A Social Mindfulness Approach to Understanding Experienced Customer Mistreatment: A Within-Person Field Experiment

Abstract:
We apply a social mindfulness lens (Van Doesum, Van Lange, & Van Lange, 2013) to understand the phenomenon of perceived customer mistreatment. Recognizing that both recall of prosocial acts and perspective taking invoke the motivation to be mindful in social interactions, we investigated whether these two types of interventions affect customer service employees’ experience of customer mistreatment. Additionally, we investigated whether these two interventions might also buffer the relation of employees’ daily experience of customer mistreatment and their negative mood at the end of the workday. Finally, we examined whether the interventions, via their effects on daily experience of customer mistreatment and afternoon negative mood, could reduce dysfunctional coping responses in the evening (i.e., employee rumination and maladaptive shopping). We conducted a within-person field experiment utilizing a daily experience sampling approach with 94 customer service employees whom we surveyed for 15 consecutive workdays. Consistent with our expectations, both interventions significantly reduced the daily experience of customer mistreatment compared to a control condition. Recall of prosocial action also significantly buffered the positive relation of daily experience of customer mistreatment with afternoon negative mood. Moreover, both interventions had significant indirect effects on dysfunctional coping responses in the evening. We discuss theoretical and practical implications of these findings.
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ABSTRACT

We apply a social mindfulness lens (Van Doesum, Van Lange, & Van Lange, 2013) to understand the phenomenon of perceived customer mistreatment. Recognizing that both recall of prosocial acts and perspective taking invoke the motivation to be mindful in social interactions, we investigated whether these two types of interventions affect customer service employees’ experience of customer mistreatment. Additionally, we investigated whether these two interventions might also buffer the relation of employees’ daily experience of customer mistreatment and their negative mood at the end of the workday. Finally, we examined whether the interventions, via their effects on daily experience of customer mistreatment and afternoon negative mood, could reduce dysfunctional coping responses in the evening (i.e., employee rumination and maladaptive shopping). We conducted a within-person field experiment utilizing a daily experience sampling approach with 94 customer service employees whom we surveyed for 15 consecutive workdays. Consistent with our expectations, both interventions significantly reduced the daily experience of customer mistreatment compared to a control condition. Recall of prosocial action also significantly buffered the positive relation of daily experience of customer mistreatment with afternoon negative mood. Moreover, both interventions had significant indirect effects on dysfunctional coping responses in the evening. We discuss theoretical and practical implications of these findings.

Keywords: Social mindfulness; Customer mistreatment; Prosocial motivation; Perspective taking; Negative mood; Rumination; Maladaptive shopping

Given the significant growth of the service economy over the past decades, interest in improving frontline service employees’ performance and well-being has increased (Groth & Goodwin, 2011). One topic related to service employees’ performance and well-being that has received extensive attention is customer mistreatment, which is defined as low-quality interpersonal treatment that employees receive from customers (Wang, Liao, Zhan, & Shi, 2011). Numerous studies have documented negative effects of customer mistreatment on service employees. For example, customer mistreatment has been shown to negatively influence service employees’ cognition, such as impairing their working memory (e.g., Rafaeli, Erez, Ravid, Derfler-Rozin, Treister, & Scheyer, 2012) and threatening their self-efficacy (e.g., Dormann & Zapf, 2004), which in turn results in lower performance (e.g., Choi, Kim, Lee, & Lee, 2014;
Goldberg & Grandey, 2007) or even increasing customer-directed sabotage (e.g., Skarlicki, van Jaarsveld, Shao, Song, & Wang, 2016; Skarlicki, van Jaarsveld, & Walker, 2008; Wang et al., 2011). To make matters worse, customer mistreatment may also culminate in poor employee physical health (e.g., Sliter, Pui, Sliter, & Jex, 2011), negative emotions (e.g., Rupp & Spencer, 2006; Zapata-Phelan, Colquitt, Scott, & Livingston, 2009), and exhaustion (e.g., Grandey, Dickter, & Sin, 2004; Zhan, Wang, & Shi, 2016).

Although not explicitly stated, most studies assume that employees’ subjective experience of customer mistreatment is a true reflection of actual customer mistreatment behaviors. The experience of customer mistreatment, however, is based on complex perceptual and evaluative judgments that may vary substantially within and across people (e.g., Skarlicki et al., 2008). Given the inherently subjective nature of experienced customer mistreatment (Bies, 2001) and the relevance of employees’ own perceptions at work, the current study focuses on understanding employees’ subjective experience of customer mistreatment. Our emphasis on employees’ subjective experience of mistreatment is aligned with the original conceptualization of customer mistreatment from Bies (2001) as a type of interactional injustice experience, which by nature involves “perceptions” and “judgements”.

Furthermore, the well-documented associations between employees’ experience of customer mistreatment and subsequent negative consequences also beg for studies that provide insights on how to reduce subjective experiences of customer mistreatment and its concomitant outcomes. Although previous studies have identified various personal characteristics (e.g., moral identity, Skarlicki et al., 2008; negative affectivity, Walker, van Jaarsveld, & Skarlicki, 2014) and contextual variables (e.g., perceived organization support, Wang, Liu, Liao, Gong, Kammeyer-Mueller, & Shi, 2013; organizational climate of support, Shih, Lie, Klein, & Jiang,
that buffer the negative effects of customer mistreatment, it would be especially useful to learn what could be done to reduce the experience of customer mistreatment in the first place.

We aim to address the above-mentioned issues by integrating a social mindfulness framework (Van Doesum, Van Lange, & Van Lange, 2013) with motivated information processing theory (Kunda, 1990; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978) to better understand how experienced customer mistreatment affects employees. A social mindfulness framework is particularly relevant to our work because it recognizes the importance of other-orientedness in social interactions by highlighting the need to both “see” others’ perspectives and “do” prosocial acts for others (Van Doesum et al., 2013: 86). We capture social mindfulness’ aspects of seeing and doing with perspective taking and recall of prosocial acts, respectively, because these are intricately related to other-orientedness and key drivers of prosocial orientation (Batson, Sager, Garst, Kang, Rubchinsky, & Dawson, 1997; Grant & Dutton, 2012; Van Doesum et al., 2013).

Furthermore, the social mindfulness framework is particularly well-aligned with customer service contexts such as ours where managing distressed customers while protecting one’s own well-being are equally important goals for employees (e.g., Groth & Grandey, 2012; Koopmann, Wang, Liu, & Song, 2015).¹

Whereas the social mindfulness framework speaks more directly to why perspective taking and prosocial recall as forms of other-orientedness matter in social interactions, motivated information processing theory (Kunda, 1990; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978) speaks to how such prosocial orientation can shape the way employees process and interpret other people’s behaviors in interdependent contexts (e.g., Dutton, Workman, & Hardin, 2014; Grant & Sumanth, 2009).

According to motivated information processing theory, employees’ motivation shapes how they

¹ Consistent with recent research, our theorizing does not assume that being other-oriented (e.g., showing concern for customers) precludes the possibility of self-interest (e.g., protecting employees’ own well-being) (e.g., Bolino & Grant, 2016; Grant & Berry, 2011).
attend to and process information, interactions, and contextual cues (Kunda, 1990; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). This theory suggests that – as the two primary ways of evoking prosocial motivation (Grant & Dutton, 2012; Maner, Lucer, Neuberg, Ciadini, Brown, & Sagarin, 2012; Stocks, Lishner, & Decker, 2009; Tasimi & Young, 2016; Van Lange, 2008; Young, Chakroff, & Tom, 2012) – perspective taking and prosocial recall are likely to shape employees’ experience of customer mistreatment. Employees exposed to the two prosocial interventions are likely to notice, encode, and retain information that is consistent with their prosocial motives and downplay information that is inconsistent with these motives in ways that impact their subsequent perceptions and behaviors.

Consistent with information processing theory, a related goal of our research is to investigate whether these two prosocial interventions buffer the relationship between service employees’ experience of customer mistreatment and negative affective reactions. Work events are proximal causes of people’s affective reactions (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) and appraisal processes of events play a critical role in determining such reactions (Lazarus, 1991). Specifically, an event first triggers a primary appraisal process that evaluates whether the event is goal-relevant. This initial appraisal is followed by a secondary appraisal process that evaluates the expected consequences of the event, which shape people’s emotional reactions. According to motivated information processing theory, customer mistreatment experiences will be appraised as less negative when employees are exposed to the prosocial interventions (e.g., Brewer, 2012; Van Doesum et al., 2013). For these reasons, we expect that the two prosocial interventions will protect employees’ mood from being severely harmed by experienced customer mistreatment.

The current study also aims to enrich the customer mistreatment literature by extending the criterion space of service employees’ customer mistreatment experience. Specifically, we
examine two self-focused maladaptive emotion regulation strategies that are intended to reduce people's negative emotion reactions, namely rumination and maladaptive shopping (e.g., LeMoult, Arditte, D'Avanzato, & Joormann, 2013; Saintives & Lunardo, 2016; Tice & Bratslavsky, 2000). Rumination represents a psychological indicator and maladaptive shopping a behavioral indicator of employees' self-focused and maladaptive reactions to customer mistreatment. Examining these two variables extends the range of after-work spillover outcomes of work-related experiences (e.g., Barnes & Wagner, 2009; Frone, 2008; Liu, Wang, Bamberger, Shi, & Bacharach, 2015), and aligns well with our purpose of investigating the effectiveness of other-oriented interventions that reduce the detrimental effects of customer mistreatment experiences. Because rumination and maladaptive shopping are self-focused strategies for coping with negative emotions, using other-oriented interventions to shift employees’ attention from the self to others may prove especially effective for mitigating the emotion-based costs of customer mistreatment. The model we propose and test is illustrated in Figure 1.

