

## Secrets Study 2

### Recruitment Notice Psychology of Secrets

(\$1.50 for each of three sessions + bonus of \$3 for completing all three sessions)

Do you have a secret that you have kept from your romantic partner? Most people do have a secret or two – a few skeletons in the closet! We won't ask you to reveal your secret(s), but we'd love to ask you a few questions about a secret you are keeping.

If you qualify for this study, you will be asked a series of questions on **three occasions** over a period of **six weeks** about a secret that you are keeping from your romantic partner (e.g., whether it concerns something you did or something that happened to you, and why you might be keeping the secret), as well as questions about your relationship, your coping and relationship styles, and your personality. Your participation is completely anonymous, and will take approximately 20 minutes to complete for each session. You will receive **\$1.50 credit for each session that you complete** in compensation for your time. Those who complete **all three sessions** will receive a **\$3 bonus credit**.

**To be eligible for this study, you must be in a romantic relationship at the first session, and have a secret that you are keeping from your romantic partner. We will not ask you to reveal your secret!**

Your contribution to this research is greatly appreciated!!

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, please contact xxx

Please note that all your responses will be anonymous. This study has received clearance by the xxxx).

**On the last page of the survey, you'll find a completion code.**

**Please copy your completion code here in order to receive compensation: \_\_\_\_\_**

Recruitment Email 2<sup>nd</sup> Session  
Psychology of Secrets  
(10 min or less/\$1.50 credit)

Two weeks ago, you completed the first survey about secrets. Now we are inviting you to complete the second survey.

You will be asked a series of questions and be invited to complete another session in two weeks. Your participation is completely anonymous. And the questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. You will receive \$1.50 credit in compensation for your time for this session. Those who complete **all three sessions** will receive a **\$3 bonus credit**.

Please click the link to proceed to complete session two. The session **must be completed by this Sunday at 11:55 pm** (PST) in order to receive a \$1.50 credit and receive a \$3 bonus credit if you complete all three sessions.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, please contact xxx

Please note that all your responses will be anonymous. This study has received clearance by the xxx

Recruitment Email 3<sup>rd</sup> Session  
Psychology of Secrets  
(10 min or less/\$1.50 credit)

Two weeks ago, you completed the second survey about secrets. Now we are inviting you to complete the third (final) survey.

You will be asked a series of questions and your participation is completely anonymous. The questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. You will receive \$1.50 credit in compensation for your time for this session. Those who completed **all three sessions** will receive a **\$3 bonus credit**.

Please click the link to proceed to complete session three. The session **must be completed by this Sunday at 11:55 pm** (PST) in order to receive the \$1.50 credit and receive a \$3 bonus credit if you completed all three sessions.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, please contact xxx

Please note that all your responses will be anonymous. This study has received clearance by the xxxx

## Study 2

### Informed Consent Session 1

*The purpose of an informed consent is to ensure that you understand the purpose of the study and the nature of your involvement. The informed consent is intended to provide sufficient information, such that you have the opportunity to determine whether you wish to participate in the study. This study has received clearance by the xxx.*

**Study Title:** Psychology of Secrets

**Study Personnel Contact:** The Principal Investigators of this project are xxx

**Contact in case of concerns:** Should you have any ethical concerns about this study then please contact xxxx

**Purpose and Task Requirements:** The general purpose of this study is to increase our understanding of the links between secret keeping on the one hand and relationship characteristics on the other. You will be asked a series of questions on **three occasions** over a period of **six weeks** about a secret that you are keeping from your romantic partner (e.g., whether it concerns something you did or something that happened to you, and why you might be keeping the secret), as well as questions about your relationship. You will be asked to complete a set of questionnaires now, in two weeks, and two weeks after that (total = three sessions) with each session taking approximately 20 minutes to complete.

**We will not ask you to reveal your secret!**

**Eligibility Requirements:** Since this study concerns secrets in romantic relationships, to be eligible to participate, the participant must be in a romantic relationship and have a secret that you are keeping from your partner.

**Potential Risk and Discomfort:** Thinking about secrets that you are keeping from your partner may cause you to feel some shame, guilt, anxiety, or fear. If you are uncomfortable answering any questions, you have the right to choose to skip questions or discontinue the survey at any time without penalty.

