

1 **Supplementary Information**

2
3 **Defensive freezing and its relation to approach-avoidance decision-making under threat**

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27 **General**

28 *A real-world example of passive and active approach-avoidance decisions*

29 The relation between defensive freezing and the passive and active approach-avoidance decisions
30 that we implement in our study maps not only to decisions of first-responders and anxiety patients,
31 but also to approach-avoidance conflict decisions in situations that most of us face in daily life. Think
32 for example of the decisions involved when partaking in a virtual conversation. One could approach
33 such a situation either by actively unmuting themselves or by passively awaiting their turn. Avoiding
34 such involvement, however, could be achieved either by actively turning off the camera or by
35 keeping silent and unengaged.

36 **Supplementary Methods**

37 ***PAT trial procedure***

38 Each trial started with a variable inter-trial interval (ITI) of 9-11 s period to allow a return to baseline
39 for all psychophysiological measures¹. Next, participants were faced with the stimulus screen
40 including the player and target icons, and the corresponding levels of potential money (green €-icons
41 indicating 1 Euro each), and electric shock amounts (lightning bolts indicating 1 shock each). The
42 player icon was a white square and was always positioned in the lower center of the screen. The
43 target was represented by a grey circle positioned in the center of the screen. The icons indicating
44 the money and shock amounts were always presented at the top of the screen and ranged from 1 to
45 5. For the main analysis there were 25 possible combinations of money and shock levels (5 money x
46 5 shocks) which were repeated four times (i.e., 100 trials in total). For these trials, the entire
47 stimulus screen was presented for a variable stimulus-to-movement interval (SMI) of 6-7 s. This
48 length was chosen because of the slow development of the psychophysiological signals²⁻⁵. To ensure
49 prolonged anticipation of the upcoming target movement we also included 30 trials with shorter
50 SMIs of 0.5-6 s which were not included in the analysis. Lastly, we also included 20 trials with 0-
51 money or 0-shock amounts which served as a manipulation check to assess whether participants
52 were paying attention to the task. Logically, participants should not approach when no reward can

53 be obtained and vice versa for shocks. Indeed, participants avoided 0-money trials and approached
54 0-shock trials (proportion approaches $M \pm SD_{0\text{-money}} = .09\% \pm .14$; $M \pm SD_{0\text{-shocks}} = .90\% \pm .17$). After the SMI,
55 to enable passive vs. active action contexts, the target gradually moved to one of two possible
56 locations: either downward towards the player (passive context) or away from the player icon (i.e.,
57 left or right [randomized across trials]; active context). These locations were indicated onscreen by
58 grey placeholder bars. Each action context (i.e., passive and active) made up 50% of the trials (i.e.,
59 there were 50 active and 50 passive trials). While the target was moving (duration of 700 ms),
60 participants had to either approach or avoid the target by positioning themselves at the same
61 location as the target (i.e., approach) or at the other location (i.e., avoid). Depending on the target
62 movement direction, this required an active response by moving the player icon to the other
63 location (i.e., via a button press), or a passive response by leaving the player icon where it was (i.e.,
64 no button press). This led to four different response types: active approach and passive avoid when
65 the target moved away from the player icon (active context) and active avoid and passive approach
66 when the target was moving towards the player icon (passive context). Responses were only
67 recorded as active when they occurred during the target movement phase. Note that not pressing a
68 button during that phase would be recorded as a passive response.

69 As soon as the target stopped moving, the outcome was indicated by color coding of the target as
70 green (i.e., money), yellow (i.e., shocks) or grey (i.e., no outcome). The task was probabilistic
71 meaning that if the participant approached, there was a 40% chance of receiving money, 40%
72 chance of receiving electric shocks, and a 20% chance of receiving nothing. If they avoided, there
73 was still a 10% chance of receiving money, 10% of receiving electric shocks, and an 80% chance of
74 receiving nothing. The 10% payout chance of money and shocks for avoid choices was added to
75 make the task more threatening and thus increase anticipatory freezing, and the 20% chance of no
76 outcome for approach choices was added to match the outcome uncertainty between the two
77 choice options (i.e., 3 possible outcomes per choice, see **Fig. 1**). The electric shocks were
78 administered immediately at the end of each trial, to ensure acute threat. Choices were incentivized

79 by paying out the summed monetary outcome of three randomly selected trials after the
80 experiment. Participants were fully instructed about the outcome probability distributions and about
81 how and when shocks and bonus money would be paid out.

82 ***Electrical stimulation procedure***

83 Each shock had a duration of 200 ms (consisting of 250 μ s pulses at 150 Hz) and an intensity varying
84 in 10 steps between 0-40 V/0-80 mA across 500 Ω . We used a standardized shock adjustment
85 procedure⁶⁻⁸ in which participants iteratively received a shock, after which they had to rate its
86 intensity between 1 and 5 (1=not at all painful, 5=very painful). After each rating of a shock, the
87 shock strength was adjusted with the aim that after 5 shocks the intensity was rated at a level of 4
88 out of 5 (i.e., as 'uncomfortable but not painful'; the average final shock intensity was $M \pm SD =$
89 4.43 ± 1.81 steps, range 1-10).

90 ***Stabilometric platform***

91 The platform was calibrated before each participant so that the amount of pressure was evenly
92 distributed among all four sensors. Participants were instructed to move as little as possible and to
93 stand in a stable position with their feet positioned approximately 30 cm apart (exact locations were
94 signed on the platform, see Ly et al.⁹).