Taken together, the current study offers several key contributions. First, integrating the social mindfulness framework with motivated information processing theory, the current study sheds light on the subjective processes involved in service employees’ experience of customer mistreatment. Second, our focus on prosocial orientation as captured by perspective taking and prosocial recall introduces a potentially valuable theoretical lens for understanding the benefits of other-oriented processes involved in service employees’ interaction with customers. Third, the current study not only furthers our theoretical understanding of the social information processing mechanisms underlying employees’ experience of customer mistreatment, but also identifies feasible means for leveraging these theoretical insights for practice. Similar to other intervention studies in the field of organizational behavior (e.g., Bono, Glomb, Shen, Kim, & Koch, 2013),
we provide examples of actionable steps that can be taken to protect employees from suffering the detrimental consequences of negative work experiences. Finally, to ensure generalizability and ecological validity, we utilized a within-person field experiment design and implemented daily interventions among a sample of customer service employees. In doing so, we address the call for employing experimental designs in field settings to simultaneously strengthen internal and external validity (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002).

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Social Mindfulness Framework

The social mindfulness framework posits that motivation and ability to be socially mindful enable individuals to pay attention to the needs and interests of others in social interactions (Brewer, 2012; Van Doesum et al., 2013). Customer mistreatment is a prevalent daily phenomenon in customer service contexts (Wang et al., 2011). For this reason, we focus on motivation to be socially mindful rather than on ability because ability is less malleable at the day level (e.g., Decety & Batson, 2007), and may take time to develop (e.g., Allen, Fonagy, & Bateman, 2008). Our approach is consistent with dual-process studies that focus either only on motivation effects or only on ability effects even though both may be relevant in a particular context (e.g., Bless & Schwarz, 1999; Chaiken & Trope, 1999). Based on the social mindfulness framework, we expect that how employees experience and react to customer mistreatment is determined in part by their prosocial orientation, which we manipulate via recall of prosocial action and perspective taking interventions.

The social mindfulness framework posits that to be mindful of others means to both see others’ needs and to act in ways that help others, which are well captured by perspective taking and prosocial recall, respectively (Van Doesum et al., 2013). Both interventions enable a focus
on the needs and interests of others and are the two fundamental types of other-oriented interventions utilized in the prosocial literature (e.g., Dutton et al., 2014; Gilin, Maddux, Carpenter, & Galinsky, 2013). Furthermore, both interventions afford participants psychological and behavioral benefits, such as reduced interpersonal biases and increased social capital via the performance of other-oriented behaviors (e.g., Grant & Dutton, 2012; Ku, Wang, & Galinsky, 2015), and are likely to have implications for how employees perceive as well as respond to mistreatment from their customers.

**Recall of Prosocial Action**

People who exhibit the motivation to act prosocially tend to focus on protecting and promoting others’ welfare (e.g., Grant, 2007; Kim, Van Dyne, Kamdar, & Johnson, 2013). Given that service employees’ work largely requires them to attend to and care about customers’ needs and to help meet customers’ demands, we expect that asking service employees’ to recall a time when they were prosocial may influence how employees interpret customers’ behaviors that could otherwise be construed as aggressive or unreasonable. This is because recalling a time when one was socially mindful of others triggers empathetic interests and concerns that are aligned with the needs of their interaction partners (Bolino, Harvey, & Bachrach, 2012). When employees recall a time when they were prosocial and mindful of the needs and interests of others, they are likely to subsequently interpret customers’ mistreatment behaviors as a signal for needing help, rather than norm-violating interpersonal treatment towards them. Additionally, activating prosocial motivation can lead people to engage in context-dependent processing, such that they pay greater attention to social cues and consider situational variance in the actions of others (Kühnen & Oyserman, 2002). A consequence of such processing is that employees will empathize with customers and attribute any perceived mistreatment from them to unfortunate
circumstances that customers experienced. Such attributions reduce the perception and potency of mistreatment behavior.

Based on the arguments above, we expect that an intervention which activates employees’ motivation to be socially mindful will subsequently reduce their subjective experience of customer mistreatment. Recalling past prosocial actions can remind individuals that they are prosocially motivated (Conway & Peetz, 2012), and is also likely to initiate a self-verification process by which individuals tend to regulate their behavior in ways that are consistent with their other-oriented tendencies in the past (Burke, 1991; Mayfield & Taber, 2009; Swann, 1983). Indeed, research suggests that when prosocial activities are recalled, people become more committed to helping (Farmer & Van Dyne, 2010; Nelson & Norton, 2005) and may pay less attention to negative interpersonal events that contradict their other-orientedness, such as customer mistreatment. Thus, since recalling a prosocial action activates service employees’ motivation to be socially mindful of others, we expect that it will reduce their subjective experience of customer mistreatment:

**Hypothesis 1:** On days when employees receive the recall of prosocial action intervention in the morning, they will perceive less daily customer mistreatment compared to when they do not receive any intervention.

**Moderating Effect of the Recall of Prosocial Action**

Although the motivation to be socially mindful may lessen the customer mistreatment experience, it is unlikely to completely eliminate such experience. Therefore, we further propose that the motivation to be socially mindful may also buffer the relation of such mistreatment experience with service employees’ subsequent negative mood. Work events elicit proximal affective reactions, which in turn shape distal attitudes and behaviors (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Two appraisal processes (i.e., primary appraisal and secondary appraisal) are involved in
the generation of emotional reactions to work events (Lam & Chen, 2012; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Upon receipt of customer mistreatment, employees are likely to experience negative emotions if the mistreatment is appraised as personally relevant (primary appraisal) and yields negative consequences (secondary appraisal; Dormann & Zapf, 2004). Many empirical studies report positive relations of experienced customer mistreatment with negative emotional reactions. For example, customer mistreatment is linked to anger (e.g., Rupp & Spencer, 2008; Spencer & Rupp, 2009), anxiety (e.g., Wegge, Van Dick, & von Bernstorff, 2010; Zhan, Wang, & Shi, 2013), and general negative emotions (e.g., Groth & Grandey, 2012; Volmer, Binnewies, Sonnentag, & Niessen, 2012). Therefore, in line with existing empirical evidence, we expect that daily customer mistreatment will be positively related to afternoon negative mood.

Building on our framework of social mindfulness, we expect that the recall of prosocial action intervention will buffer the positive relationship between customer mistreatment and afternoon negative mood. This is because when individuals are motivated to help others, they will show more understanding when interpreting others’ behaviors (Reed & Aquino, 2003). Owing to the context-dependent processing associated with an activated prosocial motivation (Kühnen & Oyserman, 2002), customer mistreatment is unlikely to be interpreted as personally targeting the employee. Instead, such mistreatment will likely be interpreted in terms of the broader context and attributed to unfavorable circumstances, thus reducing its emotional potency. Therefore, we expect that with the recall of prosocial action intervention, employees will be less likely to experience negative mood elicited by customer mistreatment:

**Hypothesis 2:** Recall of prosocial action intervention will moderate the positive relation of daily perceived customer mistreatment with afternoon negative mood, such that this relation will be weaker on days when employees receive the recall of prosocial action intervention in the morning compared to days when there is no intervention.
Perspective Taking

One of the main ways to be socially mindful of others is to try and take their perspective. Thus, apart from recalling past prosocial behaviors, prosocial motivation can also be activated by taking others’ perspective (Baston et al., 1997). Indeed, a number of studies have revealed that imagining how one would feel in another person’s situation evokes individuals’ empathic concern and motivates people to help others (Batson et al., 1997; Batson, Chang, Orr, & Rowland, 2002; Galinsky, Ku, & Wang, 2005; Van Lange, 2008). Building on motivated information processing theory, we expect that the perspective taking intervention will motivate service employees to attend, encode, process, and subsequently react to customer behaviors in ways that are consistent with their prosocial orientation.

Perspective taking can prompt service employees to show more empathic concern to customers and provide more satisfying customer service, which may result in reduced customer mistreatment experiences. That is, taking customers’ perspective may motivate employees to consider customers’ needs and welfare as more personally relevant and meaningful (Parker & Axtell, 2001) and attach more importance to solving customers’ problems (Axtell, Parker, Holman, & Totterdell, 2007). As a result, perspective taking likely enhances employees’ service performance, thus reducing customers’ dissatisfaction with the service quality and customers’ mistreatment behaviors.

Further, the prosocial motivation evoked by taking customers’ perspective may also prompt service employees to perceive and interpret customer mistreatment behaviors in a less negative light. Employees with activated prosocial motivation tend to pay less attention to social information that is not aligned with their prosocial intention. Therefore, perspective taking will motivate employees to pay less attention to negative interactions with customers. In addition,
employees may also feel empathy and concern toward customers and think of them in terms of being in an unfortunate situation rather than as rude or abusive individuals (Davis, 1983). Indeed, there is some evidence showing that experimentally manipulated perspective taking is associated with better psychological and physical synchrony among partners who experience conflict (Nelson, Laurent, Bernstein, & Laurent, 2017). For these reasons, we hypothesize that perspective taking will decrease employees’ negative appraisal of customers’ behaviors:

Hypothesis 3: On days when employees receive the perspective taking intervention in the morning, they will perceive less daily customer mistreatment compared to when they do not receive any intervention.