**Compensation:** You will receive \$1.50 Amazon credit for completing each session, plus a \$3 bonus credit for those who complete all three sessions.

**Anonymity/Confidentiality:** The data collected in this study are completely confidential. All data are coded so that your name cannot be associated with any responses that you have provided. Any identifying information associated with your code will be removed from your data once your course credit has been granted. Once the data are anonymous, aggregate data might be shared with trusted colleagues. We collect data through the software Qualtrics, which uses servers with multiple layers of security to protect the privacy of the data (e.g., encrypted websites and pass-word protected storage). The anonymous data will be kept by the primary researchers for 5 years after publication as per APA requirements. With your consent to participate in this study you acknowledge this.

**Funding Source:** This research is funded by xxx

**Right to Withdraw:** Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. At any point during the study you have the right to not complete any questions or to withdraw with no penalty. If you decide to withdraw from the study you will still receive full compensation for your participation (compensation code is provided after the debriefing page).

Withdrawing from the study prior to completion indicates that you do not wish to have your responses included, and those who do complete the study consent to the use of their responses (in aggregate form) for research and teaching purposes. As responses are anonymous, we cannot remove your data from the study after you submit.

*If you would like to participate in this study, please click the Agree button below. Otherwise, click the Disagree button.*

Agree

Disagree – exit to debriefing

## Study 2

### Informed Consent Session 2

*The purpose of an informed consent is to ensure that you understand the purpose of the study and the nature of your involvement. The informed consent is intended to provide sufficient information, such that you have the opportunity to determine whether you wish to participate in the study. This study has received clearance by the xxx*

**Study Title:** Psychology of Secrets

**Study Personnel Contact:** The Principal Investigators of this project are xxx

**Contact in case of concerns:** Should you have any ethical concerns about this study then please contact xxx

**Purpose and Task Requirements:** The general purpose of this study is to increase our understanding of the links between secret keeping on the one hand and relationship characteristics on the other. This is **session two of three sessions** of this study. You will be about a secret that you are keeping from your romantic partner (e.g., whether it concerns something you did or something that happened to you, and why you might be keeping the secret), as well as questions about your relationship. **Please think about the secret that you used in session one, if you remember.** You will be asked to complete a set of questionnaires now and in two weeks for the final session (total = three sessions) with each session taking approximately 10 minutes to complete. **We will not ask you to reveal your secret!**

**Potential Risk and Discomfort:** Thinking about secrets that you are keeping from your partner may cause you to feel some shame, guilt, anxiety, or fear. If you are uncomfortable answering any questions, you have the right to choose to skip questions or discontinue the survey at any time without penalty.

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**Funding Source:** This research is funded by xxx.

**Right to Withdraw:** Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. At any point during the study you have the right to not complete any questions or to withdraw with no

penalty. If you decide to withdraw from the study you will still receive full compensation for your participation (compensation code is provided after the debriefing page).

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*If you would like to participate in this study, please click the Agree button below. Otherwise, click the Disagree button.*

Agree

Disagree – exit to debriefing

## Study 2

### Informed Consent Session 3

*The purpose of an informed consent is to ensure that you understand the purpose of the study and the nature of your involvement. The informed consent is intended to provide sufficient information, such that you have the opportunity to determine whether you wish to participate in the study. This study has received clearance by the xxx*

**Study Title:** Psychology of Secrets

**Study Personnel Contact:** The Principal Investigators of this project are xxx

**Contact in case of concerns:** Should you have any ethical concerns about this study then please contact xxx

**Purpose and Task Requirements:** The general purpose of this study is to increase our understanding of the links between secret keeping on the one hand and relationship characteristics on the other. This is **session three of three sessions** of this study. You will be about a secret that you are keeping from your romantic partner (e.g., whether it concerns something you did or something that happened to you, and why you might be keeping the secret), as well as questions about your relationship. **Please think about the secret that you used in session one and session two, if you remember.** You will be asked to complete a set of questionnaires now and in two weeks for the final session (total = three sessions) with each session taking approximately 10 minutes to complete. **We will not ask you to reveal your secret!**

**Potential Risk and Discomfort:** Thinking about secrets that you are keeping from your partner may cause you to feel some shame, guilt, anxiety, or fear. If you are uncomfortable answering any questions, you have the right to choose to skip questions or discontinue the survey at any time without penalty.

