

# Motivated Emotion Regulation: Principles, Lessons, and Implications of a Motivational Analysis of Emotion Regulation

Maya Tamir<sup>1</sup> and Yael Millgram

The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel

<sup>1</sup>Corresponding author: E-mail: tamirm@mscc.huji.ac.il

## Contents

1. Introduction	208
2. Process and Content in Emotion Regulation	209
3. Motivated Emotion Regulation: Key Terms and Assumptions	210
3.1 A Hierarchical Organization of Desired Outcomes	211
3.2 Motives and Goals in Emotion Regulation: Definitions and Measures	211
3.2.1 <i>Emotion Goals</i>	211
3.2.2 <i>Motives in Emotion Regulation</i>	213
3.3 Summary	214
4. Motives in Emotion Regulation	214
4.1 Hedonic Motives	215
4.2 Instrumental Motives	216
4.2.1 <i>Performance Motives</i>	216
4.2.2 <i>Social Motives</i>	217
4.2.3 <i>Epistemic Motives</i>	218
4.2.4 <i>Eudaimonic Motives</i>	219
4.3 Summary	219
5. From Motives to Emotion Goals	220
5.1 Is There an Association Between an Emotion Goal and a Motive?	220
5.2 How Strong is an Association Between an Emotion Goal and a Motive?	222
5.3 Are There Conflicting Motives or Competing Emotion Goals?	223
6. From Emotion Goals to Emotion Regulation Strategies	224
7. Implications of Motivated Emotion Regulation	226
7.1 Implications for Emotional Experiences and Behavior	226
7.2 Social Implications	227
7.2.1 <i>Social Implications of Intrapersonal Emotion Regulation</i>	228
7.2.2 <i>Social Implications of Interpersonal Emotion Regulation</i>	229
7.3 Clinical Implications	231
7.3.1 <i>Emotion Goals in Depression</i>	231

7.3.2 <i>Emotion Goals in Bipolar Disorder</i>	234
7.4 Implications for Well-Being and Adaptive Functioning	235
7.4.1 <i>Pursuing Healthy Emotion Goals</i>	235
7.4.2 <i>The Healthy Pursuit of Emotion Goals</i>	236
7.4.3 <i>Summary</i>	237
8. Extending the Motivational Analysis of Emotion Regulation	237
8.1 The Development of Emotion Goals	238
8.2 The Temporal Stages of Emotion Goal Pursuit	239
9. Conclusions	240
Acknowledgment	240
References	240

## Abstract

A motivational analysis of emotion regulation focuses on understanding what motivates people to regulate emotions, and how such motivating factors operate and shape the process and outcomes of emotion regulation. We consider emotion regulation as a process that occurs within a larger motivational network. Within this network, people use emotion regulation strategies to achieve desired emotional states (i.e., emotion goals) in the service of higher-order goals (i.e., motives in emotion regulation). We review the lessons learned about motives, goals, and their interconnections. First, we identify possible motives in emotion regulation. Second, we discuss how motives in emotion regulation can give rise to various emotion goals. Third, we discuss how emotion goals may prioritize certain emotion regulation strategies. Next, we review empirical research derived from the motivational analysis of emotion regulation and its implications for understanding emotional experiences, social interactions, psychopathology, and well-being. Finally, we explore how a motivational analysis can inform future studies of emotion regulation.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Emotions are complex reactions to events that reflect a change in the individual's welfare, that feel pleasant or unpleasant and that instigate changes in how people think and behave (e.g., Barrett, 2012; Clore, 1994). Although emotions often rise and fall without intervention, they can also be a function of motivated regulation. Unlike reflexive reactions, motivated behavior is purposive and oriented to achieve desired outcomes (e.g., Carver & Scheier, 1998). Motivated emotion regulation, in particular, is designed to achieve desired *emotional* outcomes (e.g., increase happiness, decrease anxiety). People engage in self-regulation, when there are obstacles to achieving desired outcomes (Oettingen & Gollwitzer, 2015). People

engage in emotion regulation, in particular, when there are obstacles to achieving desired emotional outcomes. By engaging in emotion regulation, people can modulate their experience of pleasure and pain, control their thoughts and behaviors, and as a consequence, gain greater control over their social relationships and well-being.

Most research on emotion regulation has examined how people regulate their emotions, rather than why they do so. By focusing on emotion regulation as a motivated process, the motivational analysis of emotion regulation has posed challenges to traditional assumptions in the field, raised novel questions, pointed to new measures and methods, and paved the way to new insights into the nature and implications of emotion regulation. In this review, we identify the unique questions that guide the motivational analysis of emotion regulation, define key terms and assumptions that guide relevant research, present some of the key hypotheses that derive from a motivational analysis, and review the empirical research that has been conducted to test them. Finally, we point to some of the exciting future directions that lie ahead.



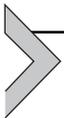
---

## 2. PROCESS AND CONTENT IN EMOTION REGULATION

The possibility that people can control emotions has fascinated both artists and philosophers for centuries. In both cases, emotion regulation has typically been considered a potential remedy for intense and harmful emotions. For instance, Bedier referred to Tristan and Isolde's love as a carriage pulled by crazy wild horses; Seneca, the Stoic philosopher, referred to anger as "temporary madness"; and Plutarch, a Roman philosopher, compared anger to a fit of epilepsy. Echoing such views, the empirical study of emotion regulation began within clinical settings, where intense unpleasant emotions can have devastating implications. In this setting, the key question to be addressed was *how* could people effectively regulate (i.e., decrease) emotions. Accordingly, the predecessors of modern emotion regulation research—namely, the psychoanalytic and the coping traditions (for a review, see [Gross, 1999](#))—focused on identifying strategies by which people can alleviate distress. Leading research on emotion regulation into the modern era and extending it beyond clinical settings, [Gross \(1998\)](#) proposed a broader model of emotion regulation, which categorizes and compares strategies in emotion regulation. This *process model of emotion regulation* has inspired much of the research on emotion regulation ever since.

