmatic attribute, and Adam, who is superior on the idealistic attribute. We worded the choice [advice] condition as follows:

Imagine that as part of a course requirement you must prepare an assignment worth 40% of the final grade with another student [Imagine having met a fellow student when visiting your friends. The student told you that as part of a course requirement worth 40% of the final grade he must prepare an assignment with another student]. You [He] must choose between two partners:

1. Ben who usually completes his assignments on time but does not always create a positive atmosphere in which people feel comfortable expressing their views and opinions.

2. Adam who usually creates a positive atmosphere in which people feel comfortable expressing their views and opinions but does not always complete assignments on time.

Participants chose or recommended a partner and then rated the importance of the attributes—partner completes assignments on time and partner creates a positive atmosphere—on a 0 to 10 scale (0 = *completely unimportant*, 10 = *very important*).

### Results and Discussion

Advice was more idealistic than choice. Consistent with Hypothesis 1, 76% of participants recommended the partner superior on the idealistic attribute, whereas only 52.4% chose him, difference = 23.6,  $\chi^2(1) = 6.80$ ,  $p = .009$ .

To examine attribute weightings, we performed a 2 (task: choice vs. advice)  $\times$  2 (attribute importance rating: completes assignments on time vs. creates a positive atmosphere) mixed analysis of variance (ANOVA) with task as a between-participant variable and attribute importance rating as a within-participant variable. Only the interaction was significant,  $F(1, 113) = 5.83$ ,  $p = .017$ ,  $\eta^2 = .04$ . The perceived importance of the idealistic consideration was greater in advice ( $M = 7.66$ ,  $SD = 2.13$ ) than in choice ( $M = 6.83$ ,  $SD = 2.42$ ), whereas the perceived importance of the pragmatic consideration was greater in choice ( $M = 7.42$ ,  $SD = 1.70$ ) than in advice ( $M = 6.90$ ,  $SD = 1.86$ ).

The results are consistent with a CLT account whereby the importance of high-level information is augmented with psychological distance, whereas that of low-level information is attenuated with distance (Liberman & Trope, 1998). Psychological distance from the decision increased the subjective importance of the idealistic consideration relative to the pragmatic consideration. The data are inconsistent with theories such as conflict theory (Lewin, 1951; Miller, 1944), which posits that both positive and negative outcomes undergo discounting with psychological distance, with negative discounting being steeper. Last, because we used a hypothetical scenario that was unlikely to evoke visceral reactions, the present data cannot be explained by theories that explain choice–advice differences in terms of differential visceral reactions.

### Study 1B

We posit that psychologically distant advisers recommend idealistic options because of their high-level construal of the choosers’ dilemma, which augments the weight of idealistic considerations relative to pragmatic considerations. Recommendations may, however, also be influenced by adviser goals in their interaction with the chooser and by what they think the chooser prefers to do. One adviser goal may be to support the chooser’s preferred path. Alternatively, advisers may wish to recommend their preferred course of action irrespective of the chooser’s preference. Last, advisers may advocate that the chooser carefully consider all options prior to choosing, or they may advise careful consideration of an option to the extent that it is the option that they prefer but the chooser does not. The aim of Study 1B was to examine the contribution of these various goals to adviser recommendations. We presented advisers with the same dilemma used in Study 1A; however, this time we told advisers that the chooser preferred either the pragmatic or the idealistic option. If advisers aim to

provide support, recommendations should be aligned with the description of choosers' preferences. If advisers wish to present their opinion, there should be a bias toward the idealistic option because advisers focus on a higher construal level. Finally, if advisers aim to play the devil's advocate, they should recommend careful deliberation of the chooser's nonpreferred alternative to ensure full consideration of both options.

## Method

**Participants.** One hundred seven undergraduate students (73 women, 34 men) participated in exchange for payment.

**Design and procedure.** Participants were randomly assigned to one of two advice conditions (chooser prefers pragmatic partner vs. chooser prefers idealistic partner) and were presented with Study 1A's work partner scenario that included a closing sentence indicating the chooser's preferred partner: "The chooser prefers Ben (Adam) but is not sure and therefore would like your advice."

Participants answered two questions. First they recommended a partner. The second question referred to advisers' tendency to highlight the other side of the coin. Advisers were reminded of choosers' preferences (Adam/Ben) and were asked to what extent they would recommend careful consideration of the other partner (Ben/Adam). Participants responded on a 0 to 10 scale (0 = *not at all*, 10 = *to a large extent*).

## Results and Discussion

The results indicate that advisers preferred the idealistic option but were also influenced by chooser preferences. Specifically, 70.17% of advisers recommended the idealistic option when the chooser preferred this option, whereas only 50% of the advisers recommended the idealistic option when the chooser preferred the pragmatic option, difference = 20.17%,  $\chi^2(1) = 4.55$ ,  $p = .033$ . Looked at differently, these data indicate that more advisers went against a chooser's preference when it was pragmatic (50%) than when it was idealistic (29.13%). The fact that recommendations often differed from chooser preference indicates that recommendations often reflected adviser preferences. The fact that recommendations differed as a function of chooser preferences indicates that some advisers preferred to align themselves with the chooser's preferences.