**Compensation:** You will receive \$1.50 Amazon credit for completing each session, plus a \$3 bonus credit for those who complete all three sessions.

**Anonymity/Confidentiality:** The data collected in this study are completely confidential. All data are coded so that your name cannot be associated with any responses that you have provided. Any identifying information associated with your code will be removed from your data once your course credit has been granted. Once the data are anonymous, aggregate data might be shared with trusted colleagues. We collect data through the software Qualtrics, which uses servers with multiple layers of security to protect the privacy of the data (e.g., encrypted websites and pass-word protected storage). The anonymous data will be kept by the primary researchers for 5 years after publication as per APA requirements. With your consent to participate in this study you acknowledge this.

**Funding Source:** This research is funded by xxx

**Right to Withdraw:** Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. At any point during the study you have the right to not complete any questions or to withdraw with no

penalty. If you decide to withdraw from the study you will still receive full compensation for your participation (compensation code is provided after the debriefing page).

Withdrawing from the study prior to completion indicates that you do not wish to have your responses included, and those who do complete the study consent to the use of their responses (in aggregate form) for research and teaching purposes. As responses are anonymous, we cannot remove your data from the study after you submit.

*If you would like to participate in this study, please click the Agree button below.  
Otherwise, click the Disagree button.*

Agree

Disagree – exit to debriefing



## Survey Materials (Session 1)

Thank you for participating in the 'Psychology of Secrets' study! This study will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Please read each question carefully.

### Demographic Questions

First, we would like to gather some demographic information. All information you provide will be completely confidential and will not be associated in any way with your identity. Please answer the questions below.

1. What is your gender? \_\_\_\_\_Female \_\_\_\_\_Male \_\_\_\_\_Other
2. What is your Age: \_\_\_\_\_ (in years)
3. What is your current relationship status?
  - a) Single, not dating (if this is endorsed, participant skips out of the study)
  - b) Single, casually dating (if this is endorsed, participant skips out of the study)
  - c) In a serious dating relationship
  - d) In a serious dating relationship and engaged
  - e) Married or Common-law
  - f) Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
4. Please estimate approximately how long (in years/months) you have been involved romantically with your partner: \_\_\_\_\_ years and \_\_\_\_\_ months
5. Are you keeping a secret from your partner? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No (if no, participant skips out of study – see appendix D)

### The Secret (Time 1)

The following questions have to do with the most significant secret that you are keeping from your romantic partner. To protect your privacy, we will not ask you about the details of the secret, but it would be helpful if you could answer the following questions about this most significant secret:

1. Under which category or categories does the secret fall? (You may check as many categories as apply):

- Infidelity
- Addiction (e.g., alcohol, drugs, gambling)
- Sexual identity
- Breaking the law
- Secret crush or attraction
- Victim of a crime (e.g., assault, rape)
- Something shameful you did as a child (e.g., theft)
- Something that happened to you as a child (e.g., abused)
- Something that some might view as stigmatizing (e.g., a health or financial problem, an abortion, family problems)
- Job related problems
- Friendships
- Feeling alienated
- Other
- Prefer not to divulge category

2. Does the secret involve something you did or something that was done to you?

I did something      Something was done to me      Neither

3. Is the secret known to:

No one but yourself      1 other person      a few people      many people

4. Have you confided your secret to:

No one      1 person      a few people      many people

5. Why are you keeping this secret? (You may check as many as many reasons as apply):

- I'd be embarrassed if it was revealed
- I'd feel shame if it was revealed
- As long as it stays a secret, I have an advantage (I gain from it)
- To protect myself
- To protect others
- It would ruin my relationship if revealed
- It would ruin my reputation if revealed
- Other

6. How long have you kept this secret from your partner?

1	2	3	4
For as long as I've known her/him	For several years	For months	For less than a month

7. How often do you think about your secret?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Almost Never	Sometimes	Reasonably often	Always

8. How much does your secret bother you?

1	2	3	4	5
I feel okay about it	Bothers me a little bit	Bothers me somewhat	Bothers me quite a bit	Bothers me a great deal