95 ***Psychophysiological pre-processing details***

96 All psychophysiological data were collected at a sampling rate of 5000 Hz (no online filters), and
97 preprocessed and analyzed using MATLAB 2018b and R¹⁰⁻¹². The raw electrocardiogram signal was
98 downsampled to 250 Hz and filtered with a Butterworth bandpass filter (0.5-10 Hz)^{3,13}. Next, R-Peaks
99 were detected using an in-house built peak detection algorithm, and were visually inspected trial-by-
100 trial and manually corrected if necessary. Trials were excluded from analysis if peaks could not be
101 reliably detected within a time window of 1 second pre-trial onset (baseline window) until 6 seconds
102 after the trial onset (earliest possible onset of target movement in long stimulus-to-movement-
103 interval trials). Short and medium SMI trials were never included. Changes in heart rate were

104 calculated in beats per minute (BPM) based on the beat-to-beat inter-beat intervals, and baseline
105 corrected relative to the average heart rate during the 1 second window before trial onset.

106 The raw signal of the stabilometric platform was also downsampled to 250 Hz and filtered with a
107 Butterworth bandpass filter (0.01-10 Hz)¹³. The body sway signal was calculated as the standard
108 deviation of the center of pressure in the anterior-posterior (AP) direction within (overlapping) 1000
109 ms time windows surrounding each sample². This was done for each sample from 1000 ms pre-trial
110 onset until 6000 ms post-trial onset (i.e., covering the baseline window and the entire anticipation
111 period). The signal of each trial was baseline corrected relative to the 1 second pre-trial window.
112 Since there are no clear pre-existing exclusion criteria for body sway signals and we wanted to
113 exclude as few trials as possible, trials were only excluded if more than 50% of all samples within
114 that trial deviated more than 3 SD's from the trial mean. Since this is a relatively conservative
115 exclusion criterion and we still wanted to ensure a reliable signal that's robust to the remaining
116 outliers, we computed the median rather than the mean body sway for later summary statistics. In
117 total, we excluded an average of 3.34% of trials per participant (SD = 3.58%, range 0-19%) due to bad
118 heart rate or body sway data. For plotting purposes only, the heart rate and body sway signals
119 displayed in main text **Figure 3a** and **Supplementary Figure S3a** were smoothed using robust loess
120 regression.

121 The raw electrodermal activity signal was low-pass filtered (2 Hz) and smoothed using a moving-
122 average filter (window of 0.25 s/50 samples). Skin conductance responses (SCRs) were for each trial
123 determined as the largest SCR amplitude within a latency window from 0.5 to 6 seconds after trial
124 onset with a max. base-to-peak rise time of 6 seconds, using the software package Autonomate in
125 MATLAB^{12,14}. Trials in which no response was detected were given a SCR value of 0, and responses
126 were square root transformed before statistical analysis.

127

128

129 ***Quantification of freeze measures***

130 Based on heart rate patterns in previous studies⁴, we preregistered to average over a time-window
131 of 2 seconds before the target movement initiation for each trial. Inspection of the actual data
132 however indicated we had to make the following minor adaptation. When considering the time
133 window based on each trial specific target movement onset, we realized that in this specific task the
134 trial-by-trial extracted signal could potentially be confounded by the delay of the movement onset
135 (e.g., a lower average heart rate could be due to a delayed movement onset in that trial instead of
136 stronger freezing). This is dealt with by setting it to a fixed post-trial onset time window for all
137 trials^{1,3}. Previous studies most similar to ours showed most robust threat effects on heart rate and
138 body sway during the very final stage of anticipation, i.e., after the 5 second mark^{3,13}. Therefore, we
139 decided the 5-6 s window provides a more precise index of freeze-related heart rate deceleration
140 and body sway reduction.

141 ***Behavioral analysis – mixed model specifications***

142 Bayesian mixed-effect models were fitted such that all continuous predictors were zero-centered
143 and scaled, and categorical predictors were coded using sum-to-zero contrasts¹⁵. The freezing
144 indices bradycardia (HR) and body sway (BS) were entered into the models as continuous predictors
145 that interacted with all other main-effects and two-way interactions apart from any effect that
146 involved the other freezing index (i.e., HR never interacted with any effect that involved BS, and vice
147 versa). Dependent variables choice (approach/avoid) and response type (active/passive) were
148 modelled with Bernoulli distributions (logit link), and response times were modelled using a shifted
149 lognormal distribution (identity link).

150 We used the default *brms* priors which are improper flat priors for population-level (i.e., fixed)
151 effects, weakly informative Student-*t* priors for group-level effects (i.e., random intercepts and
152 slopes), and LKJ-Correlation priors for random correlations^{16,17}. All models were fit with 6000

153 samples (3000 warm-up) across 6 chains, of which all converged to a solution without warnings (i.e.,
154 all R-hats between 0.99 and 1.01).

155 ***Computational modeling - fitting and comparison procedures***

156 Computational models were fitted per participant using maximum likelihood estimation (*bbmle*¹⁸
157 package) and the L-BFGS-B optimization method to allow for box constraints on free parameters¹⁹.
158 To prevent converging to local minima in the parameter space, we repeated the fitting procedure for
159 1500 iterations per participant with starting parameters randomly sampled from normal
160 distributions (i.e., $N(0, 4^2)$ and $N(1, 2^2)$ for multiplicative and exponential parameters respectively)
161 and selected the best fitting iteration for each model and participant based on the AIC (Akaike
162 Information Criterion²⁰). Parameter boundaries were set at -100 to 100 for all free parameters
163 (except θ , which had a lower bound of 0.001 before being fixed). The fitted parameter estimates of
164 the best fitting model (for both bradycardia and body sway) did not contain any boundary solutions
165 (see **Supplementary Table S1** in the **Supplementary computational modeling results** below).

