



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Science

of

MYLES MAILLET

BA (University of Western Ontario, 2014)

“Self-Regulation of Healthy Eating: The Role of Motivation and Approach-Avoidance Goals”

Department of Psychology

Monday, June 12, 2017

2:00PM

Cornett Building

Room A228

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Frederick Grouzet, Department of Psychology, University of Victoria (Supervisor)

Dr. Scott Hofer, Department of Psychology, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. Ryan Rhodes, School of Exercise, Physical & Health Education, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Allyson Hadwin, Department of Educational Psychology & Leadership Studies, UVic

Abstract

Research on healthy eating motivation has shown that people who are autonomously motivated tend to engage in healthier eating behaviours than people with controlled forms of motivation (Ng et al., 2012; Verstuyf et al., 2012). However, healthy eating requires both trying to eat healthy foods (i.e., approach goals) and trying to avoid unhealthy foods (i.e., avoidance goals), and previous research on the association between motivation and approach-avoidance eating goals is mixed (Harrison et al., 2011; Otis & Pelletier, 2008). In the current study, we explored the relationship between motivation and approach-avoidance goals using a 21-day daily diary design. Our findings indicated that approach goals were more difficult than avoidance goals and that higher relative autonomous motivation was associated with greater approach goal success, but not avoidance goal success. We also investigated the relationship between goal specificity, the temporal scope of approach-avoidance goals, and goal success/failure. Our findings are consistent with previous research on motivation and goal difficulty (Aitken et al., 2016; Green-Demers et al., 1997), but our approach-avoidance goal difficulty findings warrant further investigation.