Next, we examined advisers' tendency to highlight the other side of the coin and recommend that the chooser consider their less preferred alternative. To this end, we added a compatibility indicator, where *compatible* indicates recommendation is identical to chooser's stated preference, and *incompatible* indicates recommendation is opposite to chooser's stated preference. We then performed a 2 (chooser preference: idealistic vs. pragmatic)  $\times$  2 (compatibility: compatible vs. incompatible) factorial ANOVA with the recommendation to examine the less preferred option (Question 2) as the dependent variable. There was a main effect only of compatibility,  $F(1, 103) = 78.90$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .43$ . Advisers were far more likely to recommend examination of the chooser's less-preferred option in the incompatible condition ( $M = 8.97$ ,  $SD = 2.05$ ) than in the compatible condition ( $M = 5.37$ ,  $SD = 2.04$ ). Put simply, advisers recommended that a chooser devote more systematic thought to the decision only when the chooser preferred the option that they did not.

## Study 2A

The next two Studies (2A and 2B) were designed to test whether taking the role of adviser prompts greater reliance on a high-level construal than taking the role of chooser and to test whether construal level mediates selection of idealistic and pragmatic options. In both studies, we used a hypothetical volunteering scenario to ensure identical information and mitigate any contribution of visceral factors to the decisions of choosers and advisers. Consistent with findings showing that a high-level construal is associated with the superordinate purpose of why one performs actions and a low-level construal is associated with the subordinate means of how one performs actions (Freitas, Gollwitzer, & Trope, 2004; Liberman & Trope, 2008), in Study 2A we predicted that participants would place greater emphasis on the why aspect when acting as advisers and on the how aspect when acting as choosers.

## Method

**Participants.** Eighty-five undergraduate students (53 women, 32 men) participated in exchange for entry into a lottery that offered a monetary prize.

**Design and procedure.** We randomly assigned participants to choice and advice conditions. Participants first read a scenario involving a volunteering decision in which they were asked to adopt the role of either a chooser or an adviser. They then completed a scale that measured construal level, indicated the extent to which they would choose [advise] to volunteer, and finally completed several other measures. Thus, construal level was measured after the participant accepted the role of chooser or adviser but before they indicated their choice/advice. The choice [advice] condition was worded as follows:

Imagine that a member of the student union asked you whether you [Imagine having met Tom who told you that he had met a member of the student union that had asked him whether he] would like to volunteer at an organization that assists needy populations. The organization is recruiting volunteers to collect and distribute food, and at present, is conducting a recruitment campaign together with the student union at the university. Those willing to commit will have to volunteer at least three hours a week. Volunteering has several implications: students will have less time to work and study but in the long run the condition of many needy families will improve. You are considering whether to volunteer [advise volunteering].

Construal level was measured by asking participants to indicate the relative importance they generally place on why one performs actions as opposed to how one performs actions on a 28-point nonnumbered scale anchored by *why more important* at one end (coded as 1) and *how more important* at the other end (coded as 28). Next, participants indicated whether they would volunteer [recommend volunteering] on a 1 to 11 nonnumbered scale (1 = *I choose to volunteer* [recommend volunteering], 11 = *I choose not to volunteer* [recommend not volunteering]).

Last, we conducted a manipulation check to ensure that the scenario involved an idealistic-pragmatic tradeoff. Participants read definitions for an idealistic person and a pragmatic person (taken from *Webster's New World International Dictionary*, 1998) and were then presented with two attributes: "The amount of time devoted to work and study" and "The situation of families in need." We asked them to rate the relative importance of each

attribute to an idealistic person and to a pragmatic person on a  $-5$  to  $5$  scale ( $-5 = \text{more important to a pragmatic person}$ ,  $5 = \text{more important to an idealistic person}$ ).

## Results

The importance ratings confirm that volunteering reflects an idealistic action, whereas the decision not to volunteer reflects a pragmatic action. A single sample  $t$  test showed that participants rated the amount of time invested in study and work as significantly more important to a pragmatic individual ( $M = -3.6$ ,  $SD = 2.87$ ), whereas they rated the situation of needy families as significantly more important to an idealistic individual ( $M = 2.75$ ,  $SD = 2.53$ ). Both ratings significantly differ from the scale midpoint,  $ps < .001$ .

Consistent with Hypothesis 1, advisers ( $M = 4.12$ ,  $SD = 2.06$ ) favored volunteering more than choosers ( $M = 6.44$ ,  $SD = 2.78$ ),  $t(83) = -4.36$ ,  $p < .001$ . Consistent with Hypothesis 2 whereby advisers' construal level is higher than that of choosers, advisers rated the why aspect ( $M = 11.14$ ,  $SD = 6.23$ ) as relatively more important and therefore rated the how aspect as less important than did choosers ( $M = 15.81$ ,  $SD = 7.38$ ),  $t(83) = -3.15$ ,  $p = .002$ . Supporting Hypothesis 2, a Sobel (1982) test indicated that the indirect path of role (chooser/adviser) on decision through the mediation of construal level is significant,  $Z(1) = -2.00$ ,  $p < .05$ .