166 To compare candidate models across participants, we computed per model the sum of the individual
167 model fits across participants. Like in the model fitting procedure, we used the AIC as a goodness-of-
168 fit measure because the BIC (Bayesian Information Criterion²¹) assumes that the real data-generating
169 model is in the candidate set²², which is not an assumption we want to make. Two additional
170 participants were excluded from model comparison because of a strong lack of variability in their
171 choice data (i.e., fewer than 5 avoid or approach choices) which may result in improper parameter
172 estimates, leaving 40 participants.

173 ***Onscreen task instructions***

174 For reproducibility, we below report the onscreen instructions as they were given to the participant
175 prior to the start of the main task.

176 *“In this experiment you will Approach or Avoid moving targets in a series of rounds. We will*
177 *now explain what will happen in each round.*

178 *The target will move either towards your location (lower center), or to the side (left or*
179 *right). As soon as the target starts to move, you have to decide whether you want to Approach*
180 *it, or Avoid it. An Approach means that you end up at the same location as the target, whereas*
181 *an Avoid means that you end up at the other one (you literally avoid the target). You can*
182 *indicate this decision in the following way: press the Blue button (button 1) to move yourself*
183 *(the white square) to the other location, or don't press the button to stay at your current*
184 *location. Depending on where the target is moving, a buttonpress can thus lead to both an*
185 *Approach and an Avoid.*

186 *You can only give a response during the time that the target is actually moving. This*
187 *movement only takes less than a second, so if you want to press the button try to do so as*
188 *quickly as possible.*

189 *You can base your decision to Approach/Avoid on the possible outcomes that are*
190 *associated with the target of that particular round. These possible outcomes are indicated by*
191 *green money and yellow electrical stimulation icons at the top of the screen (see examples*
192 *above). The number of icons indicates the magnitude of the outcome (the amount of*
193 *money/number of electrical stimulations you can receive, where each money icon is worth 1*
194 *euro. Both icons have a minimum of 0 (zero) and a maximum of 5.*

195 *The probability of receiving an outcome depends on whether you Approach or Avoid*
196 *the target. If you Approach, there's a 40% probability of receiving electrical stimulation, a 40%*
197 *probability of receiving the money, and a 20% probability that nothing happens. If you Avoid,*
198 *there's an 80% probability that nothing happens, but still a 10% probability of receiving*
199 *electrical stimulation, and a 10% probability of receiving the money. The outcome that is*
200 *selected will be paid out immediately after the target stops moving and is indicated by a*
201 *change of the target color into either green (money) or yellow (stimulation).*

202 *Finally, after the experiment we will completely randomly select 3 rounds for actual*
203 *payout. That is, the sum of the money that you received on those rounds will then be paid out*

204 *as a bonus on top of your standard fee. Thus, your efforts to Approach will actually be*
205 *rewarded!”*

206 This was followed by a short onscreen summary:

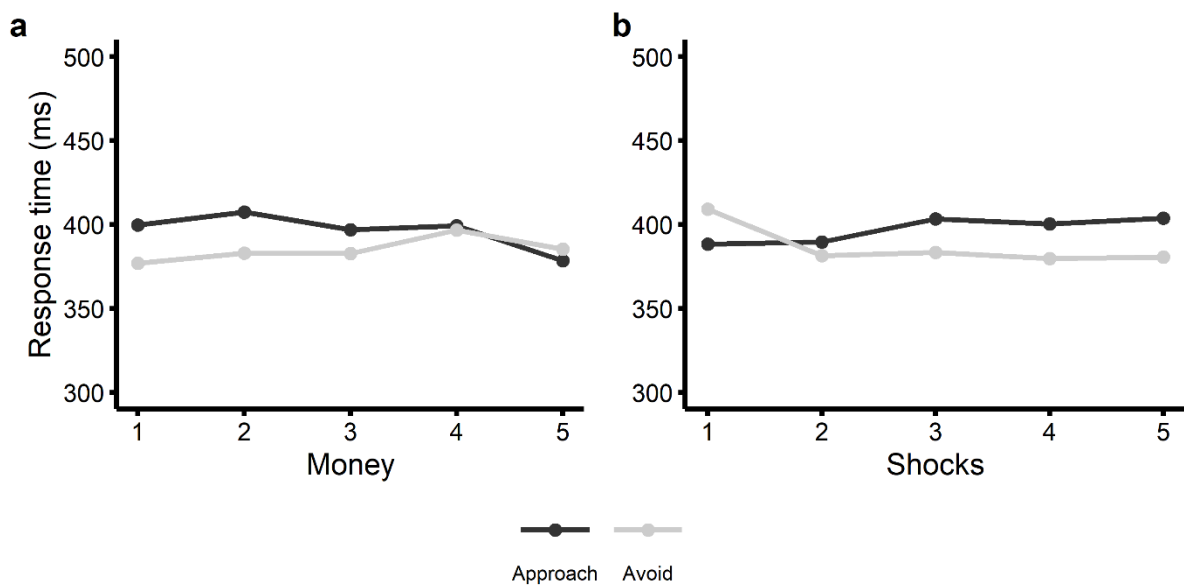
- 207 • *“In each round you have to decide whether to Approach or Avoid a target.”*
- 208 • *“You can do this by either pressing the Blue button to move, or by not pressing the button to stay.*
209 *Again, please note that a buttonpress moves yourself from the center to the other location, which*
210 *can be both an Approach and an Avoid depending on where the target goes.”*
- 211 • *“You can only give a response during the 1 sec. when the target is moving to its new location.*
212 *Pressing the button before the target starts moving will not do anything.”*
- 213 • *“If you Approach, there's a 40% chance of receiving stimulation, 40% chance of getting the money,*
214 *and 20% chance that nothing happens.”*
- 215 • *“If you Avoid, there's an 80% chance that nothing happens, a 10% chance that you receive the*
216 *stimulation, and 10% chance that you get the money.”*