9. How much does your secret affect you?

1	2	3	4	5
Doesn't affect me at all	Affects me a little bit	Affects me somewhat	Affects me quite a bit	Affects me a great deal

10. To what extent do you wish that you could tell your partner about this secret?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so

11. To what extent do you wish that you could get the secret out of your mind?

1	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	4	5
Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so

12. To what extent are you worried or afraid of the consequences of revealing your secret?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so

13. To what extent do you wish that you did not have this secret?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all – I am okay with having this secret	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so – I don't want this secret at all

14. To what extent do you distract yourself to stop thoughts about the secret?

1	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	4	5
Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so

15. To what extent do you tell yourself 'stop' when you think about the secret?

1	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	4	5
Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so

16. To what extent do you avoid situations/activities to prevent thoughts about the secret occurring?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all – I do not avoid any situations that trigger thoughts about my secret	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so – I avoid all situations that may trigger thoughts of my secret

17. To what extent does this secret affect how you think of yourself?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all – it has nothing to do with how I think of myself	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so – it has a lot to do with how I think of myself

18a: Could you explain briefly how this secret affects how you think of yourself (if it does so)?

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Please read each of the following items carefully. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each item according to the rating scale below:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neutral	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

1. I am worried that my partner will discover my secret even if I do not tell him or her myself \_\_\_\_\_
2. I find myself analyzing my partner's comments, fearing that he or she might be figuring out my secret \_\_\_\_\_
3. I worry that my partner already knows my secret but has not told me \_\_\_\_\_
4. My secret is safe because I have 'covered my tracks' (i.e., there is no trail of evidence to be discovered) \_\_\_\_\_
5. Unless I reveal my secret, there is almost no way for my partner to discover it \_\_\_\_\_

Please read each of the following items carefully. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each item according to the rating scale below:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neutral	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

1. I have an important secret that I haven't shared with my partner \_\_\_\_\_
2. If I shared all my secrets with my partner, they'd like me less \_\_\_\_\_
3. There are lots of things about me that I keep to myself \_\_\_\_\_
4. Some of my secrets have really tormented me \_\_\_\_\_
5. When something bad happens to me, I tend to keep it to myself \_\_\_\_\_
6. I'm often afraid I'll reveal something I don't want to \_\_\_\_\_
7. Telling a secret to my partner often backfires and I wish I hadn't told it \_\_\_\_\_
8. I have a secret that is so private I would lie if my partner asked me about it \_\_\_\_\_
9. My secrets are too embarrassing to share with my partner \_\_\_\_\_
10. I have negative thoughts about myself that I never share with my partner \_\_\_\_\_

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word. Indicate to what extent you feel this way **right now**, that is, at the present moment. Use the following scale to record your answers.

1	2	3	4	5
Very slightly or not at all	a little	moderately	quite a bit	extremely
___ interested	___ guilty			
___ irritable	___ determined			
___ distressed	___ scared			
___ alert	___ attentive			
___ excited	___ hostile			
___ ashamed	___ jittery			
___ upset	___ enthusiastic			
___ inspired	___ active			
___ strong	___ proud			
___ nervous	___ afraid			

Please answer the following questions according to the scale provided.

1. How well does your partner meet your needs?

1            2        3            4            5

Not at All Completely

2. In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?

1            2    3            4            5

Not at All Completely

3. To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations?

1            2    3            4            5

Not at All Completely

4. How good is your relationship compared to most?

1            2    3            4

Much Worse

5. How often do you wish you hadn't gotten into this relationship?

1            2    3            4            5

Never Always

6. How much do you love your partner?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Not at All

Very Much

7. How many problems are there in your relationship?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Not at All Many

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Do Not Agree at All				Agree Somewhat				Completely Agree

1. I want our relationship to last for a very long time
2. I am committed to maintaining my relationship with my partner.
3. I would not feel very upset if our relationship were to end in the near future.
4. It is likely that I will date someone other than my partner within the next year.
5. I feel very attached to our relationship-very strongly linked to my partner.
6. I want our relationship to last forever.
7. I am oriented toward the long-term future of my relationship (for example, I imagine being with my partner several years from now).