## Study 2B

In a series of studies, Eyal, Liberman, Trope, and Walther (2004) demonstrated that reasons to engage in an action (pros) are superordinate to reasons not to engage in an action (cons) and, consistent with the tenets of CLT (Trope & Liberman, 2003, 2010), demonstrated in several different domains that participants generated more pros and fewer cons in considering an action expected to take place in the more distant future than in the near future. In the next study, we presented participants with the volunteering scenario used in Study 2A; however, this time we asked them to generate reasons in favor of volunteering (pros) and reasons against volunteering (cons) prior to making their choice (recommendation). Consistent with CLT predictions and with the findings of Eyal et al., we predicted that participants taking the role of an adviser would generate more pros in favor of volunteering and fewer cons than would choosers.

## Method

**Participants.** One hundred thirty undergraduate students (60 women, 70 men) participated in exchange for payment.

**Design and procedure.** Study 2B was the same as Study 2A save for the following changes. First, after presenting the volunteering scenario, participants in both choice and advice conditions were asked to indicate reasons in favor of volunteering (pros) and reasons against volunteering (cons). Next, participants indicated whether they would volunteer [recommend volunteering] on a 1 to 11 nonnumbered scale ( $1 = I \text{ choose not to volunteer [recommend not volunteering]}$ ,  $11 = I \text{ choose to volunteer [recommend volunteering]}$ ). This response scale was reversed in Study 2A. Last, we conducted the same manipulation check as in Study 2A. The

results of the manipulation check were qualitatively the same as those of Study 2A and are therefore not discussed further.

## Results

As in study 2A, advisers ( $M = 7.09$ ,  $SD = 2.33$ ) were more in favor of volunteering than were choosers ( $M = 4.44$ ,  $SD = 2.58$ ),  $t(128) = 6.15$ ,  $p < .001$ . Consistent with Hypothesis 2 whereby advisers' construal level is higher than that of choosers, the pro to con ratio was higher in advice ( $M = 1.62$ ,  $SD = 1.01$ ) than in choice ( $M = 1.26$ ,  $SD = 0.62$ ),  $t(128) = 2.42$ ,  $p = .017$ . It is worth noting that the ratio in choice and advice differed because of differences in the number of pros ( $M_{\text{advice}} = 3.11$ ,  $SD = 1.03$ , vs.  $M_{\text{choice}} = 2.60$ ,  $SD = 1.06$ ),  $t(128) = 2.74$ ,  $p = .007$ , and not cons ( $M_{\text{advice}} = 2.34$ ,  $SD = 0.98$ , vs.  $M_{\text{choice}} = 2.27$ ,  $SD = 0.92$ ),  $t(128) = .44$ ,  $ns$ . Supporting Hypothesis 2, a Sobel (1982) test indicated that the indirect effect of role on decision through the mediation of construal level is significant,  $Z(1) = -1.99$ ,  $p < .05$ .

## Discussion

In summary, in Studies 2A and 2B with a second dilemma and different content, advice was again more idealistic than choice. The construal level measures indicate that distal advisers care relatively more about the superordinate why aspect and care relatively less about the subordinate how aspect than do choosers (Study 2A) and that advisers generate more reasons why individuals should volunteer than choosers and a similar number of reasons why individuals should not volunteer (Study 2B). The results in Study 2B are commensurate with those of Eyal et al. (2004), who found that participants generated relatively more pros than cons toward exam procedures, public policies, and personal and interpersonal behaviors that are expected to take place in the distant future than in the near future. Finally, analyses indicate partial mediation suggesting people are more likely to recommend volunteering than they are to choose to volunteer to the extent that their construal level is higher.

## Study 3

Study 3 was designed to provide converging evidence for our CLT account of choice–advice differences by directly priming advisers with a low-level construal. We predicted that a low-level construal prime would lead to more pragmatic recommendations, whereas a high-level prime would not influence recommendations (because advisers' role dictates a high-level construal). We primed construal level with the procedure developed by Freitas, Gollwitzer, and Trope (2004; see also Sanna, Lundberg, Parks, & Chang, 2010) in which a high-level construal is primed by answering a series of why questions, and a low-level construal is primed by answering a series of how questions.

We used the career path scenario described in our opening example that pits studying medicine against taking a lucrative job as the decision dilemma. We compared four conditions: choice, no-prime advice, high-construal prime followed by advice, and low-construal prime followed by advice. Consistent with Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 and the findings of Studies 1 and 2, we expected choosers to prefer the pragmatic option (job), whereas we expected advisers in the no-prime advice and high-construal prime

conditions to recommend the idealistic option (medical school). Testing Hypothesis 3, we expected the low-construal prime advice condition to differ from the other advice conditions with recommendations resembling choices and tending toward the pragmatic option.

## Method

**Participants.** One hundred fifty-six undergraduate students (100 women, 56 men) participated in exchange for entry into a lottery that offered a monetary prize.

