

Issues concerning dealing with emotions are gathering more interest in psychological research, which is reflected in the number of scientific publications. Emotions are important mechanisms that provide vital information about what can be beneficial for us, or what we are better off avoiding, but when we can't handle them properly, they can distort our behavior, impede our relationships with others or negatively influence our life satisfaction. Psychologists argue, that, for mental health, life satisfaction and achieving life goals, it's necessary to take control over one's emotional life and regulate emotions. However, it doesn't mean getting rid of emotions or disconnecting from them, but rather flexibly adjusting them to situation demands, so that emotions become more supportive and less distorting. To give an example, in some situations it can be more appropriate to restrain the intensity or duration of a particular emotion (anger during an important business meeting). In other situation, it can be more beneficial to strengthen intensity of a particular emotion, so to, for example, strengthen social relations or give support to someone (pride of a co-worker accomplishment). Thus, different ways of dealing with emotions can be helpful in different situations.

In today's rapidly changing world, adaptation to situation requirements seems to be especially important. At the same time, emotions are ever-present part of our daily lives and we need effective ways of dealing with them on a daily basis. Many people, who suffer from mental disorders, including depression, encounter difficulties with effective emotion regulation. Previously, focus of psychological research was placed on seeking effective and not effective strategies, which could be recommended as useful (or not) in all situations, with no regard to specifics of the context. Presently, more and more researchers point out the deficiencies of such approach. They refer to research in the area of social psychology and personality psychology, indicating that human's behavior is a result of an interaction between personality traits, abilities and situation. Following this view we argue, that methods of dealing with emotions that are always good or always bad do not exist and instead, research should concentrate on looking for effectiveness of different methods in specific situations and by people with specific traits. This is what we plan to do in our studies.

The present project is aimed at looking at the issue of flexible emotion regulation in more consistent and systematic manner. A few empirical works so far support the notion, that adaptive and effective emotion regulation, which promotes psychological health and so-called well-being (feeling of life satisfaction) is a flexible regulation. For example, one of the previous studies showed that strategy of cognitive reappraisal (changing the way of interpreting a particular emotion invoking situation), which until recently was described as effective and healthy in all situations, promotes our mental health only in case, when it's used in stressful situations over which we have no control (and we can't simply change the situation by action, we can only focus on changing our emotions). However there are no results that would tell us if this mechanism works for all the people or only those with certain traits. This is why we plan studies in which we want to check, how a situation and personality characteristics interplay to determine effectiveness of different emotion regulation strategies. In a series of 4 studies (510 participants) we want to check, what strategies are most effective in what situations and by people with what kinds of traits. We plan to show that effective regulation of emotion cannot be achieved by mastering one way of regulation, but rather by developing a whole range of strategies and flexibly adjusting them to situational demands and one's personality.

For the needs of the project a team of experts will be called off. We are going to use psychological and physiological methods in answering the questions about determinants of effective emotion regulation. We hope that result of our research will provide knowledge about how to effectively deal with one's emotion and how to use them in the most beneficial way, limiting their negative consequences. We also hope that our results will provide a useful outline for creating intervention programs, such as trainings of effective emotion regulation in the future.