ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Examining the impact of major life events on the frequency and experience of daily social events

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Abstract

Objective: Life events can impact people's dispositional functioning by changing their state-level patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behavior. One pathway through which this change may be facilitated is changes in the experience of daily social events.

Method: We examined the dynamic relationship between major life events and the subsequent experience of positive and negative daily social events in a year-long longitudinal study (initial $N = 1247$).

Results: Experiencing positive and negative major life events moderated the effects of positive and negative social events on event-contingent state well-being and ill-being in ways that were mostly (but not always) consistent with both endowment and contrast effects on judgments of well-being. Furthermore, negative life events predicted an increase in the subsequent trajectory of negative social events, while the experience of daily ill-being predicted the subsequent experience of negative social events.

Conclusions: These findings highlight the possible impact of major life events by explaining how they shape the subsequent experience of daily social events.

KEYWORDS

daily social events, major life events, personality dynamics, situations, state well-being

1 | INTRODUCTION

Major life events—transitions that require new behavioral, cognitive, or emotional responses, which are seen as subjectively meaningful (Bleidorn et al., 2018; Haehner et al., 2022; Luhmann et al., 2021)—can have a lasting impact on functioning and well-being (Jayawickreme et al., 2021). Indeed, the idea that life events can have a transformative effect on people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors resonates with many people (i.e., the idea of post-traumatic growth; Jayawickreme & Blackie, 2014). However, the ubiquity of

such change, as well as the processes by which it may occur, are less clear (Jayawickreme & Blackie, 2014, 2016). Understanding how such change may occur can help clarify mechanisms of personality change following the experience of major life events (Beck & Jackson, 2022b; Jayawickreme & Blackie, 2014; Jayawickreme, Infurna, et al., 2021).

In this paper, we sought to advance our understanding of the impact of major life events on personality by examining whether and how major life events impacts the experience and trajectory of everyday social events in a micro-longitudinal study of U.S. Americans. In line

with this goal, we developed and validated contingency-oriented assessments of state well-being and ill-being to examine the dynamic relationships between major life events and state manifestations of well-being in response to positive and negative daily social events. These measures enabled the examination of whether major life events prospectively lead to changes in both the number of positive/negative social events experienced, as well as changes in how those events are perceived over the course of one year. Understanding these relationships can facilitate a better understanding of how everyday person-situation transactions may change in response to major life events, which in turn may change personality characteristics by shaping how they are manifested in daily life.

1.1 | Using personality dynamics to understand the impact of major life events

Research in personality psychology has historically been dominated by perspectives highlighting the stability in people's patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behavior. However, a different strand of personality research has recognized and sought to explain meaningful within-person variation in thoughts, feelings, and behavior across different contexts and time (Jayawickreme, Fleeson, et al., 2021). This secondary strand of research has a long history in personality science dating back to the work of early personality researchers such as Allport and Cattell (Beck & Jackson, 2022a). Mischel and Shoda (1995) emphasized the importance of such a process-oriented approach in personality research, noting that a more comprehensive understanding of an individuals′ personality was only possible when one knows when and where specific thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are manifested, rather than simply focusing on their overall frequency (see also Oishi et al., 1999). More recently, multiple theoretical perspectives have emphasized the importance of within-person processes (e.g., DeYoung, 2015; Fleeson & Jayawickreme, 2021), and research has uncovered predictors of systematic variation of personality manifestations. Additionally, the question of whether and how the experience of major life events leads to changes in both the experience and frequency of specific patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors has hitherto been underexplored in past research (Weststrate et al., 2022).

Manifestations of personality characteristics can be measured in different timescales: the trait level, which reflects more stable characteristics, and the state level, which reflects shorter-term manifestations (e.g., fluctuating day-to-day experiences; Fleeson & Jayawickreme, 2021). Furthermore, recent research and theorizing on personality development suggests that major life events may impact

people by changing their immediate or state-level patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behavior (Blackie et al., 2014: Blackie & Jayawickreme, 2015; Hennecke et al., 2014; Hutteman et al., 2015; Jayawickreme et al., 2018). In line with dynamic perspectives on personality development such as Whole Trait Theory (Fleeson & Jayawickreme, 2015, 2021; Jayawickreme et al., 2019), for example, individuals systematically vary their behavior depending on characteristics of the situation they experience in as well as their motivation to pursue various goals (McCabe & Fleeson, 2012). Following the experience of a major life event, individuals may therefore be driven by both specific goals and their (potentially altered) experience of the situation to change their current states (i.e., their immediate behaviors, thoughts, and/or feelings). For example, life events may impact people's levels of trait well-being by changing their state-level patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behavior; that is, short-term changes lead to long-term changes (Hennecke et al., 2014; Hutteman et al., 2015; Jayawickreme et al., 2018). There is some evidence that life events may lead to personality changes through such short-term changes in studies examining personality development during the transition out of high school (Bleidorn, 2012), the development of self-esteem during international student exchange experiences (Hutteman et al., 2015), and the link between meaning-eliciting behaviors/states and well-being (Jayawickreme et al., 2022; Steger et al., 2008).

1.2 | Examining whether major life events impact daily social events

One possible way in which major life events may impact an individual is by changing their experience of daily social events (e.g., Blackie & Jayawickreme, 2015; Jayawickreme et al., 2017). For example, multiple studies have shown a clear link between the experience of daily social events and daily well-being. Experiencing positive daily events has been associated with increases in well-being outcomes (e.g., self-esteem and overall mood; Nezlek & Plesko, 2001), while negative social events ("daily hassles") has been associated with lower psychological and physical well-being, as well as subsequently impacting the quality of interpersonal relationships (e.g., Falconier et al., 2015). Such short-term change may have consequences: for instance, it may lead to poorer coping with the major event, which in turn reinforces state-level changes and leads to longer-lasting trait change (Wrzus & Roberts, 2017). One way in which these changes may occur is through changes in either the frequency or experience of everyday social interactions (e.g., Wrzus et al., 2021).