Moderating Effect of Perspective Taking

Given that the reduced customer mistreatment experience resulting from perspective taking may still lead to undesired employee consequences (e.g., negative mood), we further expect that the perspective taking intervention may also buffer the effect of perceived customer mistreatment on employees’ negative mood. In the situation of customer mistreatment, customers tend to perceive their own behaviors as legitimate responses to unpleasant service (Groth & Grandey, 2012), whereas employees are likely to interpret customers’ behaviors as unfair actions targeted at themselves (Rupp & Spencer, 2006). As a result, in the absence of other-oriented motivation, employees tend to experience negative mood following mistreatment (Wang et al., 2013; Zhan et al., 2013). In contrast, motivated information processing theory suggests that the perspective taking intervention may motivate service employees to process their customer’s perspective in a prosocial manner, and thus direct employees’ attention to situational factors that drive customer behaviors, thereby viewing mistreatment as less personally relevant (Vescio et al., 2003; Vorauer, Martens, & Sasaki, 2009; Wegner & Finstuen, 1977). Perspective taking lessens the extent to which people experience self-oriented feelings like anxiety and
distress in response to tense interpersonal interactions (Davis, 1983). When mistreatment is seen as less personally relevant, then employees’ negative emotional response to mistreatment may be muted. Therefore, we hypothesize:

\textit{Hypothesis 4: Perspective taking intervention will moderate the positive relation of daily perceived customer mistreatment with afternoon negative mood, such that this relation will be weaker on days when employees receive the perspective taking intervention in the morning compared to days when there is no intervention.}

Customer Mistreatment and Employee Self-Focused Maladaptive Outcomes

Affective reactions elicited by work events have downstream influences on cognition and behavior (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). It is not surprising, then, that the negative emotion induced by customer mistreatment can be detrimental for service employees (Koopmann et al., 2015). For instance, service employees who experience negative mood may engage in emotion-based maladaptive coping (Spector & Fox, 2002), which refers to reactions to negative emotions that produce long-term dysfunctional outcomes (Brown, Westbrook, & Challagalla, 2005). In this study we examine two such self-focused, emotion-based maladaptive outcomes: rumination and maladaptive shopping.

Conceptualized as a self-focused form of maladaptive cognition, rumination refers to persistent thoughts that focus on one’s failures and negative mood for extended periods of time (Nolen-Hoeksema, Wisco, & Lyubomirsky, 2008). Research has robustly reported that negative affect leads to ruminative self-focused attention (e.g., Mor & Winquist, 2002; Smith & Alloy, 2009) and that rumination is a maladaptive outcome of customer mistreatment (Baranik, Wang, Gong, & Shi, 2017; Wang et al., 2013). Unlike problem-solving or distraction strategies that remove focus away from the self, rumination keeps the negative thoughts accessible in memory, which perpetuates people’s negative mood rather than diminishing it (e.g., Wang et al., 2013). Cognitive theories of rumination suggest that rumination is triggered by goal failure (Martin &
Tesser, 1996). Because emotional reactions serve as feedback for the effectiveness of on-going goal pursuits (e.g., Johnson, Howe, & Chang, 2013; Johnson, Chang, & Lord, 2006), it is conceivable that negative mood may signal goal failure for service employees, thus precipitating rumination.

Apart from rumination, shopping can also serve as a self-focused, emotion-based coping behavior that is used to regulate one’s mood states (Hama, 2001; Jacobs, 1986). Dittmar, Long, and Bond (2007) investigated the motivation behind online shopping, and found that mood enhancement was a key driver of people’s personal shopping behavior. Such shopping is also a self-focused behavior, as impulsive consumption behaviors are positively associated with an individualistic self-construal (e.g., Chen, Ng, & Rao, 2005). Although shopping is not necessarily maladaptive, it can lead to financial and/or mental problems when it occurs without proper self-control (Carver & Scheier, 1998). Self-regulation perspectives posit that individuals draw from a limited pool of self-regulatory resources to control their cognition and behavior (Beal, Weiss, Barros, & MacDermid, 2005; Johnson, Muraven, Donaldson, & Lin, 2017). When employees experience customer mistreatment, self-regulatory resources are consumed as they try to avoid the distraction of negative mood while performing in-role tasks (Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989; Grandey et al., 2004). As a result, these employees will have impaired regulatory resources by the end of the workday, making it difficult to regulate subsequent mood-enhancing behaviors (e.g., shopping) at appropriate levels (Fabes & Eisenberg, 1997; Liu, Song, Koopmann, Wang, Chang, & Shi, in press).

Shopping as a maladaptive behavior has received little attention from organizational researchers yet it is a prime example of how negative work experiences can spillover to non-work domains. Indeed, personal shopping is a common after-work activity for employees
(Browne, Durrett, & Wetherbe, 2004) and people tend to rely on maladaptive shopping in misguided efforts to manage their negative mood (Dittmar et al., 2007; Donnelly, Ksendzova, & Howell, 2013). Such shopping can also be maladaptive by causing serious financial problems and threatening individuals’ mental health in the long run (e.g., when people lack control over shopping impulses; Baumeister, 2002; Edwards, 1993). Based on the above, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 5: Negative mood will mediate (a) the positive relation of daily perceived customer mistreatment with employee evening rumination, and (b) the positive relation of daily perceived customer mistreatment with employee evening maladaptive shopping.

Combining all of the hypotheses above, we propose that the recall of prosocial action and perspective taking interventions will reduce the maladaptive self-focused evening outcomes (i.e., rumination and maladaptive shopping) of customer mistreatment, via their effects on employees’ perceived customer mistreatment and the concomitant negative mood. By shifting employees’ attention away from the self and toward others, these social mindfulness interventions may prove especially effective at curbing self-focused cognitions and impulsive behaviors later in the day. Thus, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 6: Compared to the control condition, (a) recall of prosocial action and (b) perspective taking will reduce evening rumination via their effects on perceived customer mistreatment and afternoon negative mood.

Hypothesis 7: Compared to the control condition, (a) recall of prosocial action and (b) perspective taking will reduce evening maladaptive shopping via their effects on perceived customer mistreatment and afternoon negative mood.

METHOD

Sample and Procedure

We collected data from a call center of a large bank located in southeast China. The bank’s retail business department assisted us in distributing the study announcement to every call center customer service employee (N = 96), along with a letter assuring them that their responses
would be kept confidential and only used for third-party research purposes. Ninety-four employees agreed to participate in our study (response rate = 97.92%). Of the 94 participants, 86.2% were female, they had an average age of 21.1 years ($SD = 2.8$), an average organizational tenure of 1.7 years ($SD = 1.6$), and an average of 13.1 ($SD = 1.8$) years of education. Participants’ major work responsibilities included responding to customers’ requests, dealing with complaints, and providing other customer service support via phone. On average, they received about 80 calls from customers per day during the study period. Given that participants’ daily work involves frequent interactions with customers, and that mistreatment is more likely in less personal (i.e., non-face-to-face) exchanges, the likelihood that they were exposed to daily customer mistreatment is quite high (Grandey et al., 2004). This specific sample is therefore ideal for the purposes of our study. Further, since the call center industry is among the fastest-growing segments of the economy, and organizations are increasingly moving service interactions to call centers (Batt, 2002; van Jaarsveld, Walker, & Skarlicki, 2010), our call center setting is relevant for many organizations (Wang et al., 2011).

Data collection occurred in two phases. In the first phase, all participants completed a brief questionnaire about demographics (i.e., gender, age, and organizational tenure). A month later, in the second phase, participants completed daily surveys 4 times per workday (i.e., morning, noon, afternoon, and evening) for 3 consecutive weeks. Across the 15 survey days (i.e., 5 workdays $\times$ 3 weeks), the compliance rate was 100%, thus we received 1410 responses in total from participants (i.e., 4 daily surveys $\times$ 5 workdays $\times$ 3 weeks $\times$ 94 participants). The unusually high compliance rate owes to company sponsorship of the study, use of company time to fill out the daily surveys, and financial incentives for completing all surveys.

Regarding the timing of survey administration, the morning survey (measuring negative
mood) was distributed to the participants when they first arrived at work in the morning. When participants finished their morning work around noon, the noon survey (measuring customer mistreatment experienced during the morning work) was distributed and completed prior to the lunch break. At the end of the afternoon before participants left work, they completed the afternoon survey (measuring customer mistreatment experienced during the afternoon work and employee afternoon negative mood). After participants handed in the afternoon survey, the evening survey (measuring rumination and maladaptive shopping) was distributed to them to bring home. Participants were instructed to complete the evening survey prior to going to bed. Participants turned in the completed evening surveys as soon as they arrived at work the next morning (with the exception that Friday evening surveys were turned in on the following Monday morning). Each survey took around 5-10 minutes to complete, which is consistent with the recommended survey length for daily diary studies (Fisher & To, 2012).