Theories of motivated behavior, however, that have been developed outside the emotion domain, have distinguished between the *process* of motivation (i.e., how people try to achieve what they want?) and the *content* of motivation (i.e., what do people want to achieve and why?). The need to assess both process and content to understand motivated behavior has been highlighted in both early (e.g., Lewin, Dembo, Festinger, & Sears, 1944) as well as in more recent (e.g., Gollwitzer, 1990) theories of motivation. Throughout history, research on the process and the content of motivation has been conducted relatively independently, focusing first on questions of content and shifting later toward questions of process (Gollwitzer, Kappes, & Oettingen, 2012; Gollwitzer & Moskowitz, 1996; Grant & Gelety, 2009).

A motivational analysis of emotion regulation, therefore, calls attention not only to questions about process, but also to questions about content. Adopting this perspective, researchers began to inquire both how people regulate their emotions, but also what people want to feel when they engage in emotion regulation and why they want to feel that way (e.g., Bonanno, 2001; Erber & Erber, 2000; Parrott, 1993; Tamir, 2009). It became clear that in order to understand motivated emotion regulation, it is necessary to identify what motivates it. We begin our motivational analysis of emotion regulation by adapting key constructs and basic assumptions from motivational science to the emotion domain.



### **3. MOTIVATED EMOTION REGULATION: KEY TERMS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

To understand emotion regulation it is necessary to identify its key components and the relations between them, and whether and how they overlap with (or are distinct from) those of other types of self-regulation. First, people pursue many desired outcomes at any given moment, some target emotional outcomes (e.g., feel less stressed) and others do not (e.g., be healthy). Therefore, the motivated regulation of emotion must be considered within a larger motivational system. Understanding the structure and organization of this system is key to understanding motivated emotion regulation. Second, assuming that desired outcomes are hierarchically organized (e.g., Carver & Scheier, 2000; Kruglanski et al., 2002), it is necessary to distinguish between different levels of desired outcomes and what roles they play in emotion regulation. We discuss each of these points below.

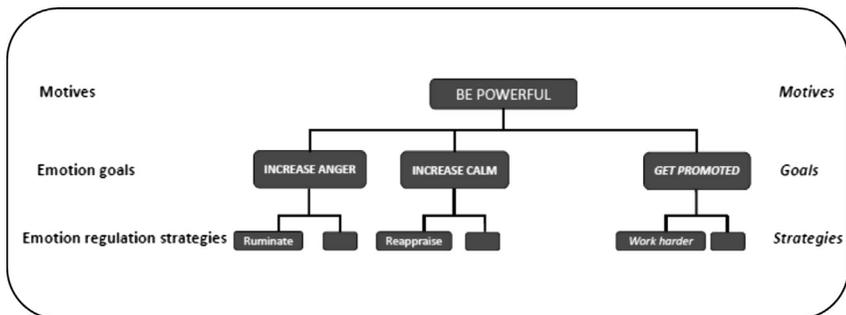
### 3.1 A Hierarchical Organization of Desired Outcomes

Motivated behavior is oriented toward the achievement of desired end-states (i.e., goals). People desire multiple end-states (e.g., increase happiness, be powerful, lose weight), that are hierarchically organized, from the specific to the more abstract (e.g., Carver & Scheier, 2000; Kruglanski et al., 2002). Each desired state (e.g., lose weight) can serve as a means to attain higher-order desired states (e.g., be healthy) and can be subserved by lower-order desired states (e.g., exercise). To understand the motivated nature of emotion regulation, it is necessary to acknowledge the hierarchical structure of related desired end-states (see Elliot, 2006). Our motivational analysis of emotion regulation distinguishes between distinct levels of desired outcomes within the motivational network, pertaining to emotion regulation strategies, emotion goals, and motives in emotion regulation (see Fig. 1). Emotion regulation strategies (e.g., cognitive reappraisal, rumination) serve as means to attain higher-order desired emotional states (e.g., increase calmness), which we refer to as *emotion goals*. These higher-order desired emotional states, in turn, can serve as means to attain other higher-order states (e.g., be powerful), which we refer to as *motives in emotion regulation*. To understand emotion regulation as a motivated process, therefore, it is essential to define and assess these distinct levels of the motivational network.

### 3.2 Motives and Goals in Emotion Regulation: Definitions and Measures

#### 3.2.1 Emotion Goals

Goals reflect specific desired end-states and refer to what people want to achieve as they engage in self-regulation (Thrash & Elliot, 2001). We define



**Figure 1** Hierarchically organized desired outcomes, where strategies serve as means to attain goals, which operate in the service of motives. With respect to emotion regulation, emotion regulation strategies serve as means to attain emotion goals, which serve as means to attain motives.

emotion goals, therefore, as the emotional states people want to achieve when they engage in emotion regulation. Emotion regulation is designed, first and foremost, to attain an emotion goal. Emotion regulation is distinct from other types of self-regulation in that it is motivated by emotion goals (i.e., desired emotional states), in particular. For instance, people may engage in emotion regulation to increase happiness, to decrease anxiety, or to decrease anger. They may target their own personal emotions or the emotions of others. Like other goals, emotion goals set the direction of emotion regulation (e.g., should an emotion be increased or decreased), and in doing so, shape the nature of its outcomes. Successful emotion regulation involves the attainment of the emotion goal that motivated it.

Two types of measures have been used to date to assess emotion goals. One measure is based on self-reports, where participants directly rate their emotion goals. Such measures have been used to assess concurrent emotion goals, by having participants rate the extent to which they want to experience an emotion in the moment (e.g., “To what extent do you want to feel angry right now?”; Tamir, Ford, & Ryan, 2013), and hypothetical goals, by having participants rate the extent to which they want to experience an emotion in hypothetical contexts (e.g., “When arguing with someone who wronged you, to what extent do you want to feel angry?”; Tamir & Ford, 2012a), and general goals, by having participants rate the extent (e.g., “To what extent do you want to feel angry, in general?” Tamir & Ford, 2012a) or the frequency (e.g., “How often do you want to experience anger, in general?”; Tamir et al., 2016) with which they want to experience an emotion, in general.