Major life events may impact both the frequency and experience of daily social events. Specifically, the impact

of the major life event may lead individuals to shift their selection, evocation and construal of subsequent social events and experiences (Blackie & Jayawickreme, 2015). Such shifts may be important for both their experience of well-being in the immediate aftermath of the experience of the major life event, and also for the possibility of personality traits being modified as a result, by shifts in experience of the situation altering how they are manifested in daily life (Fleeson, 2007). For example, shifts in state well-being in response to the repeated experience of positive or negative social events may lead to enduring changes in trait well-being (Jayawickreme et al., 2021, 2022; Wrzus & Roberts, 2017).

1.3 | How does the experience of major life events shape the experience of daily social events?

Regarding the possibility for major life events to impact the experience of subsequent experiences, Tversky and Griffin (1991, p. 101) noted that salient hedonic (positive or negative) events may influence later evaluations of well-being in two ways, through an *endowment* effect and a *contrast* effect. The endowment effect involves a major life event *enhancing* one's subsequent hedonic experience (e.g., social events). For example, experiencing a major positive life event may afford people the immediate opportunity to see the world through "rose-tinted glasses," in which the impact of the event "spills over" to the experience of subsequent events. Similarly, the experience of a major negative life event may lead one to become unhappy and subsequently be unable to enjoy social events and other positive experiences (Tversky & Griffin, 1991).

On the other hand, it is possible that major life events may have an indirect *contrast* effect on subsequent experiences. For example, experiencing a major positive life event may increase well-being, but may also lead to subsequent experiences being experienced as less positive by comparison. Conversely, the experience of a major negative life event may have the effect of evaluating subsequent events as comparatively less negative. One possibility is that such an effect may help with successful coping with the event, through both benefit-finding and the experience of enhanced benefits from social interactions (Tennen & Affleck, 2002). Relatedly, Mancini (2019) posited that people may experience positive changes in functioning following the experience of an adverse life event if they subsequently engaged in prosocial affiliative behaviors and had the opportunity to engage in prosocial interactions with others. Such a view is consistent with the idea that adversity and other major life events may foster personality change if that change is supported or "scaffolded" by the situational context (Blackie & Jayawickreme, 2015). We therefore examined whether the experience of major life events (both positive and negative life events, following Mangelsdorf et al., 2019) shifted peoples' experience of positive and negative social events.

Additionally, the extent to which positive and negative life events have subsequent impacts on the experience of daily social events may depend on whether the event is positive or negative. Following Rozin and Royzman (2001), it is possible that compared to positive life events, negative life events may have greater potency and dominate evaluations even in the presence of concurrent positive life events. While the current investigation was exploratory in nature, we expected that the observed findings would corroborate evidence for negativity dominance.

1.4 | The present study

The present study aims to clarify how major life events impact the experience of both daily social events and event-contingent well-being and ill-being. We examined this question in a year-long micro-longitudinal study where participants provided weekly reports of (a) major life events they had experienced in the previous week (Jayawickreme et al., 2022), (b) positive and negative social events they had experienced that day, (c) responses to items assessing their subjective experience of these daily social events, and (d) their overall well-being and ill-being for that day (up to 45 assessments per individual for a total of 34,205 assessments).

We first examined whether prior findings regarding the relationship between daily events and well-being could be replicated in this sample. Specifically:

1. We examined the relationship between state well-being and ill-being related to positive and negative social events at both the between- and within-person levels;
2. Similar to (1), we examined the relationship between event-contingent state well-being and ill-being and daily social events related at both the between- and within-person levels;

Additionally, and of key interest to the present investigation, we examined the following research questions:

3. Do major life events change how those events are perceived (i.e., levels of contingent well-being and ill-being)? and
4. Do major life events prospectively lead to changes in both the number of positive/negative social events experienced?

Our analyses were exploratory, in part due to the competing hypotheses provided by Tversky and Griffin (1991) regarding the impact of major life events on the subsequent experience of daily social events. For example, in line with the endowment effect, we would expect positive major events to predict increased positive social event-contingent state well-being. Conversely, and in line with the contrast effect, we would expect positive major events to predict decreased positive social event-contingent state well-being. In line with the evidence for negativity dominance (Rozin & Royzman, 2001), we would expect negative life events to have a greater impact on subsequent negative evaluations of social events compared to positive life events. We ran multilevel analyses examining whether major life events predict changes in both the number of positive and negative social events experienced, and changes in how those events are perceived in terms of well-being and ill-being.

In addition, we ran two further sets of secondary models to examine reciprocal effects between daily social events and well-being, as well as between daily social events and major life events. As discussed above, our primary research question focused on the impact on major life events on the subsequent experience of daily social events. However, it is also possible that people who report high levels of state-well-being also perceive others to be more positive in their interactions (and similarly, high levels of state ill-being may predict subsequent low ratings of social events). Additionally, it is possible that daily social events may themselves contribute to the subsequent occurrence of specific major life events. For instance, experiencing negative social events (e.g., unsatisfactory interpersonal interactions) could lead to the end of that relationship.[1] We therefore tested the following secondary research questions:

5. What are the dynamic bidirectional relationships between positive and negative social events and state well-being and ill-being?
6. What are the dynamic bidirectional relationships between positive and negative social events and positive and negative life events?