Sometimes, for a variety of reasons, people do not respond to study questions honestly or accurately. We recognize that this may occur, and it is very helpful to us in understanding our results if we can identify such cases. Please help us by answering the question below about how you responded to the questionnaire. You still receive full credit for participation in this study regardless of your response.

- Have you responded to this questionnaire package accurately and honestly?

\_\_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_\_ Mostly    \_\_\_\_ No

## The Secret (Session 2)

In the survey you completed two weeks ago, you described a secret that you were keeping from your partner. Please recall that secret.

1. Under which category or categories does the secret fall? (You may check as many categories as apply):

- Infidelity
- Addiction (e.g., alcohol, drugs, gambling)
- Sexual identity
- Breaking the law
- Secret crush or attraction
- Victim of a crime (e.g., assault, rape)
- Something shameful you did as a child (e.g., theft)
- Something that happened to you as a child (e.g., abused)
- Something that some might view as stigmatizing (e.g., a health or financial problem, an abortion, family problems)
- Job related problems
- Friendships
- Feeling alienated
- Other
- Prefer not to divulge category

3. Is the secret known to:

No one but yourself    1 other person    a few people    many people

4. Have you confided your secret to:

No one    1 person    a few people    many people

5. Have you disclosed your secret in the last two weeks?

Yes    No    Not sure

6. Have you disclosed your secret **to your partner** in the last two weeks?

Yes    No    Not sure

7. How often do you think about your secret?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Almost Never	Sometimes	Reasonably often	Always

8. How much does your secret bother you?

1	2	3	4	5
I feel okay about it	Bothers me a little bit	Bothers me somewhat	Bothers me quite a bit	Bothers me a great deal

9. How much does your secret affect you?

1	2	3	4	5
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Doesn't affect me at all	Affects me a little bit	Affects me somewhat	Affects me quite a bit	Affects me a great deal
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10. To what extent do you wish that you could tell your partner about this secret?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so

11. To what extent do you wish that you could get the secret out of your mind?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so

12. To what extent are you worried or afraid of the consequences of revealing your secret?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so

13. To what extent do you wish that you do not have this secret?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Not at all – I am okay with possessing this secret	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so – I don't want this secret at all

14. To what extent do you distract yourself to stop thoughts about the secret?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so

15. To what extent do you tell yourself 'stop' when you think about the secret?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so

16. To what extent do you avoid situations/activities to prevent thoughts about the secret occurring?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Not at all – I do not avoid any situations that trigger thoughts about my secret	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so – I avoid all situations that may trigger thoughts of my secret

Please read each of the following items carefully. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each item according to the rating scale below:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neutral	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

1. I am worried that my partner will discover my secret even if I do not tell him or her myself \_\_\_\_\_
2. I find myself analyzing my partner's comments, fearing that he or she might be figuring out my secret \_\_\_\_\_
3. I worry that my partner already knows my secret but has not told me \_\_\_\_\_
4. My secret is safe because I have 'covered my tracks' (i.e., there is no trail of evidence to be discovered) \_\_\_\_\_
5. Unless I reveal my secret, there is almost no way for my partner to discover it \_\_\_\_\_

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word. Indicate to what extent you feel this way **right now**, that is, at the present moment. Use the following scale to record your answers.

1	2	3	4	5
Very slightly or not at all	a little	moderately	quite a bit	extremely
___ interested	___ guilty			
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___ excited	___ hostile			
___ ashamed	___ jittery			
___ upset	___ enthusiastic			
___ inspired	___ active			
___ strong	___ proud			
___ nervous	___ afraid			

Please answer the following questions according to the scale provided.

1. How well does your partner meet your needs?

1            2            3            4            5

Not at All

Completely

2. In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?

1            2            3            4            5

Not at All

Completely

3. To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations?

1            2    3            4            5

Not at All

Completely

4. How good is your relationship compared to most?

1            2    3            4            5

Much Worse

Much Better

5. How often do you wish you hadn't gotten into this relationship?

1            2    3            4            5

Never

Always

6. How much do you love your partner?

1            2    3            4            5

Not at All

Very Much

7. How many problems are there in your relationship?

1            2    3            4            5

Not at All

Many

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Do Not Agree at All				Agree Somewhat				Completely Agree

1. I want our relationship to last for a very long time
2. I am committed to maintaining my relationship with my partner.
3. I would not feel very upset if our relationship were to end in the near future.
4. It is likely that I will date someone other than my partner within the next year.
5. I feel very attached to our relationship-very strongly linked to my partner.
6. I want our relationship to last forever.
7. I am oriented toward the long-term future of my relationship (for example, I imagine being with my partner several years from now).

