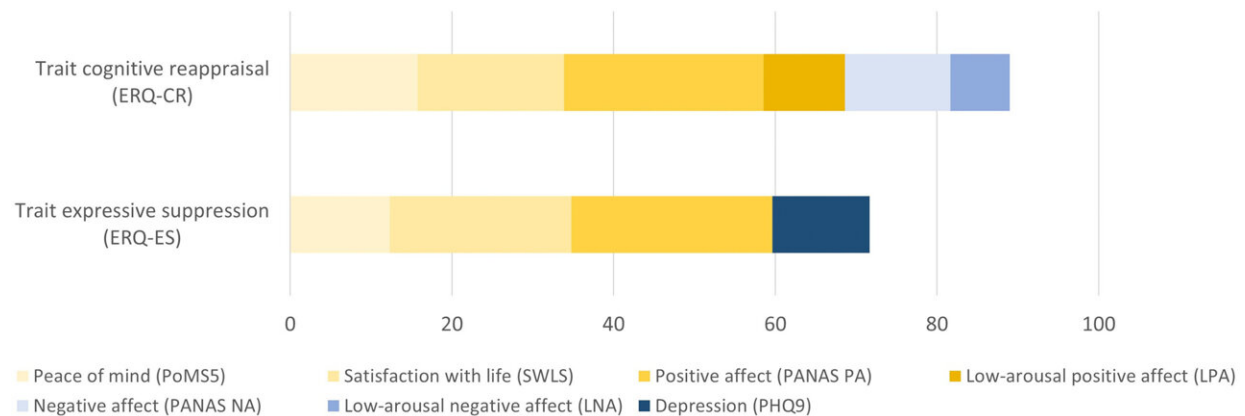


Are people with more peace of mind better at regulating emotions?

October 16 2023



Proportion of the Predicted Variance ($\% \text{ of } R^2$) Accounted for by Each of the Predictors. Note. The total (R^2) does not sum to 100 % because predictors that did not explain a statistically significant amount of variance in trait emotion regulation (i.e., 95 % CIs for the tests of significance contained zero) are not displayed. Credit: *Personality and Individual Differences* (2023). DOI: 10.1016/j.paid.2023.112378

Research shows that people with higher levels of peace of mind are better at reinterpreting situations to regulate their emotions, rather than suppressing them.

Mental well-being (or happiness) has been the subject of several studies over the past decades and is now recognized to encompass two distinct

dimensions: hedonic well-being (characterized by the presence of positive emotions, the absence of negative emotions, and being satisfied with one's life) and eudaimonic well-being (marked by [personal growth](#), mastery, and a sense of purpose in life). However, until recently, [peace of mind](#) (PoM)—a form of well-being characterized by internal [peace](#) and harmony—has received very little attention.

In Eastern cultures, internal peace and harmony are considered central to well-being. A pivotal study by Lee et al. (2013) involving Chinese participants found that PoM was positively associated with life satisfaction and [positive emotions](#), and negatively correlated with [negative emotions](#), depression, and anxiety. But also in Western cultures people think that having PoM is crucial to their well-being.

For example, Sikka et al. (2018) replicated the findings above in a group of Western participants and additionally showed a positive link between PoM and eudaimonic well-being.

The critical question is why some individuals have more PoM than others, i.e., what underlies [individual differences](#) in PoM. Although it is known that different psychological processes may be involved, decades of research have shown that one important factor explaining different aspects of well-being and ill-being is [emotion regulation](#). Surprisingly, until now, no studies have specifically examined the relationship between PoM and emotion regulation.

To fill this gap, Pilleriin Sikka and her collaborators carried out two studies in Finland and the U.S., with 417 and 303 participants respectively, assessing people's PoM, the emotion regulation strategies they typically use, and other aspects of well-being and ill-being.

The results showed that people with higher levels of PoM displayed a greater tendency to use the strategy cognitive reappraisal, i.e.,

reinterpreting situations to regulate their [emotional responses](#) (reframing an anxiety-provoking situation such as taking an exam or facing a job interview as an opportunity to showcase one's knowledge and hard work), and a lesser tendency to use expressive suppression, i.e., hiding or not expressing emotions (not trying to show how anxious one is feeling).

In the article "[Individual differences in peace of mind reflect adaptive emotion regulation](#)", published in *Personality and Individual Differences*, researchers from Stanford University (U.S.), Turku University (Finland), and Skövde University (Sweden) not only demonstrated that people with higher (versus lower) levels of PoM tend to use more adaptive emotion regulation strategies, but also that this relationship generalizes across two different Western cultural contexts.

Pilleriin Sikka emphasizes that "the ability to regulate our emotions may be important for having more peace of mind and, therefore, interventions focused on teaching effective emotion regulation skills may help enhance peace of mind."

More information: Pilleriin Sikka et al, Individual differences in peace of mind reflect adaptive emotion regulation, *Personality and Individual Differences* (2023). [DOI: 10.1016/j.paid.2023.112378](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2023.112378)

Provided by BIAL Foundation

Citation: Are people with more peace of mind better at regulating emotions? (2023, October 16) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-10-people-peace-mind-emotions.html>

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