**Design and procedure.** We randomly assigned participants to the four between-participants conditions: choice, no-prime advice, high-construal prime followed by advice, and low-construal prime followed by advice. Participants in the two priming conditions were told that they would be performing two unrelated tasks. In the first task, the priming task, high-construal participants were primed by answering a series of four successive questions regarding why physical health should be maintained and/or improved, whereas the low-construal participants were primed by answering a series of four successive questions regarding how to maintain and/or improve physical health (Freitas et al., 2004; see also Sanna et al., 2010). Within both prime conditions, each answer was made relative to the previous answer. For example, for a participant in the low-construal prime condition who indicated that physical health can be improved by exercise, the following answer would refer to how exercising is accomplished, for example, by jogging.

The pragmatic–idealistic dilemma that pitted studying medicine against taking a lucrative job followed the priming manipulation in the priming conditions or was the only task that participants completed in the choice and no-prime advice conditions. We worded the choice [advice] condition as follows:

Imagine having just completed an undergraduate degree in biology [Imagine having met Ben who just completed an undergraduate degree in biology]. You [He] always wanted to study medicine, but when you were [he was] not accepted to Medical school, you [he] decided to study biology instead. Recently, you [he] re-applied to medical school and shortly afterwards were [was] told that you are [he is] on the acceptance waiting list. A month ago, you [he] received an acceptance letter. Because there was a time period in which you were [he was] not sure whether you [he] would get accepted, you [he] went to several job interviews, and were [was] offered a job in the research department of a major pharmaceutical company. You are [He is] not sure whether to fulfill your [his] dream and begin the seven years of Medical school, or take the job which offers high salary and many promotion possibilities.

Participants chose or recommended a career path and then on two 0 to 10 scales (0 = *not at all*, 10 = *very much so*) rated the extent to which the choice of each career option was idealistic and pragmatic.

## Results

**Manipulation check.** As shown in Table 1, participants viewed medical school as a more idealistic option and the lucrative job as a more pragmatic option. Consistent with this observation, a mixed ANOVA with condition (choice vs. advice) as a between-participants variable and decision (medical school vs. lucrative job) and rating (idealistic vs. pragmatic) as

Table 1  
*Extent to Which the Two Career Options Satisfy Goals in Study 3*

Career option	Idealistic	Pragmatic
Medical school		
<i>M</i>	9.41	5.01
<i>SD</i>	1.72	2.56
Lucrative job		
<i>M</i>	4.25	9.11
<i>SD</i>	2.48	2.02

within-participants variables revealed a significant interaction only between the within-participants variables,  $F(1, 151) = 264.65$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .63$ .

**Selecting medical school.** Table 2 shows selection proportions of medical school as a function of condition. Consistent with our prediction that advice is more idealistic than choice, choosers selected medical school less often than nonprimed advisers,  $\chi^2(1) = 5.54$ ,  $p = .018$ , and less often than advisers primed with a high-level construal,  $\chi^2(1) = 5.27$ ,  $p = .022$ . Importantly, supporting Hypothesis 3, advisers primed with a low-construal prime recommended medical school less often (45%) than advisers who were not primed (69.4%),  $\chi^2(1) = 4.61$ ,  $p = .032$ , and less often than advisers who were primed with a high-construal prime (68.4%),  $\chi^2(1) = 4.35$ ,  $p = .037$ . The pragmatic shift was so pronounced that the recommendation to select medical school by advisers primed with a low-construal level did not differ from the selection proportion of medical school by choosers (42.8%),  $\chi^2(1) = 0.4$ ,  $p = .84$ .

## Discussion

By priming advisers with a low-level construal, we produced a pragmatic shift in advice that resulted in recommendations that were similar to choosers' choices. These results that are based on a direct manipulation of construal level converge with the results of Studies 1A, 2A, and 2B in showing that participants accepting the role of advisers assign greater weight to the value associated with high-level features and lesser weight to the values associated with low-level features than those accepting the role of choosers.

## Study 4

Next, we tested our CLT account of choice–advice differences by examining whether a reduction in advisers' psychological distance from the choosers' dilemma produces more pragmatic recommendations. We lessened adviser distance from the dilemma by asking advisers, before they provided a recommendation, to consider what they would choose if faced with the chooser's dilemma. We compared two advice conditions. One in which advisers imagined what they would choose before advising (reduced-distance condition), and another in which advisers imagined what they would advise before advising (baseline-distance condition). We preferred this latter condition over a baseline condition in which advisers advised immediately after reading the scenario, because we wanted similar thought elaboration in the two conditions. We predicted more pragmatic recommendations in the reduced-distance condition than in the baseline-distance condition. Importantly, any difference in recommendations between the two con-

Table 2  
*Medical School Selection Proportions as a Function of  
 Condition in Study 3*

Advise (no prime)	Advise (high-construal prime)	Advise (low-construal prime)	Choose (no prime)
.69	.68	.45	.43

ditions would indicate that advisers do not spontaneously consider self-choice when providing a recommendation.

## Method

**Participants.** Eighty-one students (41 women, 40 men) participated in return for entry into a lottery that offered a monetary prize.

**Design and procedure.** After reading the advice version of the career-choice scenario used in Study 3, participants either imagined what they would choose or what they would recommend choosing in that situation. We did not solicit overt responses to this question so that a desire to maintain response consistency would not contaminate results. The wording of the choice [advice] pre-consideration task was as follows:

Please close your eyes for a minute and imagine as vividly as possible what you would do [advise that Ben do] if confronted with the same situation. Would you choose [advise] studying medicine? Or would you choose [advise] taking the high paying job?