### [Accuracy and Honesty Question]

Sometimes, for a variety of reasons, people do not respond to study questions honestly or accurately. We recognize that this may occur, and it is very helpful to us in understanding our results if we can identify such cases. Please help us by answering the question below about how you responded to the questionnaire. You still receive full credit for participation in this study regardless of your response.

- Have you responded to this questionnaire package accurately and honestly?

\_\_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_\_ Mostly    \_\_\_\_ No

### The Secret (Session 3)

In the survey you completed two weeks ago, you described a secret that you were keeping from your partner. Please recall that secret.

1. Under which category or categories does the secret fall? (You may check as many categories as apply):

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- Something that happened to you as a child (e.g., abused)
- Something that some might view as stigmatizing (e.g., a health or financial problem, an abortion, family problems)
- Job related problems
- Friendships
- Feeling alienated
- Other
- Prefer not to divulge category

3. Is the secret known to:

No one but yourself    1 other person    a few people    many people

4. Have you confided your secret to:

No one    1 person    a few people    many people

5. Have you disclosed your secret in the last two weeks?

Yes    No    Not sure

6. Have you disclosed your secret **to your partner** in the last two weeks?

Yes    No    Not sure

7. How often do you think about your secret?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Almost Never	Sometimes	Reasonably often	Always

8. How much does your secret bother you?

1	2	3	4	5
I feel okay about it	Bothers me a little bit	Bothers me somewhat	Bothers me quite a bit	Bothers me a great deal

9. How much does your secret affect you?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Doesn't affect me at all	Affects me a little bit	Affects me somewhat	Affects me quite a bit	Affects me a great deal

10. To what extent do you wish that you could tell your partner about this secret?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so

11. To what extent do you wish that you could get the secret out of your mind?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so

12. To what extent are you worried or afraid of the consequences of revealing your secret?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so

13. To what extent do you wish that you do not have this secret?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Not at all – I am okay with possessing this secret	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so – I don't want this secret at all

14. To what extent do you distract yourself to stop thoughts about the secret?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so

15. To what extent do you tell yourself 'stop' when you think about the secret?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so

16. To what extent do you avoid situations/activities to prevent thoughts about the secret occurring?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Not at all – I do not avoid any situations that trigger thoughts about my secret	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much so – I avoid all situations that may trigger

				thoughts of my secret
--	--	--	--	--------------------------

Please read each of the following items carefully. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each item according to the rating scale below:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neutral	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

1. I am worried that my partner will discover my secret even if I do not tell him or her myself \_\_\_\_\_
2. I find myself analyzing my partner's comments, fearing that he or she might be figuring out my secret \_\_\_\_\_
3. I worry that my partner already knows my secret but has not told me \_\_\_\_\_
4. My secret is safe because I have 'covered my tracks' (i.e., there is no trail of evidence to be discovered) \_\_\_\_\_
5. Unless I reveal my secret, there is almost no way for my partner to discover it \_\_\_\_\_

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word. Indicate to what extent you feel this way **right now**, that is, at the present moment. Use the following scale to record your answers.

1	2	3	4	5
Very slightly or not at all	a little	moderately	quite a bit	extremely
___ interested	___ guilty			
___ irritable	___ determined			
___ distressed	___ scared			
___ alert	___ attentive			
___ excited	___ hostile			
___ ashamed	___ jittery			
___ upset	___ enthusiastic			
___ inspired	___ active			
___ strong	___ proud			
___ nervous	___ afraid			

Please answer the following questions according to the scale provided.