During the 5 workdays of the first week, all participants were assigned to the control condition and thus did not receive any intervention in the morning. In the second week, we randomly assigned half of the participants to the recall of prosocial action intervention and these participants then received perspective taking intervention during the third week. The other half of the sample were assigned to the perspective taking intervention during the second week, and then to the recall of prosocial action intervention during the third week. We did this to counterbalance the sequence of experimental treatment at the week level, which we also controlled for in our analyses. Interventions were administered in the morning after the participants completed the morning surveys, thus we captured morning baseline mood prior to the intervention.

Social Mindfulness Interventions

*Recall of prosocial action.* The recall of prosocial action intervention was adapted from
Weinstein and Ryan (2010). Specifically, participants in this condition were instructed to recall and describe one of their recent prosocial behaviors: “Please describe an act where you helped someone else or did something for a good cause in your work or everyday life recently. Describe the nature of the helping act, your relation to the person or persons whom you helped, and your feelings after the helping behaviors. Please include as many details as possible. Please do not refer to the same event that you have described in the past.” The participants wrote their responses in the survey booklet, which covered both work and non-work prosocial behaviors. In our data analysis, recall of prosocial action intervention was coded as a dummy variable at the day level (1 = “received the recall treatment” vs. 0 = “did not receive the recall treatment”).

**Perspective taking.** The perspective taking intervention was adapted from Weyant (2007). Specifically, participants in this condition were asked to recall and answer a few questions about a rude phone conversation they had with a customer during the previous day. Questions included “How did you feel about the phone call in general?”, “What was the customer’s problem in terms of products/service?”, and “How did you assist him/her with the problem?” Then, participants were instructed to imagine that they were in the position of the customer and to answer a few questions from the perspective of the customer. Questions included “Please describe the problem about which you are calling”, “What kind of products and information do you need?”, “How do you want to be treated during the phone call?”, and “What kind of service will make you feel satisfied?” The participants wrote their answers to all questions in the survey booklet. In our data analysis, the perspective taking intervention was coded as a dummy variable at the day level (1 = “received the perspective taking treatment” vs. 0 = “did not receive the perspective taking treatment”).

**Manipulation check.** We conducted two manipulation check pilot studies to verify the
effectiveness of our social mindfulness interventions. In the first pilot, we recruited a sample of 120 university students (average age = 20.9 years with a SD of 0.7; 63.1% were female) from a major Chinese university located in the same city as the bank call center to examine the effectiveness of the recall of prosocial action intervention. Participants were randomly assigned into either a recall of prosocial action condition or control condition (we used the same recall of prosocial action manipulation as reported above). Following Lyubomirsky, Sousa, and Dickerhoof (2006), participants in the control condition did not recall or write down anything before responding to the survey. Following the manipulation, participants responded to a survey containing manipulation check items (i.e., prosocial motivation) and filler items (i.e., positive mood, negative mood, and vigor). In particular, we used the 5-item scale developed by Grant and Sumanth (2009) to measure prosocial motivation (α = .74; e.g., “I get energized by working on tasks that have the potential to benefit others”). We measured positive mood (α = .70; e.g., “excited”) and negative mood (α = .89; e.g., “angry”) using 10 items each that were developed by Watson, Clark, and Tellegan (1988). We used the 6-item scale developed by Schaufeli, Bakker, and Salanova (2006) to measure vigor (α = .78; e.g., “I feel strong and vigorous now”). Results revealed that participants in the recall of prosocial action condition (M = 4.23, SD = .47) reported higher levels of prosocial motivation than those in the control condition (M = 4.06, SD = .48; t = 2.01, p < .05; Cohen’s d = .36). In addition, they did not differ on the other measures (i.e., positive mood, negative mood, and vigor). These findings are encouraging with respect to the efficacy of our intervention for improving participants’ prosocial motivation.

In the second pilot, we recruited a separate sample of 120 students (average age = 21.1 years with a SD of 0.8; 54.2% were female) from the same university to examine the efficacy of the perspective taking intervention. Participants were randomly assigned into either a perspective
taking condition or control condition. Since the participants were not service employees, we
followed Rafaeli et al.’s (2012) procedure and asked participants from both conditions to read
the transcripts of an aggressive service call as a simulation of a real customer mistreatment
experience. In the perspective taking condition, participants answered questions regarding the
service call first from the perspective of the service employee and then from the perspective of
the customer. Participants in the control condition only answered questions from the perspective
of the service employee (they were not instructed to take the customer’s perspective). Afterwards,
participants responded to a survey containing manipulation check items (i.e., perspective taking,
α = .67) and the same filler items as those used in the first pilot study (i.e., positive mood, α = .76;
negative mood, α = .87; and vigor, α = .85). Perspective taking was measured by the 7-item scale
developed by Miller, Birkholt, Scott, and Stage (1995; e.g., “I try to look at everybody’s side of a
disagreement before I make a decision”). Results indicated that participants in the perspective
taking condition (M = 3.75, SD = .62) reported greater perspective taking than those in the
control condition (M = 3.53, SD = .55; t = 2.04, p < .05; Cohen’s d = .38). No differences were
found for positive mood, negative mood, and vigor. These results suggest that our intervention
successfully increased participants’ intention to take other peoples’ perspective.

Measures

We followed Brislin’s (1980) translation-back translation procedure to translate the
measures from English to Chinese. Unless noted otherwise, participants responded to each item
using a 5-point response scale (from 1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree; see all
measurement items in Appendix).

Negative mood. On both the morning and afternoon surveys, negative mood was
measured using an 8-item scale developed by Mohr et al. (2005). Participants were asked to
indicate the extent to which they agreed that each of the eight items described their current mood states (e.g., “hostile” and “angry”). Across the 15 survey days, the mean Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .86 on the morning survey (with a range of [.78, .89]; $SD = .03$) and .89 on the afternoon survey (with a range of [.83, .92]; $SD = .02$).

**Customer mistreatment.** On both the noon and afternoon surveys, employees’ experience of customer mistreatment was measured using an 18-item scale developed by Wang et al. (2011). Participants rated how frequently they experienced customer mistreatment in the morning or afternoon on a 5-point scale (0 = *never*, 1 = *a few times*, 2 = *half of the time*, 3 = *a majority of the time*, and 4 = *all of the time*). Across the 15 surveyed days, the mean Cronbach’s alpha was .95 for the noon survey (with a range of [.93, .96]; $SD = .01$) and .95 for the afternoon survey (with a range of [.93, .96]; $SD = .01$). We used the average score of morning and afternoon customer mistreatment ratings to represent employees’ daily customer mistreatment, which helps in part to alleviate potential retrospective biases. The distribution of daily customer mistreatment was positively skewed (skewness = 1.61; kurtosis = 3.52), which is not surprising given its low base-rate nature (Grandey, Foo, Groth, & Goodwin, 2012).

**Rumination.** On the evening survey, rumination was measured using an 8-item scale developed by Wang et al. (2013; e.g., “I could not stop thinking about the bad experience my clients gave me today” and “Thoughts and feelings about how my clients hurt me today kept running through my head”). Across the 15 surveyed days, the mean Cronbach’s alpha was .96 (with a range of [.93, .97]; $SD = .01$). The distribution of evening rumination was positively skewed (skewness = 1.36; kurtosis = 1.29) due to its low base-rate feature (e.g., Wang et al., 2013).

**Maladaptive shopping.** To measure maladaptive shopping behavior, we used two items
from the compulsive shopping scale developed by Edwards (1993) and one item from the 
impulse buying scale developed by Verplanken and Herabadi (2001). The reason we did not use 
the full scales is because most of the items from the scales confound individuals’ feelings about 
the shopping experience during or after shopping (e.g., “I feel guilty or ashamed after I go on a 
buying binge” from Edwards [1993]; “I can become very excited if I see something I would like 
to buy” from Verplanken and Herabadi [2001]). In addition, the scales are comprised of too 
many items to feasibly include in daily surveys. The three items we used were “After work, I 
bought things that I do not need or will not use,” “After work, I bought things even though I 
couldn’t afford them,” and “After work, I went shopping despite the fact that I did not have spare 
time or the money.” Across the 15 surveyed days, the mean Cronbach’s alpha was .84, ranging 
from .70 to .90 ($SD = .05$). The distribution of evening maladaptive shopping was positively 
skewed (skewness = .82; kurtosis = .13) due to its low base-rate feature (e.g., Manolis & Roberts, 
2008). Additionally, because the skewness and kurtosis values of our dependent variables are all 
within the suggested cutoffs for multivariate skewness ($|3.00|$) and kurtosis ($|10.00|$) 
recommended by Kline (2011, p. 63; the same criterion has also been used by Mawritz, 
Greenbaum, Butts, & Graham, in press), we did not normalize these variables for the analyses 
reported in the manuscript.²

To verify the validity of our maladaptive shopping measure, we recruited a sample of 148 
employees using Amazon Mechanical Turk (participants received one dollar as payment for 
completing the survey). Of the 148 participants, 43.9% were female, their average age was 36.2

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² In supplementary analyses, we used square-root-transformed dependent variables, and log-transformed dependent 
variables to correct for their skewness. Both sets of analyses replicated our results reported in this manuscript. These 
tests indicate that our findings are robust and unlikely to be driven by non-normal distributions of the dependent 
variables. We also applied multiple approaches to detecting potential outliers in our dependent variables (i.e., 2 SDs 
around the mean, Kline, 2011; Median absolute deviation approach, Leys, Ley, Klein, Bernard, & Licata, 2013), yet 
our pattern of findings remained the same. Interested readers can contact the first author for detailed information.
years ($SD = 11.3$), and their average organizational tenure was 16.5 years ($SD = 10.8$). We checked respondents’ locations according to their IP address-based longitudes and latitudes at the time when they responded to our survey, which revealed that 143 of 148 respondents were based in the US. The online survey was conducted in the morning, and participants reported their after-work maladaptive shopping from the previous day ($\alpha = .87$) as well as their mood regulation motivation for shopping using a 7-item scale developed by Dittmar et al. (2007; $\alpha = .93$; e.g., “Buying things arouses my emotions and feelings”). Participants also directly reported how much money they spent after work during the previous day and what percentage of this money was unnecessary. Results revealed that participants’ responses on maladaptive shopping were positively related to mood regulation motivation ($r = .73, p < .01$), their total expenses ($r = .29, p < .01$), and their reported percentage of unnecessary spending ($r = .33, p < .01$), all of which provide support for the validity of our maladaptive shopping measure.