Participants then clicked a button to proceed to the next page of the computer-based survey, at which point we asked them to recommend either medical school or the lucrative job.

## Results

Consistent with Hypothesis 3, 75% of advisers recommended medical school in the baseline-distance condition, whereas only 54% of advisers recommended it in the reduced-distance condition, difference = 21%,  $\chi^2(1) = 4.01$ ,  $p = .045$ . The pragmatic shift implies idealistic advice in the baseline-distance condition did not involve spontaneous consideration of pragmatic self-choice. A reduction in advisers' psychological distance from the dilemma made advisers realize their own pragmatic choice and attenuated their idealistic recommendation.

In fact, the proportion of advisers who recommended medical school in the reduced-distance condition was similar to the proportion of choosers preferring medical school in Study 3 (42.8%) and to the proportion of advisers who recommended medical school in the low-level prime advice condition in Study 3 (45%). Also, the proportion of advisers who recommended medical school in the baseline-distance condition (75%) was quite similar to the proportion of advisers in Study 3 who were not asked to imagine anything before advising (69.5%) and to the proportion of advisers primed with a high-level construal (68.4%). Thus, recommendations were not markedly influenced by asking advisers to consider advice before advising.

## Study 5

In Studies 1 through 4, advice was more idealistic than choice in hypothetical scenarios. The main aim of Study 5 was to generalize

this observation to the domain of consequential decisions. To this end, we measured participants' willingness to help a doctoral student, or their advice that someone else do so, by partaking in the doctoral student's experiments for no compensation. We predicted that participants would recommend that others volunteer but would be reluctant to do so themselves. Because people usually ask for advice from others with which they have at least some minimal contact, we developed a procedure in which the person asking for advice (a confederate) played a game with the adviser (participant) for several minutes before asking for advice.

A second aim of Study 5 was to test whether advisers are less sensitive than choosers to a psychological distance manipulation. Consistent with the diminishing sensitivity that characterizes perceptual processes, we speculated that already distanced advisers should be relatively insensitive to further distance manipulations (see Kim, Zhang, & Li, 2008). In contrast, we expected proximal choosers to be more likely to volunteer the more distanced they were from the decision. To test this prediction, we simultaneously manipulated the likelihood of volunteering (a hypotheticality manipulation of distance) and when volunteering was to take place (a temporal manipulation of distance). In the distal condition, the confederate told participants that they most probably would not have to participate because they would be called on only if another subject cancelled, and they were told that the experiment would take place in several months time. In the proximal condition, the confederate told participants the doctoral student would schedule them to participate in an experimental session to be held on one of the weekdays of the coming week between 8:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. We expected choosers to be more willing to volunteer in the distal condition than the proximal condition. We did not expect recommendations to differ in proximal and distal conditions.

## Method

**Participants.** Eighty-three undergraduate students (45 women, 38 men) participated in return for course credit.

**Design and procedure.** We randomly assigned participants to four conditions of a 2 (distance: proximal vs. distal)  $\times$  2 (task: choice vs. advice) between-participants experimental design. We told participants that they were taking part in a study that tested the effects of body language on interpersonal communication. We told them that because they were in the body-language not visible condition, they would be playing an online game similar to charades with a third-year student (the confederate) sitting in another lab. We then gave them a name of a celebrity and explained that the other student would have to guess the celebrity's identity and that their task was to respond to the other student's questions with *yes* and *no* answers. We asked them to record the number of questions that the student asked. After several minutes of playing, the confederate asked the participants if they would be willing to volunteer [if they would advise the confederate to volunteer] to participate in one of four experiments lasting 15, 30, 45, and 60 min, respectively, of a doctoral student, Rachel, who was running the experiments to complete her degree. The confederate explained that the longer they would be willing to participate, the more they would be helping Rachel. In the proximal condition, the confederate said the experiments would be run the following week between 8:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. and that if they agreed to volunteer, they would be contacted for scheduling purposes. In the



distal condition, the confederate said the experiment would be run in about 3 months and that if they [she—the confederate] agreed to volunteer, the likelihood that they [she] would have to participate in the experiment was very low because they [she] would be placed on a waiting list; Rachel would only call on them in case of a cancellation. The confederate added that Rachel had no money or credits to compensate participants. The confederate continued to chat until participants chose or advised. If participants chose [advised] to volunteer, the confederate documented the amount of time they were willing to volunteer (15, 30, 45, or 60 min) and asked for their contact information. If participants chose [advised] not to volunteer, the confederate coded their decision as 0 min. After eliciting the critical response, the confederate continued to play the game before correctly guessing the celebrity's identity. The confederate was not aware of the expected pattern of results. Participants in the proximal condition who agreed to volunteer were scheduled for the doctoral student's experiment the following week.

## Results

Consistent with the findings of Studies 1 through 4, advice was more idealistic than choice. Although 100% recommend volunteering, only 36% chose to volunteer, difference = 64%,  $\chi^2(1) = 20.2$ ,  $p < .001$ .