Self-report measures of goals are common in research on goal pursuit (e.g., Elliot & McGregor, 2001; Hart & Albarraçín, 2009), but they have two primary limitations. First, they are subject to socially desirable responding. Such response biases could be problematic when assessing emotion goals, as some emotion goals are more socially acceptable than others (e.g., Eid & Diener, 2001; Fischer, Manstead, Evers, Timmers, & Valk, 2004). Second, goals can be activated and operate outside of conscious awareness (e.g., Bargh, Gollwitzer, Lee-Chai, Barndollar, & Trötschel, 2001). Assuming that emotion goals can also operate outside of conscious awareness, they could also be assessed by measures other than self-report. Therefore, a second type of measure that has been commonly used to assess emotion goals is based on behavioral indices. Researchers provide participants with the means to regulate emotions and assess the direction in which participants actually employ such means. Situation selection, in particular,

involves changing one's emotions by exposing one's self to stimuli that induce desired emotions (Gross, 1998). Therefore, researchers ask participants to select which stimuli they wish to engage with from an array of stimuli that are likely to induce various emotions. Emotion goals are reflected by the type of emotion induced by the stimuli participants select. For instance, the selection of stimuli that induce anger reflects a motivation to experience anger (e.g., Tamir & Ford, 2012a, 2012b). To date, researchers have used various types of emotion-inducing stimuli, including newspaper headlines (e.g., Erber, Wegner, & Theriault, 1996), autobiographical memories (e.g., Tamir, 2005; Tamir & Ford, 2012b), music (e.g., Tamir, Mitchell, & Gross, 2008), and pictures (e.g., Millgram, Joormann, Huppert, & Tamir, 2015). In some studies (e.g., Tamir & Ford, 2012b; Tamir et al., 2008), to establish the validity of such measures and to ensure that they reflect preferences for emotion rather than stimuli, participants rate their preferences for two distinct types of emotion-inducing stimuli (e.g., music and autobiographical recall), and emotion goals are assessed by averaging preferences for the same emotion across stimuli types.

### **3.2.2 Motives in Emotion Regulation**

Like other goals, emotion goals can operate in the service of higher-order goals. We refer to these higher-order goals as motives in emotion regulation, because motives tend to be more abstract and refer to why people engage in self-regulation (Thrash & Elliot, 2001). Although motives in emotion regulation are equivalent in this analysis to higher-order goals, we refer to them as motives rather than goals, to clearly differentiate them from emotion goals. In our terminology, goals in emotion regulation refer specifically to desired emotional states, whereas motives in emotion regulation can involve either emotional or nonemotional desired outcomes. Motives in emotion regulation, therefore, are the reasons why people pursue certain emotion goals. For instance, a person may be motivated to increase happiness in order to make friends at a party. In this case, the emotion goal is to increase happiness and the motive is to make friends at a party. Because they reflect higher-order desired states, motives in emotion regulation can themselves be hierarchically organized. For instance, a person may be motivated to increase happiness in order to make friends at a party, in order to find a partner, in order to have a family, in order to find meaning in life. In this example, increasing happiness is the emotion goal that sets the direction of emotion regulation, and the remaining goals serve as motives in emotion regulation

that are themselves organized from the more concrete (i.e., make friends at a party) to the more abstract (e.g., find meaning in life).

In this analysis, motives in emotion regulation are higher-order goals that emotions can help attain. It should be noted, however, that the same motives can also be attained by means that are not emotional. For instance, to attain the goal of making friends at a party, a person could try to increase her happiness or she could try to engage in conversation. Similarly, as demonstrated in Fig. 1, a person who wants to be powerful may try to increase her anger or get promoted at work. This implies that in some contexts, emotion goals compete with nonemotion goals.

Studies that measured motives in emotion regulation have used both open-ended formats (e.g., “Why do you want to feel the way you do?”; Augustine, Hemenover, Larsen, & Shulman, 2010), or closed ended-formats, where people choose from various specified motives (e.g., Kalokerinos, Tamir, & Kuppens, 2017), or rate the extent to which they pursue specific motives (e.g., Tamir et al., 2016). Studies that manipulated motives in emotion regulation have used either explicit instructions (e.g., “Your goal is to collaborate”; Tamir & Ford, 2012b) or priming manipulations (e.g., Tamir et al., 2013).

### 3.3 Summary

Our motivational analysis of emotion regulation is based on the following assumptions: (1) Emotion regulation operates within a larger network of desired outcomes, that involve both emotional and nonemotional outcomes, (2) desired outcomes within that network are interconnected and hierarchically organized, (3) emotion regulation operates directly in the service of emotion goals (i.e., desired emotional states), and is distinct in that respect from other forms of self-regulation, and (4) emotion goals operate in the service of higher-order goals that serve as motives in emotion regulation and are not necessarily emotional themselves. The first step in understanding motivated emotion regulation, therefore, involves examining why people regulate their emotions, by identifying motives in emotion regulation.



---

## 4. MOTIVES IN EMOTION REGULATION

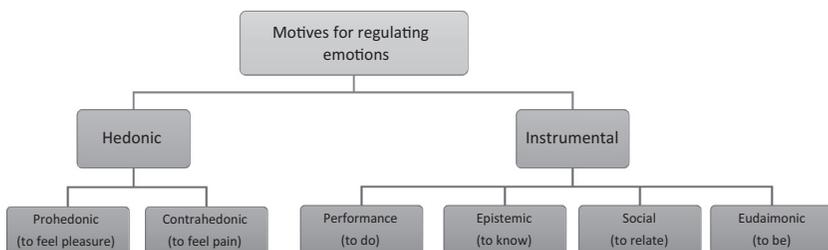
Motives in emotion regulation refer to desired outcomes that emotions can help people attain. Because a particular emotion goal can serve

various motives, and a motive can be subserved by different emotion goals, motives cannot be directly inferred from emotion goals (for similar claims, see Fischer et al., 2004; Martin, 2000). Instead, it is necessary to directly examine the reasons why people pursue a particular emotion goal. We have proposed a taxonomy of motives in emotion regulation (Tamir, 2016), which is presented in Fig. 2. This taxonomy distinguishes between two general categories of motives—namely, hedonic and instrumental motives, and identifies specific types of motives within each category.