**Order of intervention.** We created a dummy variable to represent the order of the two interventions for each participant. This variable was coded as 0 for participants who received the recall of prosocial action intervention first, and 1 for those who received the perspective taking intervention first.

**Analytic Strategy**

We used multilevel modeling to estimate the hypothesized model in Mplus 7.2 (Muthén & Muthén, 2012) because of the nested data structure. We tested the mediation hypotheses using Monte Carlo simulation procedures in the open-source software R (http://www.quantpsy.org). This method accurately reflect the asymmetric nature of the sampling distribution of the indirect effect (Preacher, Zyphur, & Zhang, 2010).
We specified a two-level model to examine the hypothesized model. At Level-1 (i.e., within-person level), we specified the fixed effects of both interventions on daily customer mistreatment, afternoon negative mood, evening rumination, and evening maladaptive shopping. We also specified the effects of daily customer mistreatment on afternoon negative mood, evening rumination, and evening maladaptive shopping. The effects of afternoon negative mood on evening rumination and evening maladaptive shopping were also specified. In addition, the effects of the interaction terms between the social mindfulness interventions and daily customer mistreatment (i.e., daily customer mistreatment × recall of prosocial action intervention, and daily customer mistreatment × perspective taking intervention) on afternoon negative mood, evening rumination, and evening maladaptive shopping were specified. Further, we controlled for the effects of morning negative mood on daily customer mistreatment and afternoon negative mood. The effect of Day T – 1’s evening rumination on Day T’s evening rumination, as well as the effect of Day T – 1’s evening maladaptive shopping on Day T’s evening maladaptive shopping were also controlled. At Level-2 (i.e., between-person level), we controlled for the effects of intervention order on all Level-1 endogenous variables. Recall of prosocial action intervention, perspective taking intervention, daily customer mistreatment, and morning negative mood were group-mean centered to remove between-person variance in estimating the within-person effect of our model (Enders & Tofighi, 2007). The interaction terms were created after group-mean centering the two intervention dummy variables and daily customer mistreatment.

3 Following an anonymous reviewer’s suggestion, we also estimated a 3-level model (daily surveys nested in weekly intervention conditions, which are further nested in persons) to test our hypotheses. The 3-level model yields similar results to our 2-level model. We also tested our 2-level model using the MLR (Maximum likelihood estimation with robust standard errors) to mitigate concerns of potential unmodeled heterogeneity (Curran, West, & Fince, 1996; Hox, Maas, & Brinkhuis, 2010), and the results of these analyses were similar to our current results. Interested readers can contact the first author for detailed information.
RESULTS

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and correlations for the focal variables. One-way random-factor ANOVA results showed that the between-person variance was significant for daily customer mistreatment (ICC [1] = .73, $F (93, 1,316) = 40.71, p < .01$), afternoon negative mood (ICC [1] = .57, $F (93, 1,316) = 21.26, p < .01$), evening maladaptive shopping (ICC [1] = .54, $F (93, 1,316) = 18.79, p < .01$), and evening rumination (ICC [1] = .50, $F (93, 1,316) = 15.98, p < .01$). These results indicate that there is substantial variance in the mediators and outcome variables at the between- and within-person levels, therefore warranting the use of multilevel modeling to analyze our data.

Hypothesis Testing

The coefficients in the hypothesized model are presented in Table 2 and Figure 2.\(^4\) We used Snijders and Bosker’s (1999) formulas to calculate pseudo-$R^2$ ($\sim R^2$) for the effect sizes for predicting outcomes. Predictors included in the model accounted for 13% of the within-person variance in employee daily experience of customer mistreatment, 16% in afternoon negative mood, 24% in evening rumination, and 28% in evening maladaptive shopping. As is shown in Table 2, both interventions – recall of prosocial action ($\gamma = .09, p < .05$) and perspective taking ($\gamma = .10, p < .01$) – were negatively related to service employees’ daily experience of customer

\(^{4}\) We also controlled for time effects (whether there is linear trend in study variables across the 15 surveyed days) and day-of-the-week effects (using Monday as the reference, four dummy variables for Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday were controlled) on all the endogenous variables in our model. Findings were virtually identical with and without these two effects. For the sake of brevity, we report results without these control variables. In addition, in order to investigate whether our intervention effects changed over time, we tested the moderation effect of time on the two intervention effects. Specifically, we created a variable (i.e., day of the week as a continuous variable) to represent time. We then created two interaction terms (i.e., time $\times$ recall of prosocial intervention and time $\times$ perspective taking intervention) and tested their effects on customer mistreatment experience. Results showed that time did not significantly moderate recall of prosocial action’s effect on customer mistreatment experience ($\gamma = .02, p > .05$) or perspective taking’s effect on customer mistreatment experience ($\gamma = .01, p > .05$). Therefore, it does not appear that our intervention effects changed over time.
This finding indicates that on the days when employees received either intervention in the morning, they experienced less customer mistreatment compared to the days without any intervention. Therefore, Hypotheses 1 and 3 were supported.

In addition, participants’ daily experience of customer mistreatment was positively related to their afternoon negative mood ($\gamma = .25, p < .01$), and this positive relation was moderated by recall of prosocial intervention ($\gamma = -.27, p < .05$). Following Cohen, Cohen, West, and Aiken’s (2003) procedure, we plotted the effect of daily customer mistreatment on afternoon negative mood at conditional values of recall of prosocial action interventions (i.e., 0 vs. 1) in Figure 3. As shown in the figure, the effect of daily customer mistreatment on afternoon negative mood was not significant when there was the prosocial action intervention in the morning ($\gamma = .07, p > .10$), but positive and significant when there was no intervention in the morning ($\gamma = .34, p < .01$). Thus, Hypothesis 2 was supported. The perspective intervention, however, did not moderate the relation of daily customer mistreatment with afternoon negative mood ($\gamma = -.14, p > .10$). Thus, Hypothesis 4 was not supported.

Afternoon negative mood was positively related to both evening rumination ($\gamma = .24, p < .01$) and evening maladaptive shopping ($\gamma = .22, p < .01$). The indirect effect of perceived daily customer mistreatment on evening rumination via afternoon negative mood was .066, with a 95% CI of [.018, .122]. The indirect effect of daily customer mistreatment on evening maladaptive

\[ \gamma = .25, p < .01 \]

\[ \gamma = -.27, p < .05 \]

\[ \gamma = .25 \]

\[ \gamma = .18 \]

\[ \gamma = .25 \]

\[ \gamma = .014, p < .01; \text{Cohen's } d = .18, \text{and in the perspective taking condition } (M_{\text{perspective taking condition}} = .53, SD = .51; t = 5.13, p < .01; \text{Cohen's } d = .25). \]

\[ \gamma = .072, .101 \]

\[ \gamma = .072, .101 \]
shopping via afternoon negative mood was .056, with a 95% confidence interval (CI) of [.016, .104]. Because these CIs do not contain zero, Hypotheses 5a and 5b were both supported.

The indirect effects of the two interventions on the distal outcomes are summarized in Table 3. Specifically, the indirect effect of the prosocial action intervention on afternoon negative mood via daily customer mistreatment was -.022, with a 95% CI of [-.048, -.004]. Similarly, the indirect effect of the prosocial action intervention on evening rumination via daily customer mistreatment and afternoon negative mood was -.005, with a 95% CI of [-.014, -.001]. The indirect effect of the prosocial action intervention on evening maladaptive shopping via daily customer mistreatment and afternoon negative mood was -.005, with a 95% CI of [-.012, -.001]. Given that these CIs do not contain zero, Hypotheses 6a and 7a were both supported.

The indirect effect of the perspective taking intervention on afternoon mood via daily customer mistreatment was -.025, with a 95% CI of [-.050, -.006]. The indirect effect of the perspective taking intervention on evening rumination via daily customer mistreatment and afternoon negative mood was -.006, with a 95% CI of [-.012, -.001]. Lastly, the indirect effect of the perspective taking intervention on evening maladaptive shopping via daily customer mistreatment and afternoon negative mood was -.006, with a 95% CI of [-.014, -.001]. Because the CIs do not contain zero, Hypotheses 6b and 7b were both supported. Above all, results indicated that both other-oriented interventions—recall of prosocial action and perspective taking—decreased employees’ daily experience of customer mistreatment, which in turn reduced afternoon negative mood and, later on, reduced evening rumination and maladaptive shopping.