2 | METHODS

2.1 | Participants and procedure[2]

Participants were recruited online through the survey company Qualtrics. Inclusion criteria specified that participants must be aged 18 years or older and have had at least 2 years of active participation in the market research panels from which Qualtrics is permitted to recruit. Participants who met these criteria were emailed by Qualtrics with information about the study and a link to our survey and the informed consent document, which they signed before starting the survey.

Participants were first asked to complete an intake survey consisting of questions on mental health, well-being, personality, demographic information, and lifetime trauma history. They then completed a total of 44 five-minute surveys over the course of 1 year (with no survey on the week of each major U.S. holiday). These weekly 5-minute surveys (weeks 1 to 52) asked questions concerning whether the participants had experienced any major events during that week, daily positive and negative interactions they experienced that day, and their current standing on multiple domains of well-being. In weeks 45 and 52, we repeated the personality, mental health, and well-being measures administered at intake. As recommended by Qualtrics, participants were paid in line with current reward incentives at the time of data collection (January 2016–February 2017) offered in these market research panels. Participants were compensated $0.25 for every survey completed, with a reward incentive of an additional $0.50 per survey if they completed a minimum of 40 surveys.

The initial sample consisted of 1247 adults, with a mean age of 46.2 years ($SD = 14.8$). Approximately half (51%) of participants were women; 84% identified their race as White, 9% as African American/Black, 4% as Asian, and 3% as Other. At week 52, the final survey was completed by 658 participants, 49% of whom were women (see Table 1 for detailed participants characteristics). The results of attrition analyses comparting participants at completed all weekly assessments to those that are presented in Table S1. Notably, compared to participants who completed week 51, participants who had missing data at week 51 experienced a higher number of daily positive events at week 1, as well as a higher average number of positive daily events across the study.

2.2 | Measures

2.2.1 | Positive and negative social events

Positive and negative social events were measured using eight items taken from the Daily Events Survey (Butler et al., 1994; Janda et al., 2006). Five items measured positive social events: "I had rewarding interactions/times with friends or family," "I did something special for someone I liked," "Someone complimented me on how well I did something," "Someone reassured me that things were going to be all right," and "Someone helped me do something, helped me solve a problem, or gave me something I needed." Three items measured negative social events: "I had a fight or argument with

TABLE 1 Participant characteristics.

	M	*SD*
Female	51%	
Age	46.2	14.8
Household income	$58,760	$40,102
Urban (vs. rural)	62%	
Employed	56%	
Education		
No degree	2%	
High school degree	17%	
Some college	24%	
Associates degree	12%	
Bachelor's degree	30%	
Graduate degree	15%	
Ethnicity		
White	84%	
Black	9%	
Asian	4%	
Other	3%	

Note: Income was an ordinal variable (e.g., <$10,000; $10,000–$19,999; etc.), so we could use the median value for each category ($15,000 for the "$10,000–$19,999" category) except for the $150,000+ category, which was coded as $150,000 to compute the overall mean and standard deviation. This table was previously included in Jayawickreme et al. (2022).

someone," "I had plans to spend time with someone special fall through," and "Someone criticized me about how I did something." Binary (Yes/No) responses to the 5 positive event items were averaged to create positive event scores, with higher scores reflecting more positive social interactions. Responses to the 3 negative event items were averaged to create negative event scores with higher scores on this scale reflecting more negative social interactions.

2.2.2 | Major life events

Positive and negative life events were assessed using an adapted version of the Major Life Events Checklist (Ludtke et al., 2011; see Appendix S1 for items). The checklist items assessed 22 major events (6 positive, 16 negative) that may have happened to the participants within the past week. Participants were asked to mark either "yes" or "no" for each statement.

2.2.3 | State well-being and ill-being

We assessed state well-being with a four-item composite measure: "Today, I felt appreciative," "Today, I felt

close and connected with other people who are important to me," "Today, I felt very capable in what I did," and "Today I felt happy."[3] We assessed state ill-being by creating a three-item composite measure: "Today, all and all I was inclined to feel like failure," "Today, I thought I was no good at all," and "Today I felt sad." Participants were asked to rate each statement on a scale from 1 = "Strongly disagree" to 5 = "Strongly agree." The observed reliabilities were $\omega_{Between} = 0.94$ and 0.96 at the between-person level, and $\omega_{Within} = 0.72$ and 0.77 at the within-person level for well-being and ill-being, respectively.

2.2.4 | Social event-contingent state well-being and ill-being

Social-event contingent well-being and ill-being used the same items but followed the social-event questions. Participants were asked to complete these questions in response to each daily social event they reported each week. Thus, for each single daily social item endorsed, participants completed the four-item state well-being measure and three-item ill-being measure. To compute reliability estimates for social event contingent well-being and ill-being, we used Nunally's (1978) formula for composite reliability of linear combinations. The observed reliabilities for social event contingent well-being and ill-being were 0.86 and 0.88 at the between-person level, and 0.91 and 0.88 at the within-person level, respectively.

2.3 | Analytic plan

We conducted our main analyses using MPlus Version 7 (Muthen & Muthen, 2012). The analyses used robust maximum likelihood estimation and full-information maximum likelihood (FIML) to deal with missing data. Between-person predictors were grand-mean centered, and within-person predictors were person-mean centered.

We examined four sets of multilevel models to test our four sets of research questions:

1. *Positive and Negative Social Events Predict State Well-Being and Ill-Being*. The first set of models examined the relationship between positive and negative social events, and state well-being and ill-being. Specifically, positive and negative social events were used as predictors at both levels (within- and between-person) of multilevel models with State Well-Being and Ill-Being as the outcomes.

2. *Positive and Negative Social Events Predict Social-Event Contingent State Well-Being and Ill-Being*. The second set of models was similar to the first model—positive and negative social events were used as predictors at both levels, but had social-event contingent state well-being and ill-being as the outcomes (vs. state well-being and ill-being).