#### 4.1 Hedonic Motives

One of the most salient characteristics of emotion is their hedonic phenomenology. Emotions feel pleasant or unpleasant at varying levels of intensity. Therefore, people may be motivated to pursue emotion goals in order to change their immediate hedonic phenomenology. To the extent that people are inherently motivated to maximize pleasure and minimize pain (see Higgins, 2014), people are likely to regulate their emotions in order to increase pleasure and decrease pain. People could do so by engaging in *prohedonic emotion regulation*—namely, by increasing pleasant emotions or by decreasing unpleasant emotions. For instance, when asked to list what they wanted to feel and why, participants listed prohedonic motives as underlying their emotion regulation attempts on 50% of the cases (Augustine et al., 2010). The available data suggest, therefore, that prohedonic motives are common in emotion regulation, and so it is not surprising that for decades scholars failed to consider alternative motives.

The available data also suggest, however, that prohedonic motives do not account for all cases of emotion regulation. First, in addition to prohedonic motives, there may be unique cases in which people engage in *contrahedonic emotion regulation*, namely, by increasing unpleasant emotions or decreasing



**Figure 2** A taxonomy of motives in emotion regulation. *Reproduced from Tamir, M. (2016). Why do people regulate their emotions? A taxonomy of motives in emotion regulation. Personality and Social Psychology Review, 20, 199–222.*

pleasant ones. For instance, in certain entertainment contexts some people derive pleasure from otherwise unpleasant emotions, such as fear (Andrade & Cohen, 2007) or sadness (Huron, 2011), and are motivated to experience such emotions to feel more pain as well as more pleasure (see Rozin, Guillot, Fincher, Rozin, & Tsukayama, 2013). Second, people may be motivated to regulate emotions to attain benefits other than hedonic ones.

## 4.2 Instrumental Motives

People are generally motivated to attain desired outcomes other than immediate pleasure (Higgins, 2014). Indeed, people are often willing to forego immediate pleasure in order to achieve other types of benefits. Whereas hedonic motives target the immediate phenomenology of emotions, instrumental motives target potential benefits of emotions, other than their immediate phenomenology. Hedonic motives can be satisfied by the experience of the desired emotional state itself. In contrast, at least in some cases, the satisfaction of instrumental motives in emotion regulation depends on the consequences of experiencing the desired emotional states, rather than on their immediate phenomenology.

Contrary to the traditional view of emotions as necessarily harmful, which instigated the initial interest in emotion regulation, the instrumental approach to emotion regulation is based on the idea that emotions can offer desired instrumental benefits (Bonanno, 2001; Tamir, 2009). Functional theories of emotion (e.g., Keltner & Gross, 1999; Levenson, 1994; Tooby & Cosmides, 1990) have proposed that emotions carry important consequences, regardless of their hedonic phenomenology. These consequences can be roughly grouped into several major categories, including consequences for performance, social relations, knowledge, and personal growth. To the extent that people may be motivated to attain these consequences, they could be motivated to pursue emotion goals as a means to attain them. Below, we discuss each type of consequence and how it may motivate emotion regulation.

### 4.2.1 Performance Motives

Perhaps the most central assumption of functional theories of emotion is that emotions can promote adaptive cognition and behavior (e.g., Ekman, 1992; Levenson, 1994; Tooby & Cosmides, 1990). Although emotions do not always influence behavior in adaptive ways, functional theories assume that they have the capacity to do so. According to functional theories, for instance, feeling love can promote social connection, whereas feeling angry

can facilitate assertive behavior (e.g., [Frijda, 1986](#); [Levenson, 1999](#)). Despite considerable debate over how they do so, it is widely agreed that emotions can shape behavior ([Barrett, 2012](#)). Given that people are inherently motivated to behave in ways that lead to desirable tangible consequences ([Forbes, 2011](#); [Higgins, 2014](#)), people may be motivated to regulate their emotions in ways that maximize desired behavior.

There is a growing body of empirical evidence demonstrating that people can be guided by performance motives when regulating their emotions. In a daily diary study, participants were asked to report on the most negative event of their day for seven days, and indicate whether and why they tried to regulate their emotions in response to that event. Participants listed performance motives in one-third of the events in which they tried to regulate their emotions ([Kalokerinos et al., 2017](#)), suggesting that such motives are relatively ubiquitous.

Evidence for performance motives also comes from studies in which manipulating performance motives led people to regulate their emotions in a manner that was more likely to lead (or actually led) to better performance. For instance, participants who wanted to perform well in an aggressive computer game were more likely to try to increase their anger than participants who wanted to perform well in a nonaggressive game ([Tamir et al., 2008](#)). Increasing their anger, in turn, led them to be more aggressive and perform better in the game.

Performance motives shape emotion regulation in individual settings. For instance, people who expected to perform an analytic task, which might benefit from sadness ([Forgas, 2013](#)), were less likely to repair their sad mood, compared to people who expected to perform a creativity task ([Cohen & Andrade, 2004](#)). Performance motives also shape emotion regulation in social settings. For instance, people were motivated to decrease their compassion toward others, when they expected it to result in greater (vs. lower) personal cost ([Cameron & Payne, 2011](#)). Taken together, these studies demonstrate that people can be motivated to regulate their emotions to optimize performance.

#### **4.2.2 Social Motives**

Regardless of the effects emotions can have on the individual herself, emotions have social implications, facilitating or impairing social relationships (e.g., [Frijda & Mesquita, 1994](#); [Keltner & Haidt, 1999](#); [Niedenthal & Brauer, 2012](#)). Given that people want to create and maintain positive social relationships (e.g., [Deci & Ryan, 1991](#); [Fiske, 2003](#); [Maslow, 1943](#)),

they may be motivated to experience emotions to strengthen desired relations or eliminate undesired ones. To the extent that the social effects of emotion can extend from intimate contexts to group contexts, social motives in emotion regulation may operate at the level of close relationships, dyads, groups, and even cultures.