DISCUSSION

This study breaks new ground by investigating the effects of two daily prosocial interventions on employees’ experiences of and responses to customer mistreatment in a field
experiment. We found that on days when service employees were instructed to recall a prosocial action in the morning (vs. control condition), they experienced less (vs. more) customer mistreatment during the day, and in turn, lower (vs. higher) negative mood in the afternoon, which was associated with less (vs. more) rumination and maladaptive shopping in the evening. We observed comparable intervention effects for perspective taking in the morning. Further, we found that the prosocial action intervention also buffered the relation of employees’ experience of customer mistreatment with afternoon negative mood.

**Theoretical and Practical Implications**

We discuss six theoretical implications of our findings. First, our study extends the customer mistreatment literature by highlighting the distinction between actual customer mistreatment and employees’ subjective experience of customer mistreatment and by investigating the antecedents of employees’ experience of customer mistreatment following a social mindfulness framework (Van Doesum et al., 2013). Previous research has mainly focused on the detrimental effects of customer mistreatment and moderators of such effects (e.g., Dormann & Zapf, 2004; Grandey et al., 2004; Wang et al., 2013), while overlooking the processes that potentially drive employees’ experience of customer mistreatment. Drawing from the social mindfulness framework, our study demonstrates how two other-oriented daily interventions (viz., recall of prosocial action and perspective taking) help mitigate employees’ experience of customer mistreatment. In doing so, we applied and examined the social mindfulness framework in customer service setting and thus contributed to both the social mindfulness and customer mistreatment literatures.

On the one hand, we highlighted how the integration of social mindfulness with motivated information processing theory is fruitful for understanding customer mistreatment
experiences. This integrated approach is particularly relevant because whether people respond to prickly interpersonal interactions in maladaptive ways largely depends on their motivation of being socially mindful (Van Doesum et al., 2013). On the other hand, we also responded to recent calls to identify antecedents of customer mistreatment experience (e.g., Koopmann et al., 2015) and provided insights to an important but unaddressed question: “How can we reduce employees’ experience of customer mistreatment?” Specifically, our findings demonstrate that employees’ prosocial orientation plays important roles in the formation of customer mistreatment perceptions as well as employee reactions to such perceptions. These findings are consistent with prior arguments that prosocial mindfulness motivates employees to have empathetic interests that are aligned with customer needs (Bolino et al., 2012; Van Doesum et al., 2013).

Second, our research also contributes to the work-to-nonwork spillover literature. Specifically, we focused on a prevalent yet rarely studied maladaptive self-focused behavior – evening maladaptive shopping – and showed that employees’ daily experience of customer mistreatment led to more maladaptive shopping in the evening via the mediating effect of afternoon negative mood. While shopping is a popular topic in fields like marketing (e.g., Hausman, 2000) and clinical psychology (e.g., Dittmar, 2004), it is overlooked in the management literature. Previous studies on maladaptive shopping have either focused on individual differences as antecedents (e.g., Bosnjak, Galesic, & Tuten, 2007; Wang & Yang, 2008) or examined maladaptive shopping as a consequence of traumatic stress (e.g., Mandel & Smeesters, 2008; Somer & Ruvio, 2014). It is surprising that associations of work experiences with after-work maladaptive shopping are rarely explored, especially given that work comprises one-third of employees’ daily lives and impacts various after-work maladaptive behaviors (e.g., Barnes & Wagner, 2009; Liu, Wang, Chang, Shi, Zhou, & Shao, 2015; Liu, Wang, Zhan, & Shi,
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31 Despite being rarely explored, maladaptive shopping is relevant to consider within a
32 social mindfulness and motivated information processing framework because impulsive
33 consumption behaviors are symptomatic of an individualistic self-focus (Chen et al., 2005).
34 Becoming more prosocial, which shifts attention away from the self, should therefore reduce
35 impulsive and individualistic acts. For this reason we positioned maladaptive shopping as an
36 example of a self-focused maladaptive coping outcome of customer mistreatment experiences,
37 and our study is among the first to link work-related experiences to maladaptive shopping. Our
38 findings therefore extend the range of spillover consequences of employees’ work-related
39 experiences and provide initial insight into maladaptive shopping. Further research that identifies
40 the impact of work-related experiences on maladaptive shopping and other impulsive self-
41 focused behaviors is warranted.

Third, our within-person field experiment design alleviates common concerns about
42 internal validity and ecological validity (e.g., Cook & Campbell, 1979; Rafaeli et al., 2012).
43 Specifically, our within-person experiment design removes the potential confounding effects of
44 individual differences and variations in organizational contexts, enabling us to focus exclusively
45 on the effects of the interventions. Additionally, our field experiment design has advantages over
46 laboratory studies using student samples in that our research setting and sample match the target
47 setting and potential users of the interventions (Dipboye & Flanagan, 1979). When possible,
48 future research ought to use a similar research design to obtain clear causal inferences and
49 generalizable findings. Future research can build upon our study by exploring possible boundary
50 conditions of the reported intervention effects, including moderation effects of individual
51 differences and organizational contexts. For instance, while we manipulated employees’ other-
52 orientedness by treating prosocial motivation as a malleable state, it can also have chronic, trait-
like counterparts (e.g., Grant & Sumanth, 2009; Meglino & Korsgaard, 2004; Parker & Axtell, 2001). It may be that the trait-like characteristics might augment or perhaps diminish the effects of the social mindfulness interventions. In addition, as indicated by the high ICC in customer mistreatment experience, such mistreatment tended to vary greatly between employees. Although it is not clear whether these differences are driven by personalities that may impact perception (e.g., neurotic employees may perceive more mistreatment), or by general customer service quality (e.g., employees providing low-quality service are more likely to be mistreated), it is important to take individual differences into consideration (Koopmann et al., 2015). As such, one direction for future research is to examine possible interaction effects between individual differences and the prosocial interventions. In addition, the effects of the interventions may also vary across different contexts, given that supportive (Shih et al., 2014) and empowering (Yagil & Ben-Zur, 2009) organizational contexts impact employees’ motivation, cognition, and behavior. Thus, it would also be fruitful to consider whether and how organizational contexts bound the effects of the recall of prosocial action and perspective taking interventions.

Fourth, our finding did not support our hypothesis about the buffering effect of the perspective taking intervention on the positive relation of customer mistreatment with negative mood. On the one hand, perspective taking may reduce negative affective reactions by increasing service employees’ other-orientation and causing them to attribute customer mistreatment to non-self (e.g., situational) factors (Vescio et al., 2003). On the other hand, perspective taking may also reduce self-serving thinking (Miller & Ross, 1975), making employees more aware of their failures to provide satisfactory service (as inferred from customer mistreatment). These goal failure experiences may subsequently lead to rumination and persistent negative mood states (e.g., Wang et al., 2013). If both of these mechanisms operate concurrently, then it would be
difficult to detect the moderation effect of the perspective taking intervention. Future research that directly examines potential mechanisms (and possibly counteracting ones) underlying perspective taking would be useful.

Fifth, although we did not hypothesize full mediation effects of negative mood in linking daily experience of customer mistreatment to evening maladaptive coping outcomes, our results suggest a full mediation pattern. Such a finding supports our choice of negative mood as the critical mediation mechanism. Specifically, drawing from self-regulation perspectives, we theorized and showed that employees’ experienced negative events (i.e., customer mistreatment) first triggered their affective responses (i.e., negative mood), which subsequently resulted in maladaptive coping (i.e., rumination and maladaptive shopping). This is consistent with prior studies that conceptualized affective reactions as the critical mechanism linking customer mistreatment to negative outcomes (e.g., Groth & Grandey, 2012; Spencer & Rupp, 2009). In addition, we also did not find significant moderation effects of the two interventions on the direct effects of experienced customer mistreatment on maladaptive coping outcomes, suggesting that the buffering impacts of our interventions appeared to work on reducing the effect of customer mistreatment on negative mood, and subsequently influencing maladaptive coping.

Sixth, in our manipulation check study, recall of prosocial actions intervention was found to have no effect on participants’ positive mood, which appears counterintuitive and contrary to the largely reported positive association between prosocial behaviors and positive mood (e.g., Lyubomirsky & Layous, 2013). However, recent studies (e.g., Lanaj, Johnson, & Wang, 2016; Weinstein & Ryan, 2010) also indicate that relationships between helping and helpers’ positive mood might be more complicated than a simple positive association, due to employees’ various motivations and the potential costs of helping behaviors. For instance, according to self-
determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), prosocial actions driven by intrinsic motivation are more likely to lead to satisfaction, compared to those driven by extrinsic motivation. Consistently, Weinstein and Ryan (2010) found that autonomous helping was positively associated with helper positive affect whereas controlled helping was negatively associated with helper positive affect. Additionally, prosocial behaviors may also result in personal cost, which can make the prosocial activity an unpleasant experience. For example, engaging in prosocial behaviors consumes employees’ regulatory resources, possibly leaving them too depleted to effectively perform other work activities (Lanaj et al., 2016; Lin & Johnson, 2015; Lin, Ma, & Johnson, 2016). Given that we did not distinguish between autonomous versus controlled helping or solicit details about helping-related costs in our recall of prosocial action intervention, it should not be expected that this recall intervention would necessarily induce positive mood. More research is needed to investigate the underlying mechanisms and unpack the seemingly complicated effect that the recall of prosocial action intervention has on positive mood.