217 **Supplementary Results**

218 ***Supplementary behavioral results***

219 To test the action invigoration effect observed in main text **Figure 2b** we conducted a second
220 Bayesian mixed model, directly investigating active versus passive responses (dependent variable) as
221 a function of choice, money, shocks, and heart rate. In this model we confirm a significant increase
222 in active responses for greater money amounts ($B_{\text{money}} = 0.11$, 95% CI = [0.04, 0.19], $pp_{<0} = .002$) and
223 a significant increase in passive responses for increased shock amounts ($B_{\text{shocks}} = -0.09$, 95% CI = [-
224 0.16, -0.02], $pp_{>0} = .007$). There were no additional interaction effects, nor any effects of heart rate.
225 Testing task effects on response times (RT; active responses only), a Bayesian mixed-effects model
226 with categorical predictor choice (approach/avoid) and continuous predictors money, shocks, and
227 heart rate revealed a marginally significant effect of choice on RT, showing on average marginally
228 faster RTs for avoid compared to approach choices ($B_{\text{choice}} = -0.03$, 95% CI = [-0.066, 0.001], $pp_{>0} =$

229 .028; remember that $\alpha = .025$). This relationship was further moderated separately by money and
 230 shock amounts: participants became faster for approach decisions as the amount of money
 231 increased, but faster for avoid decisions as the number of shocks increased, suggesting motivation-
 232 related action invigoration by reward and threat (**Supplementary Fig. S1a & b**, $B_{\text{choice:money}} = 0.04$,
 233 95% CI = [0.02, 0.07], $pp_{<0} < .002$; $B_{\text{choice:shocks}} = -0.03$, 95% CI = [-0.06, -0.01], $pp_{>0} < .002$). These
 234 results remained intact after accounting for choice difficulty. This was done by including the absolute
 235 subjective difference between the potential money and shock amounts (extracted from the best-
 236 fitting computational model, see main text **Results**) on each trial as an additional fixed effect²³ (no
 237 random slope). Importantly, in this analysis we also observed a significant trial-by-trial relationship
 238 between response times and general heart rate deceleration (**Supplementary Fig. S2a**; $B_{\text{HR}} = 0.03$, 95%
 239 CI = [0.01, 0.06], $pp_{<0} < .006$).



240 **Supplementary Figure S1. Task effects on response times.** Overall, average response times were
 241 marginally faster for avoid choices (**a, b**). Interestingly, increased money was associated with faster
 242 responses for approach choices (**a**), whereas an increase in shocks was associated with faster avoid
 243 choices (**b**).
 244

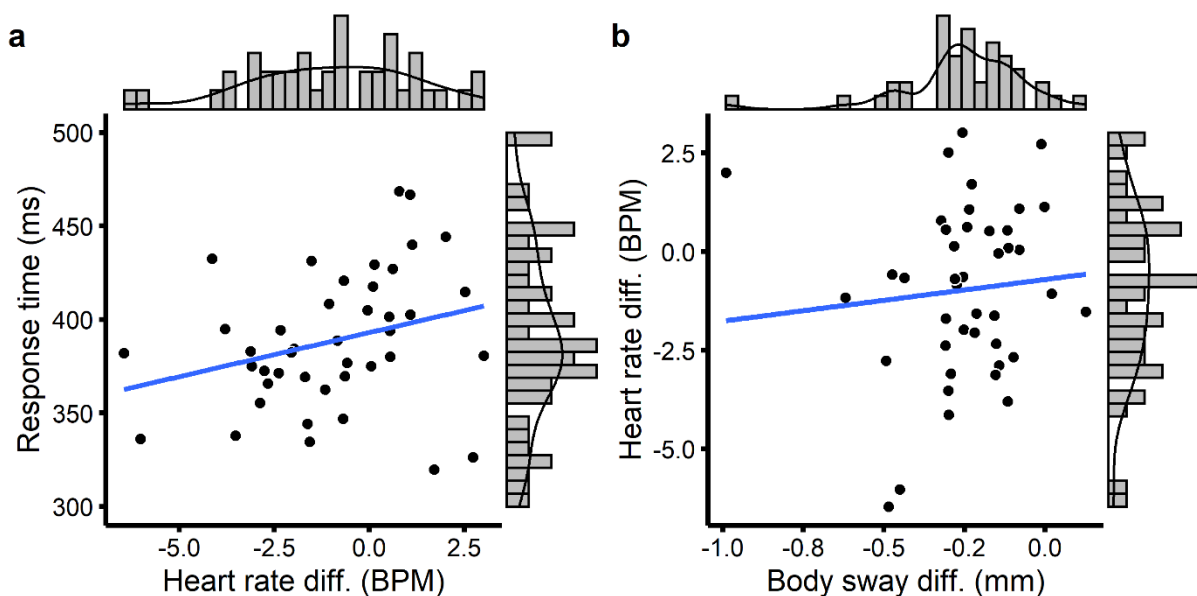
245
 246
 247

248 **Supplementary psychophysiological results**

249 As mentioned in the main text, the mixed-effects model on response times discussed above also
250 revealed a significant trial-by-trial relationship between response times and bradycardia
251 (**Supplementary Fig. S2a**; $B_{HR} = 0.03$, 95% CI = [0.01, 0.06], $pp_{<0} < .007$).