3. *Positive and Negative Major Life Events Moderate the Effects of Positive and Negative Social Events on Social-Event Contingent State Well-Being and Ill-Being*. In the next set of models, we examined the effect of major life events on the relationship between social events and social-event contingent well-being and ill-being. These models were similar to the previous model in that positive and negative social events were used as predictors at both levels with social-event contingent state well-being and ill-being as the outcomes. However, in addition, positive and negative major life events were added as predictors of social-event contingent state well-being and ill-being at the between-person level (i.e., the person-specific intercepts/averages) as well as the within-person effects of social events on social-event contingent state well-being and ill-being (i.e., the within-person slopes). In other words, these models focused on the cross-level interaction between major life events (at the between-person level) and the within-person social events and social-event contingent state well-being and ill-being relationships.

4. *Positive and Negative Major Life Events-Related Changes in Positive and Negative Social Events*. The final set of models focused on assessing the shape of the positive and negative life event-related changes in positive and negative social events. More specifically, we examined whether cumulative positive and negative life events reported in the study predicted changes in the levels and/or slopes of the positive and negative social events trajectories. In order to test the potential effects of positive and negative life events on positive and negative social events, we estimated latent growth curves with "Life Event Elevation Change" (Model 1), "Life Event Slope Change" (Model 2), and both Life Event Elevation and Slope Change (Model 3) discontinuity predictor variables at Level 1 (see Table S2 for an illustration of how the discontinuity predictor variables were coded in the long dataset).

Finally, we used dynamic structural equation modeling (DSEM) to conduct additional exploratory models testing for bidirectional within-person effects between (5) positive and negative social events and state well-being and ill-being, and (6) positive and negative social events and positive and negative life events. DSEM can

be thought of as a combination of multilevel structural equation modeling (ML-SEM) and time series analysis, where time series at Level 1 are pooled and allowed to vary (or not) across higher-level clusters as well as allowing different time series variables to serve as both outcomes and predictors of each other simultaneously. We tested Lag-1 multilevel vector autoregressive models [VAR (1)] (McNeish & Hamaker, 2020), where at Level 1 (within-person, across time), each variable at T predicted all the other variables at T + 1, including itself. At Level 2 (between-person), the individual-specific estimates were allowed to vary across individuals. Our main parameters of interest were the average (across people) within-person cross-lagged effects. Standardized within-person effects (where the effects are standardized based on each person's individual unstandardized effects and variances, and then averaged across people) are reported. We used MPlus Version 8.7 with Bayesian Markov chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) estimation for the DSEM models.

5. *Bidirectional Effects between Positive and Negative Social Events and State Well-Being and Ill-Being*. This model examined the bidirectional relationships between positive and negative social events and state well-being and ill-being. Specifically, positive and negative social events as well as state well-being and ill-being were included in a VAR(1) model.

6. *Bidirectional Effects between Positive and Negative Social Events and Positive and Negative Life Events*. This model examined the bidirectional relationships between positive and negative social events and positive and negative life events. Specifically, positive and negative social events as well as positive and negative life events were included in a VAR(1) model.

3 | RESULTS

Summary statistics of participants who experienced specific positive and negative life events and social events as well as weekly well-being and ill-being are presented in Tables 2 and S3, respectively. Multilevel summary statistics for positive life events, negative life events, positive social events, negative social events, state well-being, state ill-being, social-event contingent well-being, social-event contingent ill-being are presented in Table 3.

3.1 | Positive and negative social events predict state well-being and ill-being

At both the between- and within-person levels, positive and negative social events predicted state well-being and

ill-being (see Tables 4 and 5). Specifically, positive social events had a positive relationship with state well-being at both the between- ($\beta = .60$, $p < .001$) and within-person levels ($\beta = .32$, $p < .001$); and negative social events had a negative relationship with state well-being at both the between- ($\beta = -.31$, $p < .001$) and within-person levels ($\beta = -.17$, $p < .001$). Conversely, positive social events had a negative relationship with state ill-being at both the between- ($\beta = -.40$, $p < .001$) and within-person levels ($\beta = -.15$, $p < .001$); and negative social events had a positive relationship with state ill-being at both the between- ($\beta = .50$, $p < .001$) and within-person levels ($\beta = .20$, $p < .001$).

3.2 | Positive and negative social events predict social-event contingent state well-being and ill-being

At both the between- and within-person levels, positive and negative social events predicted social-event contingent state well-being and ill-being (see Tables 6 and 7). More specifically, positive social events had a positive relationship with social-event contingent state well-being at both the between- ($\beta = .54$, $p < .001$) and within-person levels ($\beta = .23$, $p < .001$); and negative social events had

a negative relationship with social-event contingent state well-being at both the between- ($\beta = -.50$, $p < .001$) and within-person levels ($\beta = -.17$, $p < .001$). Conversely, positive social events had a negative relationship with social-event contingent state ill-being at both the between- ($\beta = -.18$, $p = .001$) and within-person levels ($\beta = -.09$, $p < .001$); and negative social events had a positive relationship with social-event contingent state ill-being at both the between- ($\beta = .64$, $p < .001$) and within-person levels ($\beta = .16$, $p < .001$).

