

Attitudes of University Students with ADHD Towards the Non-Prescribed Use of ADHD Medications

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Background

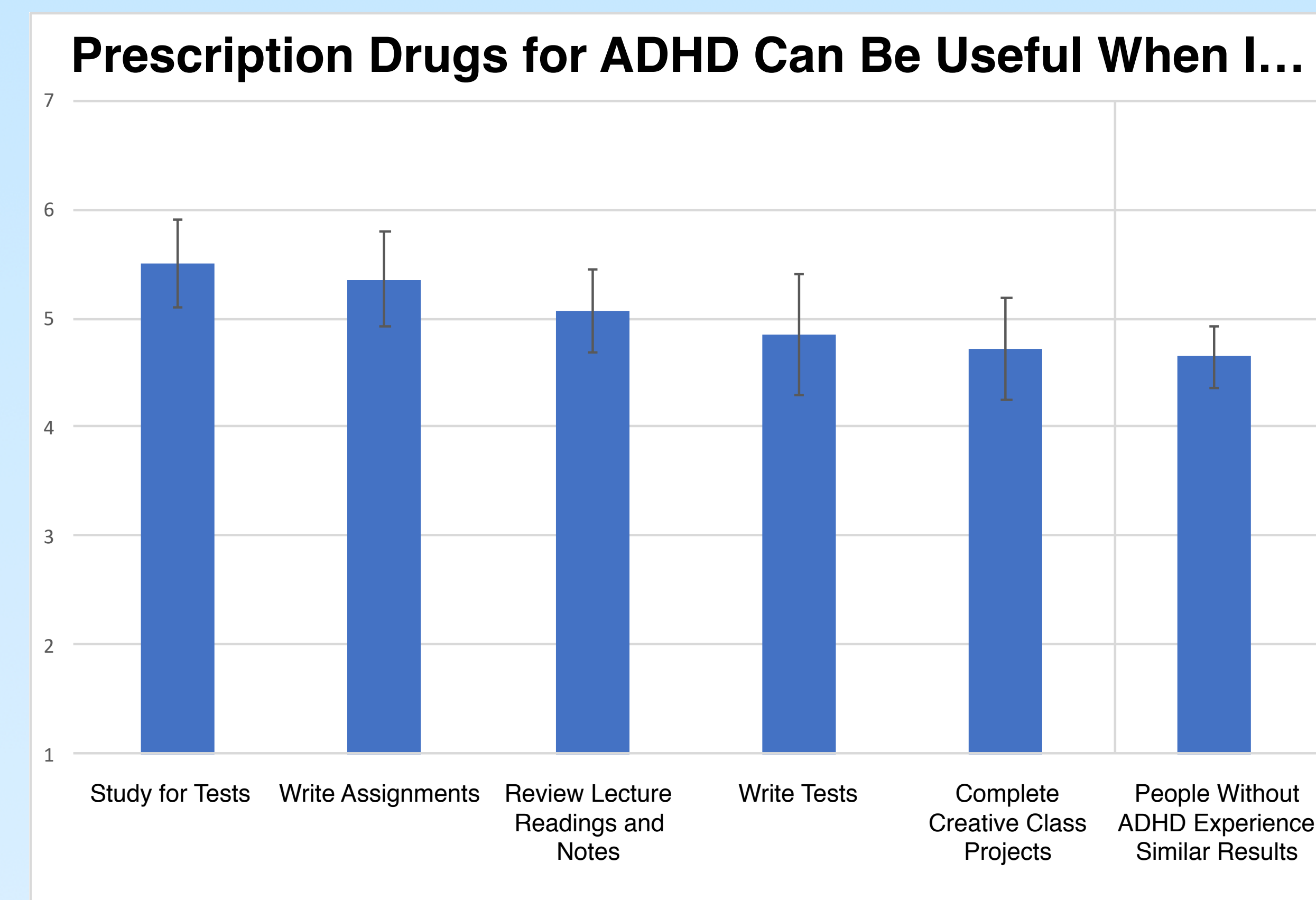
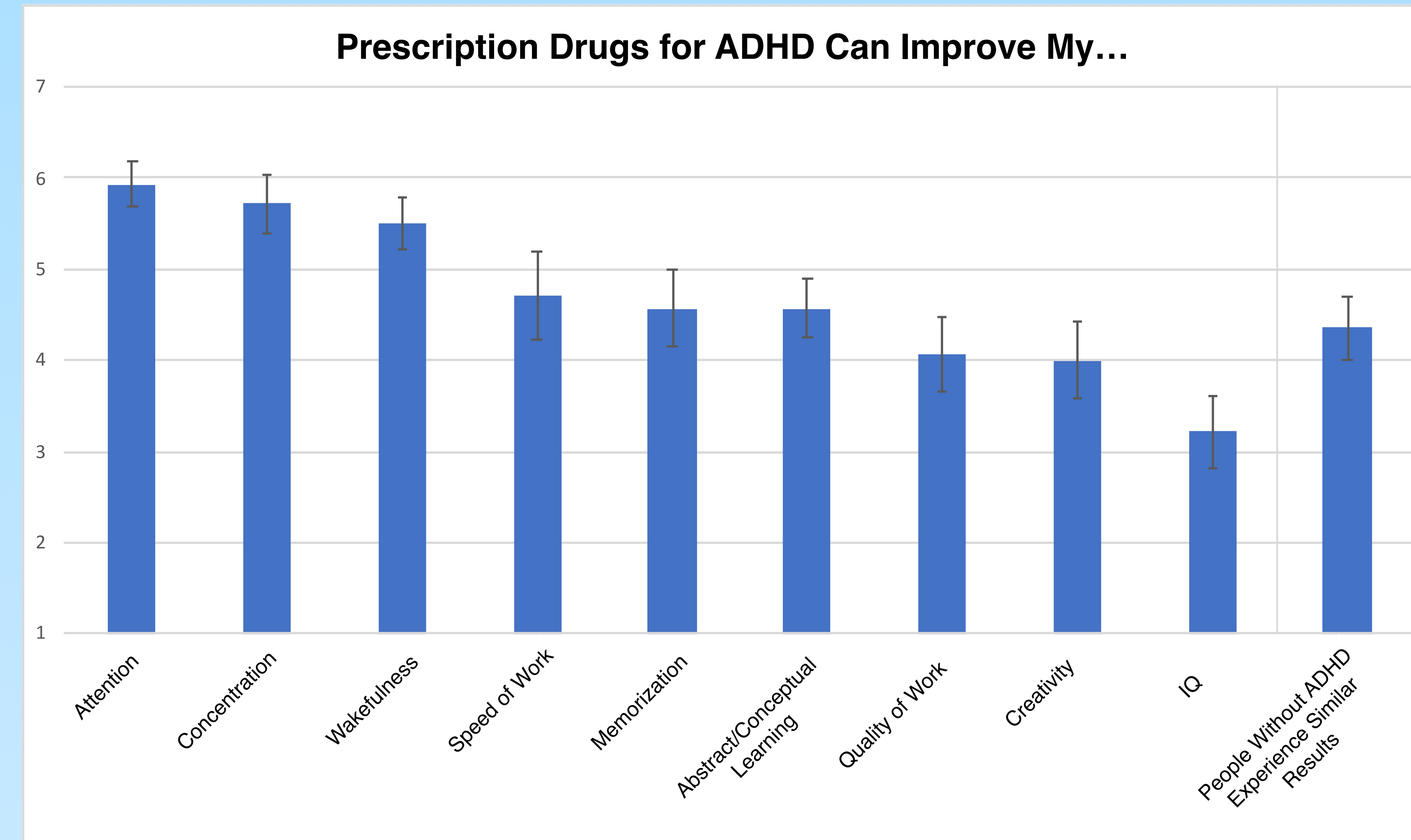
- Study drug use has been increasing
- Many medications used for cognitive enhancement are prescribed for ADHD treatment
- Little research has been done investigating the views of students with ADHD on use of these medications by students without a diagnosis