252 To investigate the sensitivity of body sway to reward and punishment, we analyzed the body sway
253 (BS) signal using a mixed-effects model with main and interaction effects of money and shock
254 amounts. This showed a significant general decrease of BS in the time window of interest, relative to
255 baseline (**Supplementary Fig. S3a**; $B_{Intercept} = -0.25$, 95% CI = [-0.31, -0.19], $pp_{>0} < .001$). This reduction
256 was however not moderated by money (95% CI = [-0.05, 0.03], $pp_{<0} = .688$) or shock amounts (95%
257 CI = [-0.06, 0.01], $pp_{>0} = .096$).

258 Finally, trial-by-trial bradycardia was significantly correlated to trial-by-trial body sway reduction (B_{BS}
259 = 0.61, 95% CI = [0.81, 1.08], $pp_{<0} < .003$; **Supplementary Fig. S2b**).

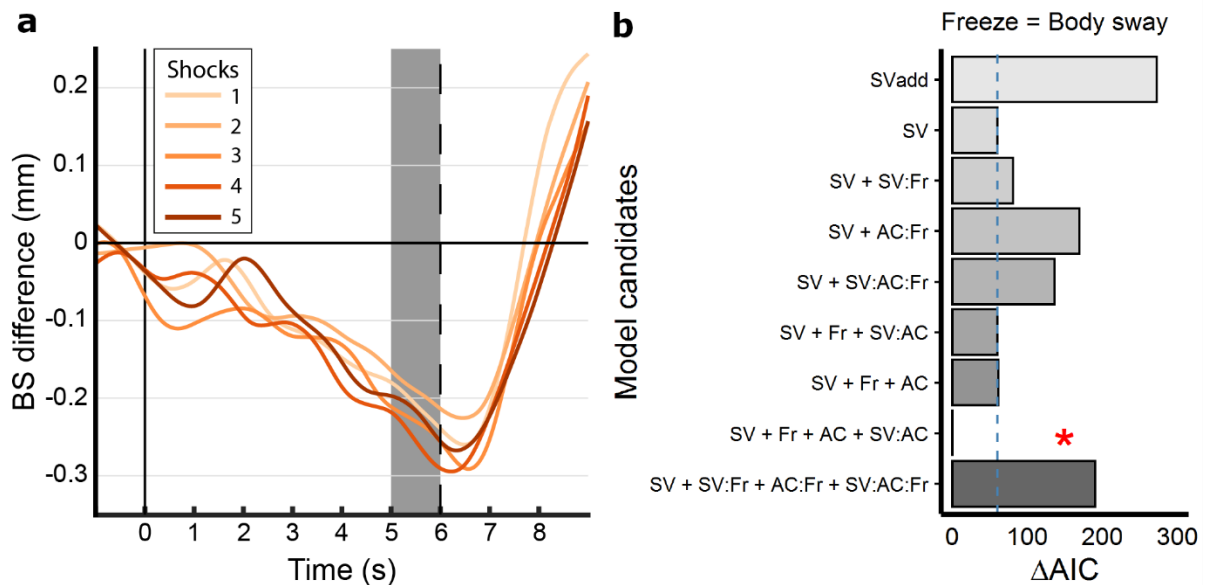


260
261 **Supplementary Figure S2. Physiological correlates.** Bradycardia relative to pre-trial baseline (see main
262 text **Fig. 3a**) was associated with faster response times (**a**). Moreover, trial-by-trial bradycardia and
263 body sway reductions were positively related (**b**). Solid vs. dashed regression lines reflect significant vs.
264 non-significant relationships. More negative heart rate differences reflect stronger bradycardia, and
265 more negative body sway differences reflect stronger postural freezing.

266 **Supplementary computational modeling results**

267 **Robustness check – computational modeling of approach-avoidance choices with body sway**

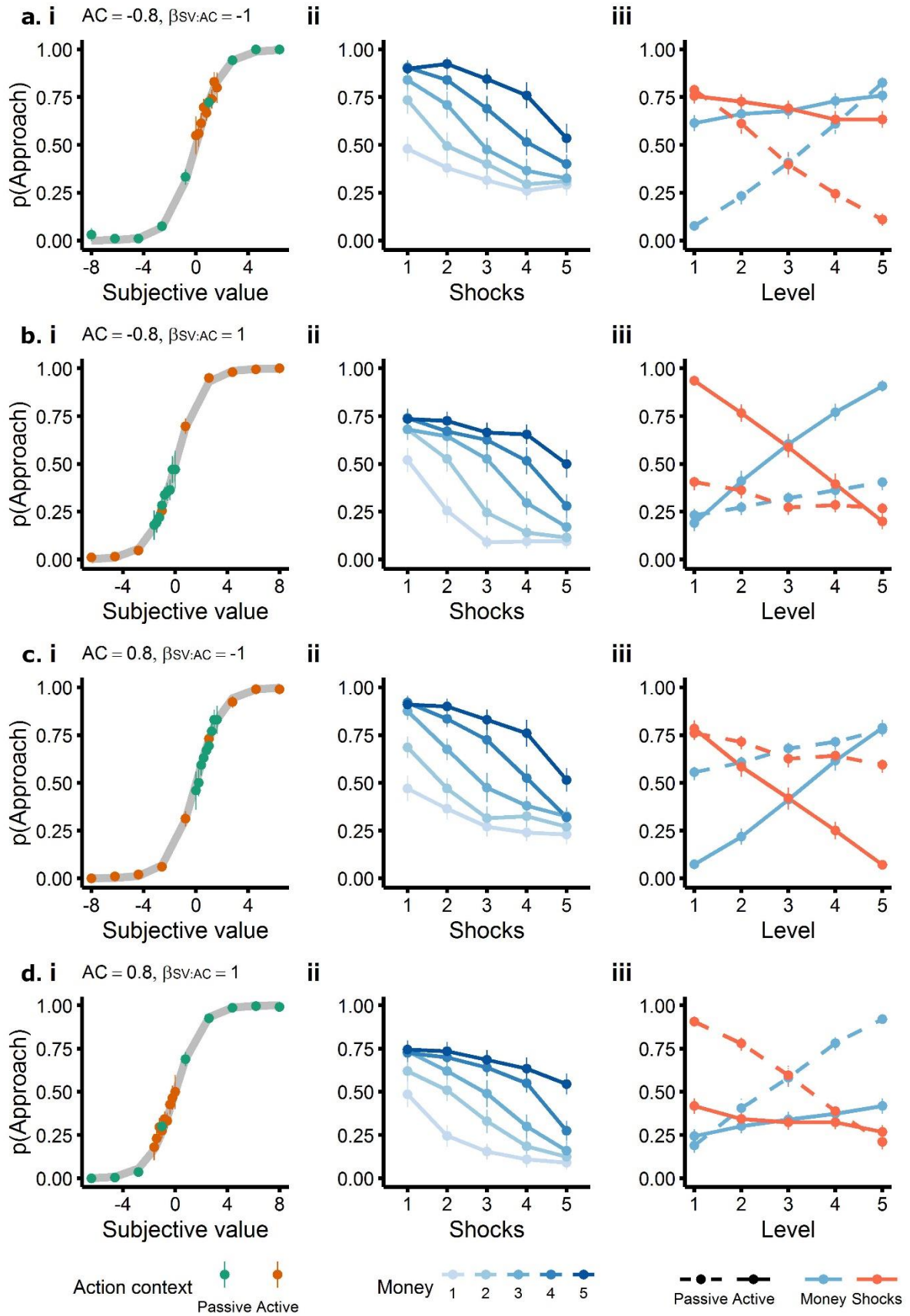
268 To check the robustness of the model comparison procedure, the same models as described in the
 269 main text were fitted again with body sway as alternative freeze index. This yielded the same
 270 winning model as when using bradycardia as index (**Supplementary Fig. S3b**).