3.3 | Positive and negative major life events moderate the effects of positive and negative social events on social-event contingent state well-being and ill-being

Positive and negative major life events moderated the effects of positive and negative social events on social-event contingent state well-being and ill-being (see Tables 8 and 9). Specifically, positive life events predicted a decreased relationship between positive social events and social-event contingent well-being ($b = -9.64$, $p < .001$) and an increased relationship between negative social events and social-event contingent well-being ($b = 3.41$, $p < .001$). In other words, experiencing positive life events decreased the positive experience of positive social events, but also increased the positive experience of negative social events. On the other hand, negative life events predicted an increased relationship between positive social events and social-event contingent well-being ($b = 8.34$, $p < .001$) and a decreased relationship between negative social events and social-event contingent well-being ($b = -3.07$, $p < .001$). That is, experiencing negative life events increased the positive experience of positive social events, and also decreased the positive experience of negative social events. Conversely, positive life events did not significantly moderate the relationship between positive social events and social-event contingent ill-being ($b = 2.58$,

TABLE 2 Number and percent of participants who experienced specific positive and negative life events and social events.

	n	%
Participants who experienced specific positive life events	226	18%
Participants who experienced specific negative life events	600	48%
Participants who experienced specific positive social events	1097	88%
Participants who experienced specific negative social events	725	58%

TABLE 3 Multilevel summary statistics.

	M	$SD_{Between}$	$r_{Between \backslash Within}$								SD_{Within}
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1. Positive life events	0.01	0.03	–	0.56	0.06	0.05	0.05	−0.01	0.02	0.00	0.03
2. Negative life events	0.01	0.03	0.95	–	0.06	0.08	−0.03	0.09	−0.02	0.05	0.03
3. Positive social events	0.36	0.14	0.19	0.18	–	0.11	0.25	−0.10	0.19	−0.12	0.19
4. Negative social events	0.38	0.06	0.29	0.32	0.32	–	−0.12	0.15	−0.15	0.15	0.17
5. State well-being	3.55	0.59	0.04	−0.01	0.41	−0.19	–	−0.47	0.52	−0.34	0.49
6. State ill-being	1.92	0.74	0.17	0.22	−0.09	0.47	−0.65	–	−0.35	0.45	0.57
7. Social-event contingent well-being	3.64	0.55	0.03	−0.02	0.39	−0.35	0.90	−0.63	–	−0.62	0.64
8. Social-event contingent ill-being	1.89	0.72	0.24	0.27	0.00	0.60	−0.49	0.85	−0.55	–	0.67

TABLE 4 Standardized estimates from a multilevel model predicting state well-being from positive and negative social events.

	Estimate	SE	95% CI	p-value
Between-person effects				
Positive social events	0.60	0.03	[0.54, 0.65]	<.001
Negative social events	−0.31	0.04	[−0.38, −0.24]	<.001
R^2	0.29	0.02	[0.24, 0.34]	<.001
Within-person effects				
Positive social events	0.32	0.01	[0.30, 0.34]	<.001
Negative social events	−0.17	0.01	[−0.19, −0.15]	<.001
R^2	0.12	0.01	[0.10, −0.13]	<.001

Note: $N = 1149$; $N_{obs} = 34,255$.

TABLE 5 Standardized estimates from a multilevel model predicting state ill-being from positive and negative social events.

	Estimate	SE	95% CI	p-value
Between-person effects				
Positive social events	−0.40	0.03	[−0.45, −0.34]	<.001
Negative social events	0.50	0.03	[0.44, 0.57]	<.001
R^2	0.24	0.02	[0.19, 0.28]	<.001
Within-person effects				
Positive social events	−0.15	0.01	[−0.16, −0.13]	<.001
Negative social events	0.20	0.01	[0.17, 0.22]	<.001
R^2	0.05	0.01	[0.04, 0.06]	<.001

Note: $N = 1149$; $N_{obs} = 34,255$.

$p = .07$) or between negative social events and social-event contingent ill-being ($b = −0.93$, $p = .53$); whereas negative life events predicted a decreased relationship between positive social events and social-event contingent ill-being ($b = −4.45$, $p < .001$) and an increased relationship between negative social events and social-event contingent ill-being ($b = 4.56$, $p < .001$).

3.4 | Cumulative positive and negative major life events-related changes in positive and negative social events

Negative life events predicted a discontinuity in the trajectory of negative daily social events ($b = 5.87$, $p < .001$

in Table 11 Model 1; $b = 5.53$, $p = .01$ in Table 11 Model 3). In other words, experiencing negative life events was associated with a subsequent increase in the experienced number of negative daily social events. Besides that, positive and negative life events did not predict changes (i.e., discontinuities or changes in slopes) in positive and negative social events trajectories (see Tables 10 and 11).

3.5 | Bidirectional effects between positive and negative social events and state well-being and ill-being

In contrast to the concurrent effects, positive social events did not significantly prospectively predict state well-being (−0.005, 95% CI [−0.018, 0.009]), and Negative social events positively predicted state well-being (0.039, 95% CI [0.024, 0.054]). Also, in contrast to the concurrent effects, positive and negative social events did not predict state ill-being (0.007, 95% CI [−0.004, 0.016]; −0.015, 95% CI [−0.030, 0.000]). In terms of state well-being or ill-being predicting positive and negative social events, only state ill-being was a significant predictor of negative social events (0.016, 95% CI [0.004, 0.031]). See Table S4 for a summary of all paths.

3.6 | Bidirectional effects between positive and negative social events and positive and negative life events

Positive social events predicted both positive and negative life events (0.024, 95% CI [0.011, 0.036]; and 0.025, 95% CI [0.013, 0.037], respectively), but negative social events were not a significant predictor of either positive or negative life events (0.008, 95% CI [−0.006, 0.019]; and 0.005, 95% CI [−0.007, 0.216], respectively). Negative life events predicted both positive and negative social events (0.117, 95% CI [0.090, 0.144]; and 0.058, 95% CI [0.010, 0.114], respectively). However, positive life events predicted positive social events (0.144, 95% CI [0.104, 0.189]), but not negative social events (0.053, 95% CI [−0.015, 0.138]). See Table S5 for a summary of all paths.