There are multiple examples for cases in which people regulate the expression of emotions to attain desired social outcomes (e.g., [Clark, Pataki, & Carver, 1996](#); [Fischer et al., 2004](#)). For instance, people express anger to others when they want them to concede to their demands in a negotiation, or express sadness to recruit help (e.g., [Small & Verrochi, 2009](#); [Van Kleef, De Dreu, & Manstead, 2004](#)). However, such motives extend beyond the regulation of emotional expression to the regulation of emotional experience. For instance, people explicitly state that they try to increase their experience of anger to intimidate or dominate others ([Averill, 1983](#)). People also try to increase their experience of sadness to recruit help from others ([Hackenbracht & Tamir, 2010](#)). Social motives in emotion regulation operate not only at the level of close or dyadic relations, but also at the level of group relations. People who experienced intergroup conflict and endorsed more right-wing goals were more motivated to increase their anger toward outgroup members, whereas people who endorsed more left-wing goals were more motivated to decrease their anger toward outgroup members ([Porat, Halperin, & Tamir, 2016](#)). Taken together, these studies demonstrate that people can be motivated to regulate their emotions to attain desired social outcomes.

### **4.2.3 Epistemic Motives**

Whereas functional theories of emotion consider how emotions inform cognition and behavior, cognitive theories of emotion consider how emotions inform human knowledge and understanding (e.g., [Barrett & Gross, 2001](#); [Clore, 1994](#)). Such theories have proposed that emotions provide people with information about themselves and about their state in the world (e.g., [Clore, Gasper, & Garvin, 2001](#)). Given that people often seek knowledge that is consistent with their values and beliefs (e.g., [Kunda, 1990](#)), people may be motivated to experience emotions that provide the knowledge they desire. For instance, given that people often seek to verify their positive or negative beliefs about themselves (e.g., [Epstein, 1973](#); [Swann, 1987](#)), they may be motivated to experience emotions that verify their self-beliefs.

There is both direct and indirect evidence in support of epistemic motives in emotion regulation. First, when asked why they seek out certain feelings, people mentioned self-verification as one reason for doing so (Augustine et al., 2010). Second, Wood, Heimpel, Manwell, and Whitting (2009) found that people lower in self-esteem were less motivated to decrease unpleasant emotions compared to people higher in self-esteem. In a series of empirical studies, she demonstrated that these emotion goals were driven, in part, by the fact that people with lower self-esteem found such feelings familiar and well-deserved. Such studies demonstrate that people can be motivated to regulate their emotions to attain epistemic benefits.

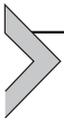
#### **4.2.4 Eudaimonic Motives**

Some have proposed that in addition to their implications for behavior, social relations, and knowledge, emotions can contribute to one's sense of personal mastery and autonomy (e.g., Pavey, Greitemeyer, & Sparks, 2012; Rozin et al., 2013). People are motivated to increase their sense of competence and autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Therefore, if emotions can promote competence and autonomy, people may be motivated to experience emotions to attain these eudaimonic benefits (see Parrott, 1993). Although this prediction is theoretically plausible, there is only limited direct evidence to support it at present. For instance, people pursue forms of entertainment that elicit negative or mixed emotions, in part, because they promote a sense of meaning (Oliver & Raney, 2011), autonomy, and mastery (Tamborini, Bowman, Eden, Grizzard, & Organ, 2010). Such preliminary support suggests that people may be motivated to experience emotions to attain eudaimonic benefits.

### **4.3 Summary**

Although people are often motivated to regulate their emotions in order to alleviate distress, as traditional approaches to emotion regulation have assumed, there is a wide range of instrumental motives that drive emotion regulation. These distinct motives reflect a rich universe of reasons for engaging in emotion regulation that can lead to diverse and distinct emotion goals. These motives were identified by detecting overlaps between what generally motivates people and what emotions can offer them. However, they may not necessarily be exhaustive. Identifying motives in emotion regulation can help explain why people engage (or fail to engage) in

emotion regulation, and point to possible interventions. For instance, it is possible that by priming salient motives people could be motivated to try to regulate their emotions in a particular way. If Jeff cares about performing well, whereas Roy cares about his relations with others, telling Jeff that decreasing sadness can help him perform better may motivate him to engage in emotion regulation, whereas telling Roy that decreasing sadness can improve his relations with others might motivate him to engage in emotion regulation. Furthermore, identifying motives in emotion regulation might help explain why people pursue certain emotion goals over others. We expand on this hypothesis below.



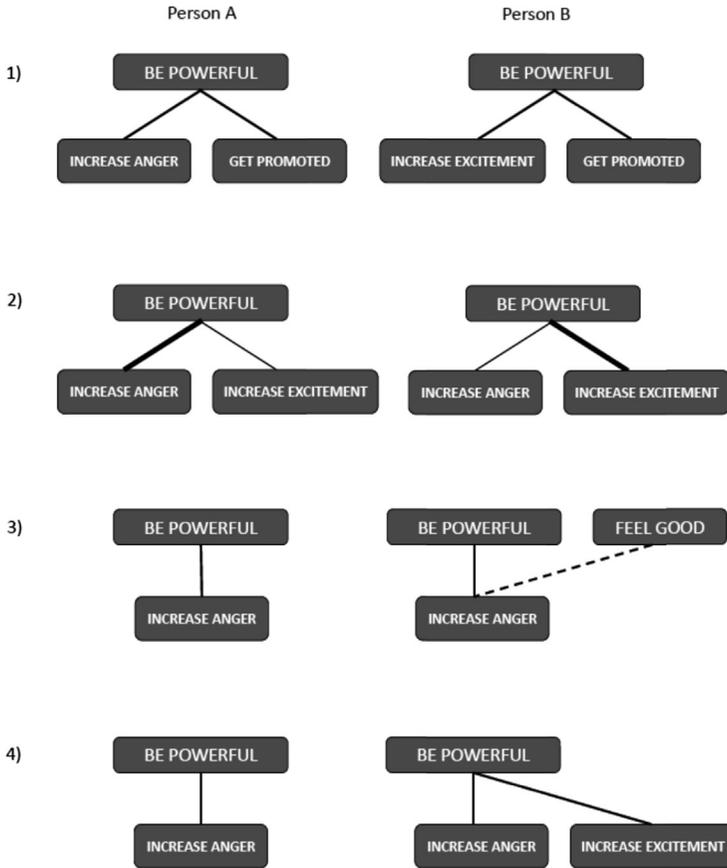
## 5. FROM MOTIVES TO EMOTION GOALS

Emotion goals operate in the service of motives in emotion regulation. Therefore, the pursuit of a particular motive should activate the emotion goal that subserves it. To understand the associations between motives and emotion goals, one needs to consider three related questions. First, is there an association between a motive and a given emotion goal? Second, how strong is this association? Third, are there competing associations that might create conflict or competition? We discuss each of these questions below.