Next, we analyzed the average volunteering time in choice and advice as a function of distance. As Table 3 shows, advisers were far more generous with their friends' time than choosers were with their own time, especially in the proximal condition. Choosers were sensitive to the distance manipulation. Although they were willing to volunteer approximately 6 min in the proximal condition they were willing to sacrifice approximately 30 min in the distal condition. Advisers, on the other hand, were not sensitive to the distance manipulation and recommended volunteering approximately 44 min in the proximal condition and approximately 39 minutes in the distal condition. A two-way ANOVA revealed a significant main effect for the choice/advice role,  $F(1, 79) = 52.05$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .40$ . The main effect of distance was also significant,  $F(1, 79) = 5.33$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .06$ , but was qualified by an interaction of the two factors,  $F(1, 79) = 14.61$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .16$ .

## Discussion

In a consequential setting, the present study replicates our findings of idealistic advice and pragmatic choice. It is noteworthy that the choice–advice difference in this study was far greater than the

difference observed in the hypothetical scenarios of Studies 1 through 4. Furthermore, the present results support our account whereby advisers are psychologically distanced from the chooser's dilemma by showing that advisers are relatively insensitive to further manipulations of psychological distance, whereas choosers are sensitive to such manipulations.

## Study 6

The aim of Study 6 was to extend the finding of an idealistic shift in advice relative to choice to real-life decisions outside the lab. We asked participants to recall a real dilemma involving an idealistic–pragmatic tradeoff in which they either chose or advised. We predicted a greater share of idealistic recommendations than of idealistic choices. Two distinct processes can contribute to this predicted pattern. First, participants may recall idealistic advice more often than idealistic choice because recommendations tend to be idealistic, whereas choices tend to be pragmatic. Second, thinking about advice may prime a high-level construal that makes instances of idealistic recommendations more accessible in memory, whereas thinking about choice may prime a low-level construal that makes instances of pragmatic choice more accessible in memory. Importantly, to the extent that advice increases the weight of idealistic considerations relative to the weight of pragmatic considerations we assume that the accessibility of idealistic instances of advice and choice should be aligned with their actual rate of occurrence.

## Method

**Participants.** One hundred forty-eight undergraduate students (114 women, 34 men) participated in return for a chance to win five breakfast coupons in a raffle.

**Design and procedure.** We randomly assigned participants to choice and advice conditions. In each condition, they first read an example of an idealistic–pragmatic tradeoff dilemma. Then they were asked to recall and describe a similar choice (advice) dilemma and to indicate what they had decided. We worded the choice [advice] condition as follows:

When we choose [advise] there are situations in which we weigh idealistic considerations (principles, personal values and self-fulfillment) more heavily than pragmatic considerations (practical concerns such as income, effort and security) and there are situations in which we weigh pragmatic considerations more heavily than idealistic considerations. Recall a situation in which you had to make [a friend asked for your advice regarding] an important decision involving a tradeoff between pragmatic and idealistic considerations. Describe each option as precisely as possible and indicate the option you chose [advised].

Respondents then indicated their reliance on pragmatic and idealistic considerations, the effort they invested in choosing [advising], and how accurately they remembered the decision dilemma on 1 to 7 scales (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *to a large extent*). Next, they indicated the number of attributes they considered in their decision on a 1 to 7 scale (1 = *one factor*, 7 = *many factors*) and how much time had passed since the decision (1 = *up to a month*, 2 = *between a month and 3 months*, 3 = *more than 3 months*). Last, advisers classified their relationship with the advisee: stranger, acquaintance, friend, close friend, or family member.

Table 3  
*Mean Volunteering Time in Proximal and Distal Choice and Advice Conditions in Study 5*

Distance	Advice	Choice
Proximal		
<i>M</i>	44.29	5.71
<i>SD</i>	16.24	11.10
Distal		
<i>M</i>	39.00	27.14
<i>SD</i>	18.63	16.85

## Results

Two judges that were not aware of the study's purpose separately coded whether the dilemma involved a tradeoff between pragmatic and idealistic options and whether the chosen (recommended) option was idealistic or pragmatic. Data for 10 participants were dropped because the judges concluded that the dilemma did not involve a tradeoff between pragmatic and idealistic considerations. This left us with valid data for 138 participants. In seven of the valid cases, the judges determined the nature of the decided-on option after discussion. It was pragmatic in four instances and idealistic in three. Using a mixed ANOVA, we validated the judges' decision coding by testing participants' self-reported reliance on pragmatic versus idealistic considerations (within participant) as a function of the judges' decision coding (pragmatic vs. idealistic). The interaction was significant,  $F(1, 136) = 103.08, p < .001, \eta^2 = .43$ . For decisions that the judges coded as idealistic, participants reported greater reliance on idealistic considerations ( $M = 5.91, SD = 1.14$ ) than on pragmatic considerations ( $M = 4.38, SD = 1.73$ ), and for decisions the judges coded as pragmatic, participants reported greater reliance on pragmatic considerations ( $M = 6.28, SD = 0.97$ ) than on idealistic considerations ( $M = 4.19, SD = 1.60$ ).