4 | DISCUSSION

Consistent with past research, positive and negative social events were found to predict overall state well-being and ill-being for that day in the manner that would be expected (e.g., positive social events enhanced state well-being). Furthermore, positive social events were positively associated with event-contingent well-being at both the

TABLE 6 Standardized estimates from a multilevel model predicting social-event contingent state well-being from positive and negative social events.

	Estimate	SE	95% CI	p-value
Between-person effects				
Positive social events	0.54	0.05	[0.45, 0.63]	<.001
Negative social events	−0.50	0.07	[−0.63, −0.37]	<.001
Pseudo-R^2	0.35	0.06	[0.24, 0.47]	<.001
Within-person effects				
Positive social events	0.23	0.02	[0.19, 0.26]	<.001
Negative social events	−0.17	0.02	[−0.21, −0.13]	<.001
Pseudo-R^2	0.07	0.01	[0.05, 0.10]	<.001

Note: $N = 1112$; $N_{obs} = 15{,}526$.

TABLE 7 Standardized estimates from a multilevel model predicting social-event contingent state ill-being from positive and negative social events.

	Estimate	SE	95% CI	p-value
Between-person effects				
Positive social events	−0.18	0.05	[−0.29, −0.08]	.001
Negative social events	0.64	0.06	[0.52, 0.76]	<.001
Pseudo-R^2	0.36	0.06	[0.23, 0.48]	<.001
Within-person effects				
Positive social events	−0.09	0.02	[−0.12, −0.06]	<.001
Negative social events	0.16	0.02	[0.13, 0.20]	<.001
Pseudo-R^2	0.03	0.01	[0.02, 0.04]	<.001

Note: $N = 1112$; $N_{obs} = 15{,}526$.

TABLE 8 Unstandardized estimates from a multilevel model predicting social-event contingent state well-being from positive and negative social events, and positive and negative life events.

	Estimate	SE	95% CI	p-value
Between-person effects				
Positive life events	1.99	0.69	[0.64, 3.35]	.004
Negative life events	−2.51	0.71	[−3.90, −1.11]	<.001
Positive life events * (*Positive social events*)	−9.64	1.17	[−11.92, −7.36]	<.001
Positive life events * (*Negative social events*)	3.41	0.70	[2.04, 4.78]	<.001
Negative life events * (*Positive social events*)	8.34	1.29	[5.81, 10.87]	<.001
Negative life events * (*Negative social events*)	−3.07	0.70	[−4.44, −1.69]	<.001
Positive social events	1.07	0.11	[0.85, 1.29]	<.001
Negative social events	−0.81	0.19	[−1.19, −0.43]	<.001
Positive social events * (*Positive social events*)	−1.95	0.32	[−2.57, −1.33]	<.001
Positive social events * (*Negative social events*)	1.10	0.18	[0.75, 1.44]	<.001
Negative social events * (*Positive social events*)	0.53	0.43	[−0.31, 1.37]	.22
Negative social events * (*Negative social events*)	−0.74	0.28	[−1.29, −0.19]	.01
Well-being residual variance	0.22	0.01	[0.20, 0.24]	<.001
Within-person effects				
Positive social events	0.99	0.05	[0.90, 1.08]	<.001
Negative social events	−0.62	0.03	[−0.68, −0.56]	<.001
Well-being residual variance	0.35	0.02	[0.32, 0.38]	<.001

Note: "*" indicates a cross-level interaction with the within-person effect in parentheses. Between-person predictors are grand-mean centered, and within-person predictors are person-mean centered. $N = 1150$; $N_{obs} = 54{,}050$.

TABLE 9 Unstandardized estimates from a multilevel model predicting social-event contingent state ill-being from positive and negative social events, and positive and negative life events.

	Estimate	SE	95% CI	p-value
Between-person effects				
Positive life events	−1.15	1.28	[−3.66, 1.36]	.369
Negative life events	4.89	1.18	[2.57, 7.21]	<.001
Positive life events * (*Positive social events*)	2.58	1.45	[−0.25, 5.42]	.07
Positive life events * (*Negative social events*)	−0.93	1.49	[−3.84, 1.98]	.53
Negative life events * (*Positive social events*)	−4.45	1.18	[−6.77, −2.14]	<.001
Negative life events * (*Negative social events*)	4.56	1.20	[2.21, 6.91]	<.001
Positive social events	−0.28	0.14	[−0.57, 0.00]	.05
Negative social events	1.51	0.28	[0.96, 2.05]	<.001
Positive social events * (*Positive social events*)	0.32	0.28	[−0.23, 0.86]	.26
Positive social events * (*Negative social events*)	−0.57	0.24	[−1.05, −0.10]	.02
Negative social events * (*Positive social events*)	−0.98	0.36	[−1.69, −0.26]	.01
Negative social events * (*Negative social events*)	1.27	0.45	[0.39, 2.15]	.01
Ill-being residual variance	0.43	0.02	[0.39, 0.48]	<.001
Within-person effects				
Positive social events	−0.58	0.04	[−0.66, −0.50]	<.001
Negative social events	0.93	0.05	[0.84, 1.02]	<.001
Ill-being residual variance	0.41	0.02	[0.38, 0.45]	<.001

Note: "*" indicates a cross-level interaction with the within-person effect in parentheses. Between-person predictors are grand-mean centered, and within-person predictors are person-mean centered. $N = 1150$; $N_{obs} = 54,050$.

between- and within-person level, while negative social events were positively associated with state-contingent ill-being at both the between- and within-person level. Conversely, positive social events were negatively associated with event-contingent ill-being at both the between- and within-person levels, and negative social events were negatively associated with state-contingent well-being at both the between- and within-person levels. Again, these associations were in the direction expected; for example, negative social events were positively associated with state-contingent ill-being for that day.