### 5.1 Is There an Association Between an Emotion Goal and a Motive?

According to theories of self-regulation, when people pursue a certain desired outcome they select the means that they believe would lead to desirable consequences (e.g., Atkinson, 1957; Feather, 1982; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). This implies that whether or not a person pursues a particular lower-order goal depends primarily on whether she expects it to lead to the outcome she desires. Building on these ideas, we have proposed that a motive in emotion regulation should lead to the pursuit of a particular emotion goal, if the person expects the emotion goal to promote the attainment of the motive (Tamir, Bigman, Rhodes, Salerno, & Schreier, 2015; Tamir & Ford, 2012b). For instance, a person who seeks to increase power would be motivated to increase anger only if she believes anger can increase power, but not otherwise (see Fig. 3-1).

There are now several sources of evidence for the critical role of emotion outcome-expectancies (i.e., the outcome people expect an emotion to have in a particular context) in shaping emotion regulation. First, several studies



**Figure 3** The hierarchical organization of desired outcomes can determine whether and when a motive would activate an emotion goal. We provide three examples, where Person A is more likely than Person B to try to increase anger. This is likely when (1) Increasing anger is associated with becoming powerful for Person A, but not for Person B; (2) increasing anger is more strongly associated with becoming powerful for Person A than it is for Person B; (3) no competing higher-order motives exist for Person A, but they do exist for Person B, and (4) no competing emotion goals exist for Person A, but they do exist for Person B. Thicker lines reflect stronger associations, dashed lines reflect inhibitory associations.

have shown that the more people expect an emotion to produce desired outcomes, the more likely they are to pursue that emotion. For instance, athletes who believed that anger or anxiety would improve their performance in competitions tried to increase these emotions before competitions, whereas athletes who believed that anger or anxiety would impair their performance, tried to decrease them instead (Lane, Beedie, Davenport, &

Stanley, 2011). Second, in a series of empirical studies, we have shown that when holding the motive constant, changing people's beliefs about the likely outcome of an emotion changed people's motivation to experience that emotion (Tamir et al., 2015). Participants were told they would be rewarded for good performance on an upcoming task. Participants who were led to expect anger to impair performance wanted to decrease their anger, whereas participants who were led to expect anger to improve performance wanted to increase it. We found this pattern even in novel performance contexts, where participants had no prior expectancies. Furthermore, we found this pattern even when the expected benefits or costs of anger were manipulated outside of conscious awareness. Whether they are aware of it or not, people associate emotions with the attainment of desired or undesired outcomes. Such associations, in turn, seem to motivate people to increase or decrease emotions. Studies such as those described above indicate that in order for a particular motive to activate a particular emotion goal, the goal must be associated with the motive.

## 5.2 How Strong is an Association Between an Emotion Goal and a Motive?

Cognitive theories of motivation suggest that the likelihood that a motive would activate a lower-order goal depends not only on whether the two are associated, but also on how strongly they are associated (Kruglanski et al., 2002). Similarly, a motive should be more likely to activate an emotion goal, the stronger the association between the two. For instance, Person A who strongly associates anger with being powerful should be more likely to try to increase anger to attain power, compared to Person B, who only weakly associates anger with being powerful (see Fig. 3-2).

Although relatively few studies have directly examined the strength of associations between emotion goals and motives, the existing evidence is consistent with the idea that people are more likely to pursue an emotion goal the more strongly they associate it with desired outcomes. For instance, Tamir, Chiu, and Gross (2007) assessed how strongly emotions, such as worry or excitement, are associated with the attainment of either avoidance goals (e.g., preventing a disaster) or approach goals (e.g., getting a good grade).

Building on the assumption that people may or may not be aware of the nature of their motivational network (Bargh et al., 2001; Kruglanski et al., 2002), we used both explicit and implicit measures to assess the associations between motives and goals. We found that, on average, people tend to

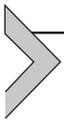
associate worry with successful avoidance, and they tend to associate excitement with successful approach. However, as predicted, the more strongly people associated worry with successful avoidance, the more likely they were to try to increase worry before performing an avoidance task. Such evidence suggests that whether or not a motive activates an emotion goal depends not only on whether the two are associated, but also on the strength of this association.

### 5.3 Are There Conflicting Motives or Competing Emotion Goals?

According to [Kruglanski et al. \(2002\)](#) and [Kruglanski, Chernikova, Babush, Dugas, & Schumpe \(2015\)](#), each goal can operate in the service of multiple higher-order motives and each motive can be linked to multiple lower-order goals. Such links can give rise to many potential structures. In this section, we focus on two of the many possibilities that exist. First, given that a goal can serve more than one motive, it is possible that an emotion goal can promote the attainment of one motive, but impair the attainment of another. In this case, an emotion is likely to be driven by conflicting motives, so that one desired outcome motivates people to increase the emotion, whereas another desired outcome motivates people to decrease it. We predict that the likelihood of a motive activating an emotion goal decreases if conflicting motives are present.

Conflicting motives may explain, for instance, why prohedonic emotion goals are more common than contrahedonic ones. Increasing pleasant emotions or decreasing unpleasant emotions may promote the attainment of certain instrumental motives, and at the same time, promote the attainment of hedonic motives. Therefore, pursuing prohedonic emotion goals can serve two motives at once. In contrast, increasing unpleasant emotions or decreasing pleasant emotions may promote the attainment of certain instrumental motives, but impair the attainment of hedonic motives. Emotion goals that involve increasing unpleasant emotions or decreasing pleasant emotions, therefore, are likely to serve conflicting motives. Given that people are motivated to attain both instrumental and hedonic outcomes, they should be less likely to pursue contrahedonic goals when they have prohedonic goals as viable alternatives. As shown in [Fig. 3-3](#), both Person A and Person B may associate anger with becoming powerful, but Person A should be more likely to try to increase anger if she only wants to increase power, compared to Person B who also wants to feel good (see [Fig. 3-3](#)).