271 **Supplementary Figure S3. Postural freezing results.** Body sway reduced significantly (i.e., postural
 272 freezing) during anticipation of approach-avoidance decisions (**a**). Using body sway as an index of
 273 freezing in our computational models yielded the similar results; the winning model was the same as
 274 when using bradycardia (**b**).
 275

276 **Simulation of approach-avoidance choices**

277 We performed simulations of approach-avoidance choices (**Supplementary Fig. S4**) to further
 278 understand the positive relationship between bradycardia and the $\beta_{SV:AC}$ parameter (main text **Fig.**
 279 **3c**). To this end, we let the SV+AC+SV:AC model predict choices (approach/avoid) for all money,
 280 shock, and action context (passive/active) conditions while systematically varying the value of the
 281 AC and $\beta_{SV:AC}$ parameters. More specifically, AC was varied to simulate active (AC = -0.8) and passive
 282 (AC = 0.8) subjects, for both negative (-1) and positive (1) values of $\beta_{SV:SC}$, resulting in four separate
 283 simulations. For simplicity, all other parameters were set to have no influence on the choice (i.e., $\theta =$
 284 1, $\alpha_m = 1$, $\alpha_s = 1$, $\beta_{m:s} = 0$).



286 **Supplementary Figure S4. Simulation of approach-avoidance choices.** Approach-avoidance choices
 287 were simulated for active (**a, b**) and passive tending (**c, d**) subjects, and for negative vs. positive
 288 subjective value by action context interactions (SV:AC). Panels in the left column (**i**) plot the predicted
 289 probability to approach as a function of the total subjective value per trial, with each dot
 290 representing the average choice for a certain subjective value across subjects, plotted separately for
 291 active (orange) and passive action contexts (green). The middle and right columns (**ii, iii**) display the
 292 simulated proportion of approach choices as a function of varying money and shock amounts (1-5; **ii**)
 293 and action context (passive vs. active; **iii**). Error bars represent one standard error of the mean (SEM).

294 **Inspection of fitted parameter estimates**

295 The fitted computational models produced no boundary fits, as is demonstrated in **Supplementary**
 296 **Table S1.**