4.1 | Life events moderated the effects of social events on event contingent state well-being and ill-being

Regarding the third research question, and of particular relevance to the present investigation, the experience of positive and negative major life events across the year

were found to moderate the effects of positive and negative social events on event-contingent state well- and ill-being. These analyses were exploratory in nature, and the results reflect to some degree the differential primacy of endowment and contrast effects in well-being judgments in the wake of major life events. We found that experiencing major life events led participants to in some cases *contrast* their experience of daily social events with that experience. For example, experiencing negative life events led to a strengthening of the relationship between positive social events and event-contingent well-being. Similarly, experiencing positive life events decreased the relationship between positive social events and event-contingent well-being. These results are consistent with an affective contrast effect (Tversky & Griffin, 1991), as well as with frameworks of recovery and growth that highlight the role of compensatory prosocial engagement (e.g., Mancini, 2019).

We also found evidence for an endowment effect that may be driven by negativity dominance (Rozin &

TABLE 10 Unstandardized estimates from models testing cumulative positive and negative life event-related changes in positive daily social events trajectories.

	Estimate	SE	95% CI	p-value
Model 0: Week only				
Positive daily social events intercept	25.96	0.63	[24.73, 27.19]	<.001
Week slope	−0.34	0.02	[−0.36, −0.31]	<.001
Model 1: Positive and negative life events discontinuities				
Positive Daily social events intercept	26.09	0.65	[24.82, 27.36]	<.001
Week slope	−0.33	0.02	[−0.36, −0.30]	<.001
Positive life events discontinuity	0.67	1.95	[−3.16, 4.49]	.73
Negative life events discontinuity	0.30	1.92	[−3.47, 4.07]	.88
Model 2: Positive and negative life events slopes				
Positive Daily social events intercept	26.07	0.65	[24.79, 27.36]	<.001
Week slope	−0.35	0.04	[−0.42, −0.27]	<.001
Positive life events slope	−0.15	0.35	[−0.83, 0.53]	.66
Negative life events slope	0.31	0.45	[−0.57, 1.19]	.49
Model 3: Positive and negative life events discontinuities and slopes				
Positive daily social events intercept	26.35	0.66	[25.06, 27.64]	<.001
Week slope	−0.34	0.03	[−0.40, −0.28]	<.001
Positive life events discontinuity	2.97	6.27	[−9.32, 15.26]	.64
Negative life events discontinuity	−3.78	6.86	[−17.23, 9.67]	.58
Positive life events slope	−0.23	0.54	[−1.29, 0.83]	.67
Negative life events slope	0.29	0.24	[−0.18, 0.76]	.23

Royzman, 2001). Negative life events were found to decrease the relationship between positive social events and event-contingent ill-being, as well as increase the relationship between negative social events and event-contingent ill-being. These results distinguish the experience of positive life events from negative life events, and highlight how negative life events shape people's subsequent affective experience in distinctive ways.

It should be noted however that negative life events also predicted a tendency to perceive positive social events less negatively, a finding that does not fit clearly with the evidence for negativity dominance and affective contrast. One possibility is that the experience of negative life events had the subsequent effect of strengthening the overall affective experience of positive social events (e.g., make the experience of such events simultaneously more positive and negative). However, this finding should be seen as tentative, and future research is needed to replicate this finding. Additionally, experiencing positive life events increased the relationship between negative social events and event-contingent well-being. One possible

explanation is that experiencing positive life events may provide psychological resources that allow for the positive appraisal of negative events (e.g., Fredrickson, 2001). Again, this result should be seen as tentative.

4.2 | The cumulative experience of negative life events led to changes in negative social events

Related to the fourth research question, moreover, negative life events predicted change in the trajectory of negative social events, such that negative life events predicted an increase of negative social events. No other relationships were observed regarding the relationship between the cumulative experience of positive and negative major life events and changes in the experience of positive and negative social events. The finding that negative life events predicted change in the trajectory of negative social events suggests a potential path for how negative life events may lead to personality change (see also the discussion of the

TABLE 11 Unstandardized estimates from models testing cumulative positive and negative life event-related changes in negative daily social events trajectories.

	Estimate	SE	95% CI	p-value
Model 0: Week only				
Positive daily social events intercept	6.56	0.34	[5.89, 7.23]	<.001
Week slope	−0.11	0.01	[−0.12, −0.09]	<.001
Model 1: Positive and negative life events discontinuities				
Positive daily social events intercept	6.42	0.36	[5.72, 7.12]	<.001
Week slope	−0.12	0.01	[−0.14, −0.10]	<.001
Positive life events discontinuity	−1.13	1.29	[−3.66, 1.40]	.38
Negative life events discontinuity	5.87	1.36	[3.22, 8.53]	<.001
Model 2: Positive and negative life events slopes				
Positive daily social events intercept	6.68	0.35	[5.99, 7.37]	<.001
Week slope	−0.13	0.01	[−0.15, −0.10]	<.001
Positive life events slope	−0.02	0.04	[−0.10, 0.06]	.64
Negative life events slope	0.23	0.18	[−0.12, 0.58]	.19
Model 3: Positive and negative life events discontinuities and slopes				
Positive daily social events intercept	6.42	0.40	[5.63, 7.20]	<.001
Week slope	−0.12	0.01	[−0.15, −0.09]	<.001
Positive life events discontinuity	−0.26	2.44	[−5.05, 4.52]	.91
Negative life events discontinuity	5.53	1.97	[1.66, 9.40]	.01
Positive life events slope	−0.069	0.14	[−0.34, 0.20]	.62
Negative life events slope	0.03	0.22	[−0.40, 0.46]	.88

secondary analyses below). Recent research suggests that affective reactivity to daily hassles may be associated with changes in neuroticism (Wrzus et al., 2021). We should note that we did not examine the relationship between negative life events and changes in trait neuroticism. Nevertheless, the observed shift in the trajectory of negative life events would be consistent with a dynamic explanation of how changes in daily experiences may lead to trait change over time (Jayawickreme et al., 2019; Wrzus & Roberts, 2017).

