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# **Mind wandering during conversations affects subjective but not objective outcomes**

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## **Abstract**

How much do we mind wander during conversations, and how does that affect objective outcomes and subjective perceptions of the conversation? We studied computer-mediated dyadic negotiations during which participants ( $N = 144$ ) discreetly reported whenever they were thinking about something else, and whenever they thought their partner was not attending. Participants mind wandered around 19% of the time. Surprisingly, the number of times that a participant thought that their counterpart was not attending correlated almost perfectly with the first participants own number of mind wandering reports ( $r\text{-partial} = .941$ ), but very poorly with the other participants number of reports ( $r\text{-partial} = .004$ ) (controlled for time until agreement). Mind wandering negatively affected subjective ( $F(1, 57) = 6.48, p = .014$ ) but not objective ( $F(1, 57) = .089, p = .766$ ) outcomes. These findings suggest that mind wandering, and the attribution of mind wandering to others, leads to worse social psychological outcomes.