Implications

- Students with ADHD may feel disempowered in their own learning if they believe other students are using medication to “get ahead”, while they are using the same medication to perform at a “normal” level

Research Question

- How do students with ADHD perceive the use of ADHD medication by students without a prescription (study drug use)?



1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat disagree, 4 = Neither agree nor disagree, 5 = Somewhat agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly agree

Study drugs help those without ADHD

“[T]hose who do fall far enough somewhere in the attention deficit spectra and take their prescribed medication they move away from the disadvantaged side of the spectrum in a more normal magnitude. For those that...don’t have an attention deficit...have a similar effect but start from a more normal/healthy magnitude in the spectrum.”

Study drugs do *not* help those without ADHD

“Prescribed study drugs simply bring your cognitive function to normal levels, if someone with normal levels takes the drug there might be no [e]ffect.”

Methods

- Online questionnaire developed by WoodLab regarding study drug use on campus
- Targeted to all U of T students, advertised by fliers on campus & posts on social media
- Subset of data for those who identified as having ADHD presented here (n=14)

Discussion

- Preliminary data
- Suggestive that students with ADHD may believe non-diagnosed students will demonstrate academic improvement when on drug
- Variability in responses, however

Future Directions

- Analyze data from all student respondents
- Compare students with and without ADHD on their views
- Design information about study drugs to be distributed to U of T students to either endorse or dispel current beliefs