

## Abstract for Groningen Workshop on Reconciliation

'Stress reduction through consolation by valuable partners in chimpanzees'

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Reconciliation, the post-conflict affiliative reunion between former opponents, functions to repair the relationship between opponents and reduce post-conflict stress levels. A second post-conflict interaction, consolation, is the post-conflict affiliative interaction directed from a third party to the recipient of aggression. The term consolation implies a stress-reduction function, although this function has never been demonstrated. This study has provided evidence for such a function by showing that consolation reduces behavioural indicators of stress in recipients of aggression. The stress-reduction function of reconciliation was also demonstrated for the first time in chimpanzees. In order to investigate the effects of the quality of the relationship between opponents and between consolers and recipients of aggression, principal components analysis was used to extract three components of relationship quality (value, compatibility and security) from nine behavioural variables. The effects of multiple factors, including the components of relationship quality, on the occurrence of reconciliation and consolation were analysed using generalised linear mixed models. Consolation was found to be more likely to occur between partners with valuable relationships, consistent with the argument that relationship quality affects empathic responses. Furthermore, the best predictor of reconciliation was the absence of consolation and the best predictor of consolation was the absence of reconciliation, suggesting that consolation may act as an alternative to reconciliation. Thus, valuable partners may reduce post-conflict stress levels in recipients of aggression through consolation when reconciliation fails to occur.