4.3 | State ill-being predicted subsequent negative social events

We also ran secondary analyses examining the dynamic relationship between (a) daily social events and well-being, and (b) daily social events and major life events. Many of the results observed in our concurrent analyses were not replicated in the analyses examining the dynamic relationship between daily social events and subsequent well-being. The one exception here was the

relationship between state ill-being and subsequent negative social events. These results are consistent with what we found for negative life events predicting change in the trajectory of negative social events, as the dynamic interplay between ill-being and negative life events may ultimately lead to trait change (Wrzus et al., 2021). However, the picture regarding the bidirectional relationship between social events and life events was less clear. While positive social events predicted both positive and negative life events, negative social events were unrelated to both positive and negative life events. Furthermore, both positive and negative life events predicted both positive and negative social events.

4.4 | Towards greater clarity on understanding how life events impact the person

The present results provide evidence for one pathway through which life events can impact personality.

Specifically, we focused on specific processes underlying personality change in response to major life events; specifically, the extent to which major life events impact one's experience of subsequent social experiences, as well as the subsequent experience of social events. This focus is in line with theoretical perspectives that emphasize the importance of identifying within-person processes associated with personality change (Fleeson & Jayawickreme, 2021; Weststrate et al., 2022), as well as the importance of shifts in states and situations for subsequent personality change (Jayawickreme, Fleeson, et al., 2021; Roberts & Jackson, 2008). This study is distinctive in its focus on how major life events impact one's subsequent experience of the social world, and we believe that research designs such as the one employed in the present article—which sampled well-being states and experiences of different life events across one year—are important for answering questions related to the impact of life events on persons as well as personality dynamics more generally (e.g., Do life events change our experience of the world?). Given the recent increase of interest in situations research in personality psychology (Rauthmann & Sherman, 2020), the present study contributes to a greater understanding of how major life events can lead to shifts in the number and experience of specific social "situations." Although we did not examine whether these changes subsequently predicted changes in personality traits, our results provide initial insight into how such change may occur.

Despite the strengths of this design, we also acknowledge some limitations with the current study. As noted above, these analyses were exploratory and as a result not pre-registered. Confirmatory replications of this study are needed to further examine the observed relationships. Second, the sample consisted of U.S. residents in established adulthood. However, we note that this sample was quite representative of the general population in terms of gender and a number of other characteristics. That said, future research should examine whether these findings can be replicated in other contexts and cultures where beliefs about the impact and utility of positive and negative life events may differ from this sample (Jayawickreme et al., 2022; McLean et al., 2020). Additionally, the present study examined only a subset of daily positive and negative social events, and further utilized a self-report checklist for assessing major life events, which may be prone to memory biases (see Jayawickreme, Infurna, et al., 2021, p. 148 for a more detailed discussion of limitations with checklist approaches to assessing life events).

We further did not differentiate between different major life events in the present study beyond their normative positive versus negative status. We note however that previous research suggests that life events may be differentiated in

terms of "gain-based" and "loss-based" events (Denissen et al., 2019). While this distinction arguably maps onto the experience of positive and negative life events, we acknowledge that it is nevertheless possible that specific types of life events beyond positivity and negativity may in turn impact the experience of specific daily social events (e.g., the experience of separation or loss of a loved one leading to a decrease in the experience and quality of social events). Such fine-grained associations are an important question for future research. Additionally, given that individual differences exist in how major life events are perceived (e.g., Kritzler et al., 2022), future research should distinguish between different theoretically meaningful characteristics of major life events (e.g., Luhmann et al., 2021), and examine their differential relationship with specific daily life events.

Similarly, while we distinguished all events based on their valence in the present study (i.e., positive vs. negative social events), these events may also be distinct from each other on other dimensions. For example, we note that for positive social events, the first two items put the target in the role of an actor (e.g., "I did something special for someone I liked"), while the last three items put the target in the role of a recipient of positive social interactions (e.g., "Someone complimented me on how well I did something"). While we did not distinguish being the actor versus the recipient in the current investigation, future research can clarify the links between major life events and different types of social events.[4]

In summary, the present study provides new insights on how the experience of major life events impacts one's subsequent social experiences. Specifically, major life events influenced well-being judgment of subsequent social events in different ways, and the experience of negative life events was associated with change in the subsequent experience of negative social events. Future research using similar longitudinal designs that examine additional contextual and situational factors can provide new insights into how people respond to and change in the wake of major life events.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST STATEMENT
All authors have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS
E.J. obtained grant funding for the study. E.J and L.B. developed the study design and collected the data. E.J., and E.T. cleaned and analyzed the data. E.J., and E.T. wrote the first draft. L.B. provided detailed comments and feedback

on the manuscript. All authors revised and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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ENDNOTES
[1] We thank a reviewer for suggesting this set of additional analyses.

[2] This section is adapted from Jayawickreme et al. (2022) and Bossert et al. (2022), which used these data to answer different research questions.

[3] A subset of these items was utilized to assess state manifestations of post-traumatic growth in these data in prior publications (Jayawickreme et al., 2022).

[4] We thank a reviewer for this suggestion.

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information can be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of this article.