297 **Supplementary Table S1**

298 *Summarized parameter estimates of the best fitting model (SV+Fr+AC+SV:AC)*

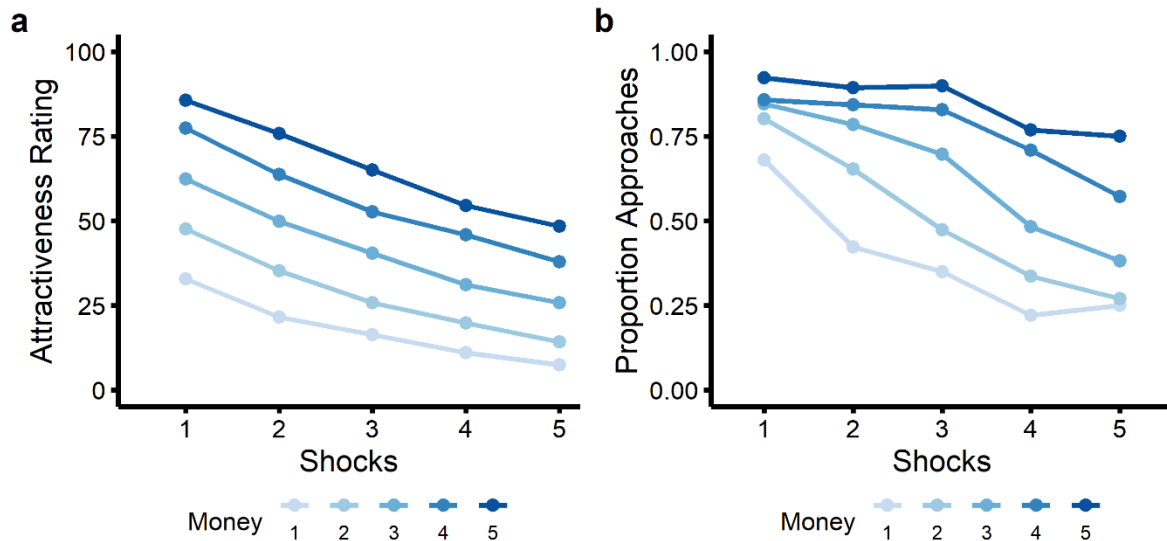
Parameter	Constraint	Median		Interquartile range		Min – Max	
		HR	BS	HR	BS	HR	BS
α_m	-100 – 100	0.31	0.32	0.28	0.26	-0.30 – 2.13	0.001 – 2.10
α_s	-100 – 100	0.39	0.37	0.43	0.42	-0.16 – 1.53	-0.14 – 1.40
$\beta_{m:s}$	-100 – 100	0.10	0.08	0.41	0.40	-0.93 – 2.55	-0.93 – 1.31
β_{Fr}	-100 – 100	0.003	-0.02	0.02	0.09	-0.04 – 0.07	-0.27 – 0.22
AC	-100 – 100	-0.37	-0.02	0.19	0.18	-2.05 – 0.30	-0.89 – 0.22
$\beta_{SV:AC}$	-100 – 100	0.40	-0.09	4.60	5.53	-11.55 – 80.84	-83.90 – 61.66

299 *Note.* Interquartile range is computed as the difference between the 3rd and 1st quantile. HR = bradycardia, BS
 300 = body sway, m = money, s = shocks, Fr = umbrella term for freeze indices: either HR or BS, SV = subjective
 301 value, AC = action context.

302 **The relationship between approach-avoidance choices and reported attractiveness ratings**

303 Since we deem it relevant to compare observed choice behavior with subjective reports, we have
 304 asked participants, after the experiment, to rate for each choice option its attractiveness (i.e., for all
 305 money-by-shock combinations we asked “Please indicate how attractive (Very Unattractive to Very
 306 Attractive) you find this scenario”, on a scale of 0 [‘Very unattractive’] to 100 [‘Very attractive’]).
 307 Interestingly, these attractiveness ratings show a similar pattern to the behavioral data
 308 (**Supplementary Fig. S5**). Indeed, participants’ trial-by-trial approach-avoidance choices were

309 significantly related to their trial-wise attractiveness ratings ($B = 0.07, p < .0001$). Thus, the more
310 attractive a participant rated the option, the more often they approached the option in the
311 experiment.



312
313 **Supplementary Figure S5.** Subjective attractiveness ratings (a) and observed approach-avoidance
314 choices (b) for varying levels of money (blue lines) and shock amounts (x-axis).

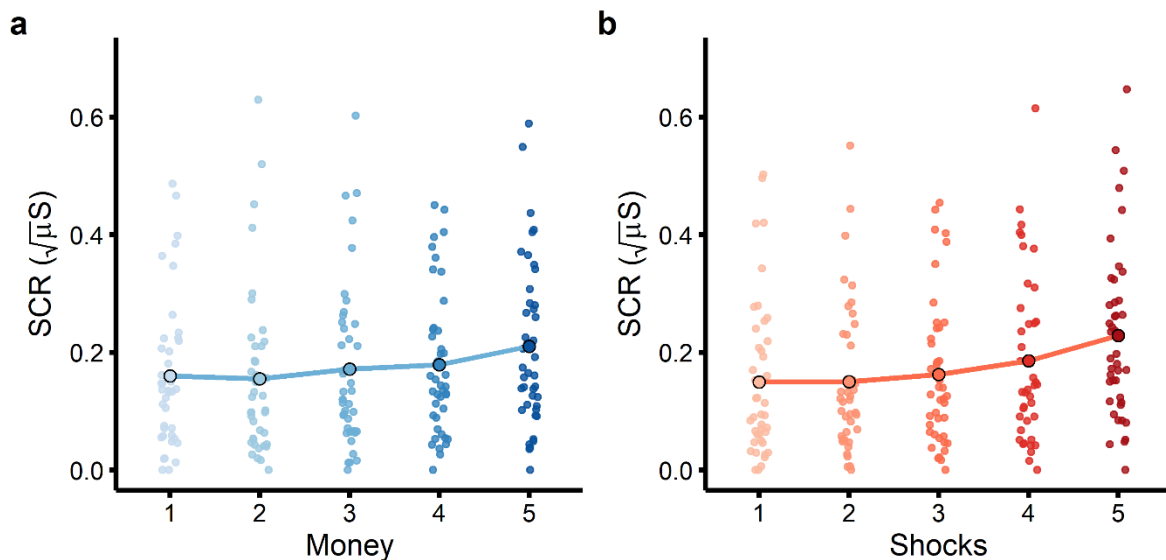
315 Supplementary control analyses

316 Manipulation check – effect of potential reward and threat on physiological arousal

317 Although skin conductance was initially only measured for control analyses (see below), we
318 performed a manipulation check to see whether our money and shock manipulations affected
319 psychophysiological arousal. To that end, we ran a mixed-effects model on the skin conductance
320 response (SCR) as a function of the potential money and shock amounts, and their interaction. To
321 accommodate for the non-normal and zero-inflated shape of the SCR distribution, we used a hurdle
322 model with a lognormal distribution to separately estimate the effect of our predictors on the
323 probability of a non-zero response (i.e., the hurdle), and the amplitude of the SCR when it is non-
324 zero.

