

PSYCHOPATHOLOGICAL DISEASE AND EMOTION REGULATION

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Introduction: Research aims to understand how psychological mechanisms influence mental health. Accordingly, much of the studies in this field has been dedicated to clarifying how emotion regulatory strategies may be associated with increased psychopathology (Gross & John, 2003). Individuals regulate their emotions in a wide variety of ways.

Objectives: We focus on two commonly used emotion regulation strategies: reappraisal (changing the way one thinks about a potentially emotion-eliciting event) and suppression (changing the way one responds behaviorally to an emotion-eliciting event).

Aims: We analyze emotion regulation strategies (Gross & John, 2003) in order to examine their relation with a broad range of psychological problems and symptoms of psychopathology.

Methods: Emotion regulation was assessed by means of the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ, Gross & John, 2003), which taps two regulatory strategies, suppression and reappraisal. The psychopathological distress was assessed by the 90-item Symptom Checklist-90-Revised (SCL-90-R; Derogatis, 1994) by indicating the degree of distress on a scale of 0 (not at all) to 4 (extremely) caused by a list of problems during the past 7 days. The sample consisted of 548 individuals (age: M=32.97; DS=3.55 for male; M=31.29; DS=3.64 for female).

Results: Individuals who reported low levels of suppression reported the lowest levels of psychopathological symptoms.

Conclusions: Our findings highlight that the capacity to regulate emotions may be associated with reduced psychopathology and more adaptive functioning.