Second, given that several goals can serve any one motive, it is possible that more than one emotion goal can promote the attainment of a motive. The likelihood of a motive activating a specific emotion goal should decrease if competing emotion goals are present (see [Kruglanski et al., 2002, 2015](#)). For instance, as shown in [Fig. 3-4](#), Person A might be more likely than Person B to try to increase her anger because she has no other options for becoming powerful, whereas Person B could either increase anger or increase excitement. The predictions in this section are derived from a motivational analysis of emotion regulation. Although they account for some observed phenomena, they have not yet been empirically tested.



## **6. FROM EMOTION GOALS TO EMOTION REGULATION STRATEGIES**

Whereas emotion goals serve the attainment of higher-order motives, emotion regulation strategies serve the attainment of emotion goals (see [Fig. 1](#)). Most of the available literature on emotion regulation focuses on emotion regulation strategies, contributing to an impressive and sophisticated understanding of the diverse ways in which people can change a current emotional state into a desired one (for reviews, see [Gross, 2007](#); [Parkinson & Totterdell, 1999](#); [Webb, Miles, & Sheeran, 2012](#)).

Although people use emotion regulation strategies as means to attain emotion goals, studies on emotion goals and studies on emotion regulation strategies have been conducted largely in parallel. This might have created the impression that the emotion goals people pursue and the strategies they use to attain them are independent of each other. However, our motivational analysis of emotion regulation assumes that goals and means in emotion regulation are hierarchically interconnected. This implies that to understand emotion regulation it is necessary not only to ask what motivates people to regulate emotions, but also whether and how goals in emotion regulation shape the means used to pursue them.

Within general motivational systems, means are typically linked to goals in unique rather than arbitrary ways. For instance, to promote physical health people may change their diet or exercise, whereas to promote knowledge, people may read books or take classes. People do not take classes to change their physical health or exercise to promote knowledge, because those particular means are less relevant to these goal pursuits. Building on these ideas and applying them to the emotion domain, we proposed that some emotion regulation strategies may be more effective than others for

pursuing certain emotion goals. This would imply that certain emotion regulation strategies are more strongly associated with the attainment of particular emotion goals, compared to other strategies. If this is the case, activating specific emotion goals may dictate the use of particular emotion regulation strategies.

We recently tested this prediction, by assessing whether the activation of certain emotion goals predicts the selection of emotion regulation strategies (Millgram, Sheppes, & Tamir, 2017). We distinguished between two broad types of emotion goals—namely, the goal to increase emotions and the goal to decrease emotions. Next, we assumed that some emotion regulation strategies may be better suited to increase emotions, whereas others may be better suited to decrease emotions. Emotion regulation strategies differ in the degree to which they facilitate engagement with the emotion-inducing stimulus (Parkinson & Totterdell, 1999). The more engaged people are with the stimulus, the more intense their emotional reaction to it is likely to be (Pessoa, Padmala, & Morland, 2005; Westfall, Mrkva, & Van Boven, 2014). Rumination, for instance, is an emotion regulation strategy that involves repetitively thinking about the emotion-inducing stimulus and, therefore, involves high engagement with the stimulus (Nolen-Hoeksema, Wisco, & Lyubomirsky, 2008). Distraction, in contrast, is a strategy that involves shifting attention away from the emotion-inducing stimulus and, therefore, involves high disengagement from the stimulus (Gross, 1998; Sheppes & Gross, 2011). Finally, matching emotion goals to strategies, we expected people to be more likely to choose rumination to increase emotional intensity and more likely to choose distraction to decrease emotional intensity.

To test our predictions, we manipulated emotion goals by instructing participants to either decrease or increase their emotional reactions to emotion-inducing stimuli. To assess whether people select strategies that match their goals, we asked participants to choose between distraction and rumination. We found that when participants were instructed to increase their emotional reactions, they selected rumination in over 74% of trials. When participants were instructed to decrease their emotions, they selected distraction in over 69% of trials. This pattern was replicated in three studies, and was found when people regulated their emotions in response to both unpleasant and pleasant stimuli.

These findings demonstrate that a motivational analysis of emotion regulation is important not only for understanding the content of emotion regulation, but also for understanding the process of emotion regulation.

Motives and goals in emotion regulation are not independent of the strategies people use to regulate emotions. Instead, strategies in emotion regulation are linked to, and might even be dictated by the emotion goals people pursue.



## 7. IMPLICATIONS OF MOTIVATED EMOTION REGULATION

Motives in emotion regulation can determine which emotion goal people pursue. The emotion goal people pursue, in turn, sets the direction in which people regulate their emotion (and in some cases, the means with which they do so). By doing so, emotion goals play a critical role in shaping the outcomes of emotion regulation, and as a result, the emotions people experience. Given that emotions can shape cognition, behavior, social relationships, and well-being, by influencing emotional experiences, emotion goals could potentially have critical downstream effects. In particular, emotion goals can potentially influence how people behave, how they interact with others, their psychological health, and their well-being. We discuss each of these implications below.

### 7.1 Implications for Emotional Experiences and Behavior

A central assumption in the study of motivated emotion regulation is that identifying motives in emotion regulation and emotion goals is important, because these motivational factors could potentially shape how people feel, and consequently, how they behave. Several experimental studies provide evidence supporting these predictions. Some studies demonstrate the downstream effects of motives in emotion regulation. For instance, participants who were motivated to increase their personal gain (vs. joint gains) in an upcoming negotiation were subsequently more motivated to increase their anger (Tamir & Ford, 2012b). This led them to select stimuli that increased their anger, and indeed, they felt more intense anger after they were exposed to the stimuli they had selected. Experiencing more intense anger, in turn, led participants to increase their personal gain in the negotiation.

Outside the laboratory, however, motives in emotion regulation may be difficult to control, as they are often related to basic values (Tamir et al., 2016) or ideologies (Porat et al., 2016). Therefore, building on the motivational analysis of emotion regulation, other studies demonstrated the downstream effects of emotion goals. This was done, for instance, by manipulating

the associations between motives and emotion goals. For instance, in a series of studies, we manipulated people's beliefs about the expected outcomes of emotions (Tamir et al., 2015). Participants who were led to believe that anger would be harmful (vs. useful) for performance became less motivated to experience anger. This led them to avoid (vs. select) anger-inducing stimuli, and to feel less (vs. more) intense anger after being exposed to the stimuli they had selected. Participants who felt less angry, in turn, lost less money in a gambling task and were more willing to share resources with others, compared to participants who felt angrier. We have recently demonstrated that the same mechanism can operate outside the laboratory. People who were motivated to feel angry toward outgroup members were led to consider anger as less useful (vs. not), which decreased their motivation to feel angry (Porat et al., 2016). This manipulation motivated such individuals to try to decrease their anger in response to an anger-inducing stimulus, and resulted in them feeling less angry toward outgroup members. The decreased intensity of anger toward outgroup members, in turn, led to more tolerant political reactions.