We now turn our attention to the practical implications of our findings. While customer mistreatment’s damaging effect on service employees’ well-being is well-established, this phenomenon remains a headache for organizations because organizations have little control over customers and thus cannot directly prevent them from exhibiting norm-violating behaviors (McColl-Kennedy, Patterson, Smith, & Brady, 2009). To alleviate such concerns, our findings point to some rather easily implementable strategies to improve service employees’ well-being. For example, instructing service employees to recall recent prosocial actions prior to beginning the workday produced a meaningful decrease in their daily experience of customer mistreatment and negative mood in the afternoon. Moreover, the effects of this intervention persisted into the evening, resulting in less self-focused maladaptive coping at home. Accordingly, organizations
could develop formal programs encouraging employees to build daily routines of deliberately reflecting on their prosocial behaviors before they start working so as to improve their work experience during the day and well-being after work. Moreover, a recall prosocial action intervention would also mitigate the extent to which customer mistreatment elicits negative emotional reactions in employees, on days when such mistreatment occurs. As such, it is likely that by applying such a daily intervention, service employees’ well-being may be improved in the long run.

In a similar vein, our study suggests that instructing employees to take the perspective of customers would also lessen employees’ experience of customer mistreatment and negative mood during the day, and their self-focused maladaptive coping during the evening. While there are many reasons to encourage employees to exercise greater perspective taking (e.g., greater cooperation), the improvements in daily well-being and reductions in maladaptive coping that we observed in this study are especially important given that they are closely relevant to employees physical and mental health (Sliter et al., 2011). Having said that, we also want to emphasize the importance of exercising caution with the above-mentioned interventions. There is always a risk that some organizations may improperly use these interventions to compel service employees to view customer mistreatment as acceptable. Executives and managers should practice these interventions with good intentions and aim to improve employees’ well-being, instead of trying to desensitize employees to customers’ abusive behaviors. In addition, these employee-oriented interventions should be implemented in combination with other practices that increase supervisor support to prevent potential escalation of customer mistreatment due to employees’ improved resilience.

Finally, our study documented that negative mood was the linchpin that linked customer
mistreatment experience during the day with self-focused maladaptive coping after work. This finding, along with previous research, highlights the importance of effective emotion regulation following negative work events (Doerwald, Scheibe, Zacher, & van Yperen, 2016; Scheibe, Spieler, & Kuba, 2016; Zhan et al., 2013). To this end, Hargrove, Winslow, and Kaplan (2013) summarized various exercises that can be used to promote service employees’ emotion regulation, including self-distancing (Kross & Ayduk, 2011) and mindfulness (Erisman & Roemer, 2010) activities. Organizations can leverage this knowledge by developing training programs involving these emotion regulation activities to improve service employees’ well-being.

Limitations and Future Directions

Despite the important theoretical and practical implications of our findings, they should be interpreted in light of some limitations. First, except for the interventions, all other variables were self-reported by employees, which may be biased owing to common method variance. However, we took several steps to mitigate common method and source bias (e.g., Johnson, Rosen, & Djurdjevic, 2011; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). First, we measured the mediator and outcome variables at different times. Second, we controlled for baseline levels of the outcome variables from prior times, enabling us to assess change in affect and maladaptive coping, which also mitigates concerns with common method variance. Third, we used group-mean centering for our level 1 variables, which removes potential between-person confounds such as social desirability. Thus, it is unlikely that our results are driven by method artifacts. Future studies could build upon our work by using objective measures (e.g., customer service monitoring records) and other-reports (e.g., family-reported rumination).

Second, both our manipulation check and model estimation results suggest that the prosocial recall intervention activates employees’ prosocial motivation. Although this idea is
well-aligned with previous research findings (e.g., Reed, Aquino, & Levy, 2007), the recall of prosocial action can also lead to moral licensing, which paradoxically reduces prosocial behavior and increases deviant behavior (e.g., Klotz & Bolino, 2013; Lin et al., 2016; Miller & Effron, 2010). For instance, Lin, Ma, and Johnson (2016) found that managers acted more abusive after exhibiting ethical behavior due to moral licensing. In a similar vein, Mazar and Zhong (2010) found that people gained moral license after purchasing organic products and thus acted less altruistically. These theorizing and findings would suggest a positive relation of recalling prosocial actions with maladaptive behaviors in our study, such that recalling prosocial actions would give employees license to engage in impulsive self-serving shopping. This inconsistency hints at the presence of potential moderating factors that are worthy of further investigation. For example, Conway and Peetz (2012) leveraged construal level and action identification theories to argue that recalling distant (abstract) moral action would make moral identity more salient and induce people to act consistent with this identity, whereas recalling recent (concrete) moral action reminds people that they have already fulfilled moral goals and thus are free to act less morally. Future research is needed to identify situations where the recall of prosocial action is beneficial versus detrimental.

Third, the generalizability of the current findings may be limited by our Chinese call center sample. Although call center operations and managerial practices in China are similar to other countries, China’s collectivistic culture, which emphasizes the importance of societal norms and culturally-defined roles, may have shaped our interventions’ effects. Additionally, Takaku, Weiner, and Ohbuchi (2001) found that the effects of a perspective taking intervention were significant in an American sample but not a Japanese one. The authors ascribed this inconsistency to differences in individualism–collectivism. Further, given that the experience of
customer mistreatment involves complex perceptual and cognitive processing, it is possible that cultural differences also play a role in shaping service employees’ experience of customer mistreatment. As such, our two other-oriented interventions may operate somewhat differently in individualistic cultures, which creates a need for samples from other cultures to cross-validate the current findings.

Fourth, similar to other experimental studies, our findings may be subject to potential confounds such as practice effects, Hawthorne effects, and demand effects (Shadish et al., 2002). For example, due to our within-person design, a practice effect may have occurred such that participants’ perceptions of customer mistreatment were altered by filling out surveys repeatedly in the first week (i.e., the control condition). Further, participants might have reported more favorable outcomes in the intervention conditions just because any intervention was implemented (i.e., Hawthorne effect), or because they speculated that researchers expected different responses in the intervention conditions (i.e., demand effect). Despite these potential alternative explanations, from a post hoc perspective, our findings may to some extent rule out the possibility that the reported intervention effects were purely due to practice effects. Specifically, as reported in Footnote 4, our results still hold when we control for time and day-of-the-week effects, which is unlikely to occur if the intervention effects are influenced by repeated practices. Nevertheless, we encourage future studies to apply more rigorous designs that can overcome the potential confounding effects (Cook & Campbell, 1979).

Fifth, we applied a crossover design where only the order of the two intervention conditions was counterbalanced in order to guarantee an uncontaminated baseline-control measure of focal variables (Shadish et al., 2002). Although such a design has several advantages (e.g., providing no-treatment baseline for assessing later intervention effects, avoiding the
situation where some participants were given more things to do than others), it cannot completely rule out the alternative explanation that our intervention effects were partly driven by participants’ general reactions to any interventions (compared to no intervention at all). Such a concern may be addressed by using a fully-counterbalanced design, where the order of all conditions (both the control condition and the intervention conditions) is counterbalanced (Crano & Brewer, 2014). However, it is important to note that a fully-counterbalanced design may create other issues that can jeopardize the internal validity of the findings (e.g., participants in one intervention condition could have spoken to participants in the control condition).

Sixth, although we found significant direct and indirect intervention effects, the reported effect coefficients appear small, which might raise concerns regarding the meaningfulness and replicability of our findings. We report effect sizes (e.g., Cohen's $d$, pseudo-$R^2$, and $\omega^2$) to assist with interpreting our intervention effects’ magnitude. These effect sizes are comparable to other studies using similar designs (e.g., Liu, Song, Li, & Liao, 2017; Matta, Scott, Colquitt, Koopman, & Passantino, 2017; Uy, Lin, & Ilies, in press). In addition, the small three-path indirect effect coefficients are actually not surprising, given that by definition they are products of three regression coefficients that are usually smaller than 1 (Taylor, MacKinnon, & Tein, 2007). Therefore, a small raw point estimate of indirect effect does not necessarily indicate a small effect size of the mediation effect. Further, following recommendations by Preacher and Kelley (2011), the reported intervention effects (both direct and indirect effects) need to be interpreted considering the scaling and ranges of the focal variables, especially given that the outcome variables we focused on were low-base-rate negative experiences. Moreover, the seemingly small effects may still be practically useful considering the low cost of the interventions and the relatively long time lapse between the interventions and the outcome.
variables. According to Cortina and Landis (2009: 299), for a low-cost intervention, “any nonzero relationship has important implications.” Similarly, Prentice and Miller (1992) also suggested that small effect sizes are particularly meaningful when a minimal manipulation of the independent variable or a difficult-to-influence dependent variable is involved. As such, we believe that our findings are informative and practically meaningful despite the seemingly small effects. Having said that, we should still be careful not to draw overly strong conclusions about the intervention effects that prosocial recall and perspective taking may have in practical application. Future studies applying similar design are needed to further validate our findings and help relieve the concern about our seemingly small intervention effect.