Consistent with our previous findings, advisers (51.4%) were more likely to recall an idealistic recommendation than were choosers (34.8%), difference = 16.6%,  $\chi^2(1) = 3.83, p = .05$ . Choice and advice did not significantly differ with respect to ease of recall, reported effort, and time since the decision.<sup>1</sup> Consistent with the findings of Kray and Gonzalez (1999), choosers reported considering more attributes ( $M = 4.79, SD = 2.08$ ) than did advisers ( $M = 4.14, SD = 1.99$ ). However, this difference only approached significance,  $F(1, 134) = 3.48, p = .064, \eta^2 = .03$ . Last, participants recalled dilemmas from the same domains in the choice and advice conditions, with the majority belonging to academic major and career opportunities (advice = 62%, choice = 68%) and travel abroad (advice = 18%, choice = 14%). Remaining cases were related to interpersonal relations, housing, and purchases.

## Discussion

In summary, across several real-life domains, advisers were more likely than choosers to recall a dilemma in which the winning option was idealistic. The present findings demonstrate that idealistic advice persisted even though all recalled recommendations were given to a close friend or to a family member. This finding indicates that the idealistic shift characterizing advice occurs even when the social distance between an adviser and chooser is relatively small. On the basis of our psychological distance account, we predict greater differences between choice and advice when individuals advise a socially distant person, such as a casual acquaintance on an Internet forum.

### General Discussion

A series of six studies found that participants adopted a pragmatic perspective when choosing and an idealistic perspective when advising. This pattern was replicated across several contexts with hypothetical dilemmas and in real-life decisions. Studies 1A

and 1B showed that advisers were more likely than choosers to select a work-assignment partner superior on an idealistic attribute than to select a partner superior on a pragmatic attribute. In Study 1A, participants also judged the importance of idealistic and pragmatic considerations. Consistent with a CLT account, idealistic considerations received more weight and pragmatic considerations received less weight in advice than in choice. Thus, advisers do not generally assign less weight to attributes than do choosers because of their greater psychological distance from the dilemma. In Study 1B, advisers were also given the choosers' preferred option. The results indicate that advisers may go against the choosers' preference, that they are more likely to do so when the chooser prefers a pragmatic option, and that advisers recommend the chooser consider their less preferred option only when it is the adviser's preferred option. In Studies 2A and 2B, participants were more likely to recommend the idealistic option of volunteering than to choose to volunteer. Construal level, which was measured in Study 2A by the relative weighting of why (purpose focus) to perform an action as opposed to how to perform an action (implementation focus) and in Study 2B by the generation of pros relative to cons, partially mediated the choice–advice difference. In Study 3, idealistic advice and pragmatic choice was replicated in a career-choice dilemma. Advisers preferred the idealistic option of studying medicine, whereas choosers preferred the pragmatic option of securing a lucrative job. Importantly, priming advisers with implementation considerations that are associated with a low-level construal led to more pragmatic recommendations. This finding provides further support for our CLT account of choice–advice differences. In Study 4, we used the same scenario as in Study 3 and produced pragmatic recommendations by asking advisers to consider what they would choose before providing advice. This finding indicates that advisers do not spontaneously consider self-choice and that lessening their psychological distance from the chooser's dilemma makes recommendations more similar to choices. Finally, in Studies 5 and 6, recommendations were more idealistic than choices in real-life decisions. In Study 5, people advised others to volunteer but were reluctant to do so themselves. Furthermore, the data support our psychological distance account of advice by showing that already distanced advisers were relatively insensitive, whereas proximal choosers were sensitive to an additional manipulation of psychological distance. In Study 6, we used a recall measure to demonstrate the idealistic shift in advice across a range of participant-generated real-life dilemmas. Because recalled advice in this study was real and therefore most likely reflected a relatively involved interaction between the adviser and chooser and because recommendations were always given to close others, this study indicates that advice may differ from choice even when social distance is minimal.

Two parallel research streams propose that psychological distance systematically influences judgments and decisions. Applied to the context of choice and advice, research in both streams suggests that advice should systematically differ from choice.

<sup>1</sup> The interaction between idealistic–pragmatic and near–far temporal distance (defined as greater or less than 3 months) in this study replicated the pattern found in Study 5, although it was not statistically reliable ( $p = .13$ ). This is possibly because of potential errors in event dating and a very small number of events more recent than 3 months.

Research investigating actor–observer differences reveals that social distance moderates the contribution of visceral factors to judgment. This research shows that observer judgments of actors' motives and predictions regarding actors' actions often fail to account for the impact of the actors' visceral experiences (for a review, see Pronin, 2008). With regard to advice, a straightforward application is that an adviser will recommend that a chooser engage in viscerally unpleasant actions (for the chooser) that evoke feelings of disgust, embarrassment, and fear to obtain a desirable goal even if the adviser would choose not to engage in the activity himself or herself (Pronin, Olivola, & Kennedy, 2008; Wray & Stone, 2005). Importantly, an account that attributes the differential impact of visceral information to choice–advice differences cannot explain the present findings because we used dilemmas that were unlikely to evoke visceral reactions.