325 This analysis revealed that both higher money and shock amounts led to increased probabilities of
326 evoking a non-zero response ($B_{hu_money} = -0.14, 95\% CI = [-0.24, -0.05], pp_{>0} < .004$; $B_{hu_shocks} = -0.27,$

327 95% CI = [-0.38, -0.15], $pp_{>0} < .001$) as well as increased skin conductance responses in general
 328 (**Supplementary Fig. S6**; $B_{\text{money}} = 0.04$, 95% CI = [0.01, 0.06], $pp_{<0} < .007$; $B_{\text{shocks}} = 0.06$, 95% CI = [0.03,
 329 0.09], $pp_{<0} < .001$). Our money and shock manipulations thus successfully invoked
 330 psychophysiological arousal.



331 **Supplementary Figure S6. Effects of potential money and shock amounts on psychophysiological**
 332 **arousal.** Increased potential money (a) and shock (b) amounts are both associated with greater skin
 333 conductance responses (SCR). Lines and large dots represent overall means per money and shock
 334 amount; small dots represent individual subject means.

336 **Control mixed-effects models – sympathetic influence and covariates**

337 To assess the robustness of our findings, we performed some control analyses. For the mixed-effects
 338 models, we first wanted to control for potential sympathetic influences on our dependent variables.
 339 To that end, we re-ran the three main mixed-effects models (on choice, response type, and response
 340 time) with skin conductance (SCR) as an additional fixed effect (no random slope). The results of
 341 these models were qualitatively identical to those reported in the main text. Then, as a general
 342 robustness check, we re-ran the same models after excluding two participants that showed very
 343 little variability in their choice data (i.e., <5 approach or avoid choices) and while controlling for trait
 344 anxiety and depression scores^{24,25} and gender (female/male). These models again yielded the same
 345 conclusions as reported above, except for one effect: the trend effect of choice on response time

346 now became significant (i.e., faster response times for avoid compared to approach choices; $B_{\text{choice}} =$
347 -0.04 , 95% CI = $[-0.07 -0.002]$, $pp_{>0} = .02$, note that critical $\alpha = .025$). There were no effects of trait
348 anxiety, depression, or gender.

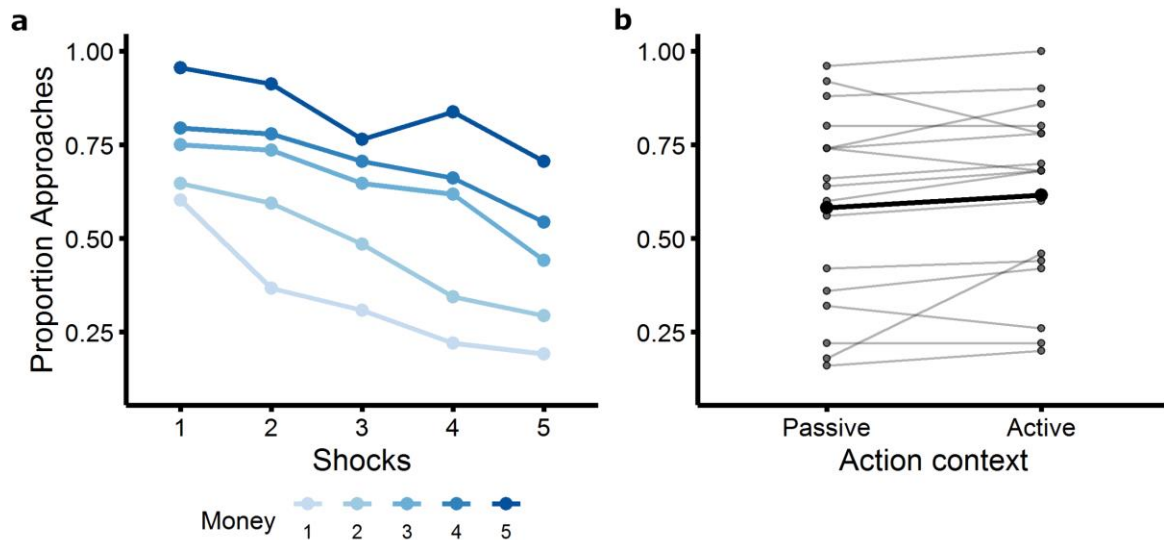
349 For the computational models, we also controlled for potential sympathetic influence by running the
350 same models with SCR as an extra predictor. This yielded the same conclusions with regards to the
351 best fitting model.

352 Together, these control analyses confirm the robustness of the results reported in the main text.

353 **Supplementary results - pilot sample**

354 We here provide a short description of the results of a behavioral pilot data set we collected before
355 the current study to develop our novel task (N=17). To summarize, the pilot data showed main
356 effects of both money and shocks amounts on approach-avoidance choice behavior ($B = 1.84$ and -
357 1.16 respectively, both $p < .001$), indicating higher proportions of approach choices for increased
358 money, and lower proportions of approach choices for more shocks (**Supplementary Fig. S7a**).

359 Additionally, there was a small main effect of the action context, showing overall more approaches
360 in active contexts compared to passive contexts ($B = -0.28$, $p = .03$; **Supplementary Fig. S7b**). In
361 short, these data made us confident that our experimental paradigm was well able to let participants
362 trade-off money and shocks without inducing floor or ceiling effects, since if that were the case,
363 there would be no (or only small) effects of money and shocks on choice behavior.



364
 365 **Supplementary Figure S7. Approach-avoidance decisions in the pilot data set.** The proportion of
 366 approach choices is plotted as a function of money and shock amounts (**a**), and the passive vs. active
 367 action context (**b**).

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