1. How well does your partner meet your needs?
- 1      2      3      4      5
- Not at All                                  Completely

1            2     3            4            5  
Not at All    Completely

1            2     3            4            5  
Not at All    Completely

1      2      3      4      5  
Much Worse                      Much Better

1	2	3	4	5
Never				Always

1	2	3	4	5
Not at All				Very Much

1	2	3	4	5
Not at All				Many

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Do Not Agree at All				Agree Somewhat				Completely Agree

1. I want our relationship to last for a very long time
2. I am committed to maintaining my relationship with my partner.
3. I would not feel very upset if our relationship were to end in the near future.
4. It is likely that I will date someone other than my partner within the next year.
5. I feel very attached to our relationship-very strongly linked to my partner.
6. I want our relationship to last forever.
7. I am oriented toward the long-term future of my relationship (for example, I imagine being with my partner several years from now).

Sometimes, for a variety of reasons, people do not respond to study questions honestly or accurately. We recognize that this may occur, and it is very helpful to us in understanding our results if we can identify such cases. Please help us by answering the question below about how you responded to the questionnaire. You still receive full credit for participation in this study regardless of your response.

- Have you responded to this questionnaire package accurately and honestly?

\_\_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_\_ Mostly    \_\_\_\_ No

### **Debriefing - Time 1**

**Study Title:** Psychology of Secrets

Thank you for completing the first session of this study!

**What are we trying to learn in this research?**

The main purpose of this study is to better understand the effects that secret keeping has on the individual and the relationship. Prior studies indicate that people who are preoccupied with secrets may experience more negative effects in their relationships. In this research, we are exploring the extent to which these effects change and predict increases over time.

**Why is this important to scientists or to the general public?**

This research will increase our understanding of how secrets influence cognitive resources of the secret keeper and their romantic relationship. Ultimately, this and subsequent research may help guide psychotherapists who are working with people and couples preoccupied by secrets.

**Where can I learn more?**

For more information about the effect that secret keeping has on romantic relationships, see <https://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/201703/how-secrets-can-destroy-relationship>

**Contact Information:**

For additional questions or comments, please contact xxx

In case of ethical concerns about this study, please contact xxx

This study has received clearance by xxx

Thank you for your participation!

To ensure maximum confidentiality, please exit this browser by clicking 'Next' at the bottom of this page.

### **Debriefing - Time 2**

**Study Title:** Psychology of Secrets

Thank you for completing the second session of this study!



**What are we trying to learn in this research?**

The main purpose of this study is to better understand the effects that secret keeping has on the individual and the relationship. Prior studies indicate that people who are preoccupied with secrets may experience more negative effects in their relationships. In this research, we are exploring the extent to which these effects change and predict increases over time.

**Why is this important to scientists or to the general public?**

This research will increase our understanding of how secrets influence cognitive resources of the secret keeper and their romantic relationship. Ultimately, this and subsequent research may help guide psychotherapists who are working with people and couples preoccupied by secrets.

**Where can I learn more?**

For more information about the effect that secret keeping has on romantic relationships, see <https://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/201703/how-secrets-can-destroy-relationship>

**Contact Information:**

For additional questions or comments, please contact xxx

In case of ethical concerns about this study, please contact xxx

This study has received clearance by the xxx

Thank you for your participation!

To ensure maximum confidentiality, please exit this browser by clicking 'Next' at the bottom of this page.

**Debriefing - Time 3****Study Title:** Psychology of Secrets

Thank you for completing this study!

**What are we trying to learn in this research?**

The main purpose of this study is to better understand the effect that secret keeping has on preoccupation, including relationship satisfaction and commitment. Prior studies indicate that people who are preoccupied with secrets may experience more urges to suppress and disclose a secret than those who do not keep secrets, or are less preoccupied by the secrets that they are keeping. In this research, we are exploring the extent to which these effects predict an increase over time in degree of preoccupation and relationship satisfaction and commitment.

**Why is this important to scientists or to the general public?**

This research will increase our understanding of how secrets influence cognitive resources and relationship satisfaction and commitment. Ultimately, this and subsequent

research may help guide psychotherapists who are working with people preoccupied by secrets.

**Where can I learn more?**

For more information about the effect that secret keeping has on romantic relationships, see <https://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/201703/how-secrets-can-destroy-relationship>

**Contact Information:**

For additional questions or comments, please contact xxx

In case of ethical concerns about this study, please contact xxx

This study has received clearance by xxx

Thank you for your participation!

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