It is important to note, however, that whereas a self–other account based on visceral information asymmetry can explain choice–advice differences only in dilemmas that evoke an asymmetric emotional reaction, a CLT account accommodates both cases that evoke differential visceral reactions and cases that do not. Specifically, primarily caring about high-level construal information, advisers should pay little attention to visceral information that may deter a chooser from engaging in an action, such as a sense of disgust, embarrassment, or fear. Although these reactions are all subjective, they are likely to serve the choosers as a low-level reason why they should not engage (cons) in a worthwhile action (e.g., eating a disgusting food to advance science).

We suggest that the idealistic recommendations we observed result from the different construal levels on which advisers and choosers based their decisions. We propose that advisers adopt an idealistic perspective and choosers a pragmatic perspective because of this construal difference. Adoption of an idealistic perspective results in placing principles and values, such as self-fulfillment and helping others, above practical considerations. Adoption of a pragmatic perspective results in placing a premium on practical concerns, such as saving money, saving time, and being efficient. Consequently, people recommend idealistic options but choose pragmatic ones. Converging evidence that psychological distance leads to the adoption of an idealistic perspective comes from the research of Eyal, Liberman, Sagristano, and Trope (2009; see also Kivetz & Tyler, 2007). They showed that a person's central values exert greater influence in resolving temporally distant conflicts than temporally proximal conflicts and that people view immoral acts as more offensive and moral acts as more virtuous when such acts are more temporally distant (Eyal, Liberman, & Trope, 2008).

Importantly, our CLT account whereby choice reflects a low-level construal, whereas advice reflects a high-level construal that does not entail simulated self-choice can also explain previous findings. Kray and Gonzalez (1999) found that advisers assign greater weight to the attribute they believe is most important in a dilemma and, as a result, use lexicographic decision rules. However, they do not specify which type of attribute advisers consider most important. An examination of their career-choice dilemmas (Kray & Gonzalez, 1999, p. 209) suggests advisers preferred the more self-fulfilling option, which is consistent with an idealistic viewpoint, whereas choosers showed a more even-handed strategy, taking into account self-fulfillment as well as such practical con-

siderations as salary. In our view, this finding is consistent with a CLT account.

However, we do not think that advice will be characterized by more unequal weighting than choice when competing choice-set options are equally appealing at a particular construal level. We posit that the relative importance of attributes for choosers and advisers depends on the mental representations that distinguish choice and advice and that unequal weighting in advice depends on the particular attributes characterizing the options. Furthermore, in contrast to Kray's (2000) assertion that advisers allocate more weight to the attribute they believe the majority of people find important, we posit and show that advisers assign more weight than choosers to attributes represented in a high-level construal.

A CLT account is also applicable to the finding of Furby et al. (1991). They showed that women are more sensitive than professional male advisers to the daily cost the women must pay to reduce risk of sexual assault. Although the goal of safety was equally important to the professional male advisers and the female choosers, the potential victims that purportedly relied on a lower level construal expressed a more pragmatic view that highlighted the restricting aspects of implementing the various strategies (e.g., restrictions to their freedom and mobility). Thus, as in our research, recommendations were aligned with a high-level construal, and the choice of potential victims was aligned with a low-level construal.

Prior research has found that temporal distance, through its impact on construal level, impacts the emphasis people place on a prevention versus a promotion regulatory focus (Pennington & Roese, 2003; Theriault, Aaker, & Pennington, 2008; for comprehensive reviews on regulatory focus, see Higgins, 1998, 2002). Choosers tend to prefer options consistent with prevention goals (security and obligations) when events are temporally proximal, whereas they tend to prefer options that are consistent with promotion goals (aspirations and ideals) when events are temporally distal. We propose that these tendencies may contribute to advisers' preferences for idealistic options and choosers' preferences for pragmatic options because idealistic options tend to be promotion oriented, whereas pragmatic options tend to be prevention oriented. Future research may examine whether recommendations are more promotion oriented and less prevention oriented than choices.

Our findings are also pertinent to career-choice research. Whereas much of this research has examined the job seeker in isolation, many job seekers choose a career in consultation with friends, family members, and acquaintances (Slaughter & Highhouse, 2003). We paid special attention to career-choice dilemmas. Aside from Studies 3 and 4 in which studying medicine was pitted against accepting a lucrative job, many of the recalled dilemmas in Study 6 were study or career related. Assuming that career decisions often involve consulting with others, our findings indicate that choosers tend to discount idealistic advice.

At the outset, we pointed out the paucity of research about advice giving, and we are not familiar with an attempt to provide a comprehensive account of when advice differs from choice, in what fashion it differs, and why. Such research is sorely needed because we are in the midst of an advice-giving revolution because of the advent of technologies that enable people to more easily interact. Countless Internet forums enable people to advise others, often with little or no individuating information about the advice

recipient. Whereas people used to advise physically and socially proximal others, they now advise people they know little about. Our research suggests that especially under such conditions of extreme psychological distance, an adviser will construe a chooser's dilemma differently than the chooser and will not engage in perspective taking. It is exactly under these conditions that advice will differ from choice. Future research may study the advice people provide on the Internet along these considerations. To conclude, given the ubiquity of advice giving in social interactions and the relative lack of knowledge concerning its characteristics, we hope this research will stimulate further investigations of advice-giving behavior.

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