Finally, one remaining question is whether or not the effects of the two interventions extend beyond the evening. Although we observed that the effects are robust enough to affect evening consequences of customer mistreatment on the same day the daily intervention was administered, we have no direct evidence to support whether and how long our intervention effects persist after the intervention is stopped. Nevertheless, we speculate that our interventions will endure beyond the same day based on prior findings on the frequency and effect durations of self-reflection interventions (e.g., Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005; Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005). For example, Grant and Dutton (2008) found that after recalling experiences as a benefactor (vs. beneficiary) for 15 min per day for 2 to 4 days, individuals exhibited more prosocial behavior two weeks later. We encourage future research to extend the study window and investigate how persistent the effects of our two interventions are. This is especially important from an applied perspective because practitioners would be interested to know with what frequency and duration the interventions are most effective.

A second question is whether or not our interventions impact actual customer
mistreatment, given our focus on service employees’ experience of (vs. actual) customer mistreatment. Nevertheless, based on Groth and Grandey’s (2011) negative exchange spiral model in employee–customer interactions, it is possible that our interventions may also reduce actual customer mistreatment. Specifically, this model posits that customer mistreatment tends to ignite employees’ negative emotions or even antisocial behaviors, which may in turn result in service delivery failure (Wang et al., 2011). Once customers perceive the low-quality service, they are more likely to respond by mistreating service employees, creating a negative spiral. Such incivility spirals are ubiquitous in work settings (Rosen, Koopman, Gabriel-Rossetti, & Johnson, 2016). However, our interventions may break this negative spiral by weakening the link between customer mistreatment and employees’ negative reaction (e.g., negative mood). Therefore, implementing our interventions may also produce effects that extend to customer outcomes. We hope that future studies will test such potential intervention effects by incorporating measures of actual mistreatment behaviors and customer outcomes.

A final question is whether the two interventions only impact employees’ processing of customer behaviors via our theorized mechanism. Although past research has established that both recall of prosocial behaviors and perspective taking consistently invoke individuals’ other-oriented motivation (Batson et al., 1997; Grant & Dutton, 2012; Maner et al., 2012; Stocks et al., 2009; Tasimi & Young, 2016; Van Lange, 2008; Young et al., 2012), we did not provide a direct test of this mechanism in the current study (except for the manipulation check for recall of prosocial action), nor did we test potential alternative mechanisms (e.g., interventions’ effects on the ability of being socially mindful). Future studies may want to build on our findings and examine whether recall of prosocial action and perspective taking may also function through different mechanisms. Nonetheless, our findings indicate that there are practical and low-cost
interventions available that leverage social mindfulness and motivated information processing theories to aid the well-being of employees who experience customer mistreatment.

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### TABLE 1
Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Correlations among the Focal Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Within SD</th>
<th>Between SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Morning negative mood</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.51 (.86)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>.93**</td>
<td>.62**</td>
<td>.45**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Recall of prosocial action intervention vs. control</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-- -.05*</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Perspective taking intervention vs. control</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-- -.04</td>
<td>-.50**</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Daily customer mistreatment experience</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.48 .09**</td>
<td>-.06*</td>
<td>-.10**</td>
<td>(.95)</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.36**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Afternoon negative mood</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.53 .38**</td>
<td>-.07**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>(.89)</td>
<td>.64**</td>
<td>.49**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Evening rumination</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.67 .13**</td>
<td>-.07*</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>(.84)</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Evening maladaptive shopping</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.67 .10**</td>
<td>-.12**</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.13**</td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td>.10**</td>
<td>(.96)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes.** *p < .05, **p < .01. Between-person correlations are above the diagonal (N = 94) and within-person correlations are below the diagonal (N = 1,410). The average Cronbach’s alpha coefficients are in parentheses along the diagonal. No between-person correlations are reported for prosocial intervention and perspective taking intervention since the variables do not have between-person variance.
TABLE 2
Simultaneous Multilevel Path Model Tests and Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Daily customer mistreatment experience</th>
<th>Afternoon negative mood</th>
<th>Evening rumination (Day T)</th>
<th>Evening maladaptive shopping (Day T)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Estimate</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>Estimate</td>
<td>SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level-1 (Within-person level)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>.65**</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>1.68**</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning negative mood</td>
<td>.05†</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recall of prosocial action intervention vs. control</td>
<td>- .09*</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perspective taking intervention vs. control</td>
<td>-.10**</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily customer mistreatment experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily customer mistreatment experience × Recall of prosocial action intervention</td>
<td>- .27*</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon negative mood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening rumination (Day T-1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening maladaptive shopping (Day T-1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual variance at Level 1</td>
<td>.08**</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.17**</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level-2 (Between-person level)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulation order</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual variance at Level 2</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes. N = 1,410. †p < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesized Indirect Effect</th>
<th>Point Estimate</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
<th>Proportion of Mediation (Pm)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 5a</strong> Daily customer mistreatment experience → Afternoon negative mood → Evening  rumination</td>
<td>.066*</td>
<td>[.018, .122]</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 5b</strong> Daily customer mistreatment experience → Afternoon negative mood → Evening maladaptive shopping</td>
<td>.056*</td>
<td>[.016, .104]</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 6a</strong> Recall of prosocial action intervention → Daily customer mistreatment experience → Afternoon negative mood → Evening rumination</td>
<td>-.005*</td>
<td>[-.014, -.001]</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 6b</strong> Perspective taking intervention → Daily customer mistreatment experience → Afternoon negative mood → Evening rumination</td>
<td>-.006*</td>
<td>[-.012, -.001]</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 7a</strong> Recall of prosocial action intervention → Daily customer mistreatment experience → Afternoon negative mood → Evening maladaptive shopping</td>
<td>-.005*</td>
<td>[-.012, -.001]</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 7b</strong> Perspective taking intervention → Daily customer mistreatment experience → Afternoon negative mood → Evening maladaptive shopping</td>
<td>-.006*</td>
<td>[-.014, -.001]</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Significant based on 95% confidence interval.
FIGURE 1
Hypothesized Model.

- Perspective taking intervention (Morning)
- Daily experience of customer mistreatment (Noon survey and afternoon survey)
- Recall of prosocial action intervention (Morning)

\[ H1, H6a, H7a \]

\[ H3, H6b, H7b \]

- Afternoon negative mood (Afternoon survey)

\[ H5, H6, H7 \]

- Evening rumination (Evening survey)

\[ H5a, H6 \]

- Evening maladaptive shopping (Evening survey)

\[ H5b, H7 \]
FIGURE 2
Multilevel Path Model Estimation Results

Notes. N = 1,410. † p < .10, * p < .05, ** p < .01. For the sake of brevity, we do not present direct effects in the current model. Please refer to Table 2 for the direct effects of the intervention variables on afternoon negative mood and evening rumination and maladaptive shopping, as well as the direct effects of daily customer mistreatment on evening rumination and maladaptive shopping.
FIGURE 3
Recall of Prosocial Action Intervention Moderates the Effect of Daily Customer Mistreatment on Afternoon Negative Mood
APPENDIX

Customer Mistreatment:

“How frequently did you experience the following this morning (afternoon)? Please respond on a 5-point scale, with 0 = Never, 1 = A few times, 2 = Half of the times, 3 = A majority of the time, and 4 = All of the time”.

2. Clients thought they were more important than others.
3. Clients asked you to do things they could do by themselves.
4. Clients vented their bad mood out on you.
5. Clients did not understand that you had to comply with certain rules.
6. Clients complained without reason.
7. Clients made exorbitant demands.
8. Clients were impatient
9. Clients yelled at you.
10. Clients spoke aggressively to you.
11. Clients got angry at you even over minor matters.
12. Clients argued with you the whole time throughout the call.
13. Clients refused to listen to you.
15. Clients made demands that you could not deliver.
16. Clients insisted on demands that are irrelevant to your service.
17. Clients doubted your ability.
18. Clients used condescending language to you.

Negative Mood:

“To what extent do you agree that the following items describe your current mood states? Please respond on a 5-point scale, with 1 = Strongly disagree and 5 = Strongly agree.”

1. Jittery
2. Ashamed
3. Nervous
4. Hostile
5. Guilty
6. Angry
7. Dejected
8. Sad

**Rumination:**

“To what extent do you agree with the following statements describing your experience this evening? Please respond on a 5-point scale, with 1 = Strongly disagree and 5 = Strongly agree.”

1. I couldn’t stop thinking about the bad experiences I had with my clients today.
2. Thoughts and feelings about how my clients hurt me today kept running through my head.
3. Strong feelings about what my clients did to me today kept bubbling up.
4. Images of today’s bad experiences with my clients kept coming back to me.
5. I brooded about how my clients treated me badly today.
6. I found it difficult not to think about the bad experiences that I had with my clients today.
7. I found myself replaying the bad experiences with my clients over and over in my mind.
8. Even when I was engaged in other tasks, I thought about the bad experiences with my clients today.

**Maladaptive Shopping:**

“To what extent do you agree with the following statements describing your behaviors this evening? Please respond on a 5-point scale, with 1 = Strongly disagree and 5 = Strongly agree.”

1. After work, I bought things that I do not need or will not use.
2. After work, I bought things even though I couldn’t afford them.
3. After work, I went shopping despite the fact that I did not have spare time or the money.
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