These examples demonstrate the pragmatic importance of studying emotion regulation as a motivated process. Identifying motives and goals in emotion regulation and understanding how they operate can ultimately help shape the outcome of emotion regulation, change emotional experiences, and alter subsequent behavior. It is not surprising, therefore, that the motivational analysis of emotion regulation has important implications for a host of critical outcomes, including social functioning, mental health, and well-being, as reviewed below.

## 7.2 Social Implications

Emotions play a critical role in shaping social interactions (for reviews, see Niedenthal & Brauer, 2012; Van Kleef, 2016). Emotion regulation can influence social interactions by modifying the emotions of the regulator or by enabling the regulator to modify the emotions of social counterparts. *Intrapersonal emotion regulation* refers to the process by which individuals regulate their own emotions, whereas *interpersonal emotion regulation* refers to the process by which individuals regulate the emotional experiences of other people (Gross & Thompson, 2007). Both intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion regulation are motivated processes. Furthermore, the motives and goals that drive intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion regulation have important social implications, both at the dyadic and at the group levels.

### **7.2.1 Social Implications of Intrapersonal Emotion Regulation**

Because human life is inherently social, many of the goals people pursue are social by nature or operate in the service of higher-order social goals. To the extent that motives can dictate emotion goals, it may be possible to predict emotion goals from more general social motives. Values, for instance, are motives that are positioned relatively high in the hierarchical organization of desired outcomes (Schwartz, 1992). They reflect a general view of how the world ideally ought to be. According to the theory of human values (Schwartz, 1992), values vary in the extent to which they involve enhancing the self (e.g., by increasing power and dominance) versus transcending the self (e.g., by increasing benevolence and universalism). Consistent with the predictions of a motivated analysis of emotion regulation, in a cross-cultural study that spanned eight countries from distinct cultural regions, we found consistent links between values and emotion goals. The more people endorsed self-transcending values, the more motivated they were to experience emotions that signal self-transcendence, such as love, trust, and empathy. In contrast, the more people endorsed self-enhancing values, the more motivated they were to experience emotions that signal self-enhancement, such as anger, hatred, and contempt. What people value, therefore, may anticipate what people want to feel, which could ultimately influence how people actually feel and how they interact with each other.

To directly test whether and how a motivational analysis of emotion regulation can shape social outcomes, we examined motives and emotion goals in the intergroup context. Political ideology reflects different goals pertaining to social inequality and change (Jost, Federico, & Napier, 2009). Whereas right-wing ideology is associated with resistance to social change and the acceptance of inequality, left-wing ideology is associated with advocating change and rejecting inequality (Jost et al., 2009). We expected political ideology to motivate emotion goals. Supporting our prediction, we found that compared to left-wing Israelis, right-wing Israelis were more motivated to feel angry (and less motivated to feel empathy) toward Palestinians. We were also able to provide causal evidence for the role of political ideology in shaping emotion goals, by showing that changing the temporary salience of political ideology changes how angry Israeli participants wanted to feel toward Palestinians.

Next, we expected these emotion goals to predict how people ultimately felt and how they behaved in the intergroup context, even when controlling for the motives that gave rise to these goals. In support of these predictions, how much anger Israelis wanted to feel toward Palestinians at Time 1

predicted how much anger they actually felt, both during war (Time 2) and during the renewal of peace negotiations (Time 3). These effects persisted when controlling for political ideology and for how much anger people actually felt at Time 1. How much anger people felt at Times 2 and 3, in turn, predicted how willing they were to renew peace negotiations with the Palestinians or support the provision of humanitarian aid to Palestinian residents of the occupied territories.

Finally, building on the motivational analysis of emotion regulation, we predicted that by manipulating emotion goals, it may be possible to change how people regulate their emotions, how they feel toward outgroup members, and which policies they support. Our findings supported these predictions. To test these predictions, we manipulated the associations between motives and emotion goals. Israeli participants were provided with information suggesting that decreasing anger may be advantageous (or not) for making effective political decisions. This, in turn, motivated participants to try to decrease their anger when reading about an event that induced anger toward the outgroup, decreasing the intensity of their anger. The less intense anger participants felt toward outgroup members, in turn, the less likely they were to support politically intolerant policies (e.g., supporting the right of minority members to vote in the elections). These results demonstrate how motives and goals in emotion regulation shape how people ultimately feel toward others, and how they behave. The results are particularly impressive, given that the behaviors in question (e.g., supporting a ceasefire during war, supporting the right of minority members to vote) can ultimately shape the well-being of groups and even entire nations.

### ***7.2.2 Social Implications of Interpersonal Emotion Regulation***

The motivational analysis of emotion regulation has focused primarily on intrapersonal regulation, with relatively less attention devoted to interpersonal emotion regulation, and how it might be informed by motivational factors. Much of the research on the latter has focused on emotion regulation in close relationships, involving parents and their offspring (e.g., [Thompson, 1991](#)), or intimate partners (e.g., [Butler, 2011](#)). Echoing traditional assumptions in intrapersonal emotion regulation, such research has assumed that people regulate the emotions of others to increase pleasure and decrease pain in the other, presumably because this could lead to congruent hedonic benefits for the self.

Informed by a motivational analysis of emotion regulation, researchers have proposed alternative motives (e.g., [Clark et al., 1996](#); [Zaki, 2013](#)),

suggesting that there may be multiple reasons that lead people to try to change the emotions of others. There is now empirical evidence for instrumental motives in interpersonal emotion regulation. People try to increase unpleasant emotions in others (e.g., anger) when they expect to directly benefit from doing so (Gneezy & Imas, 2014; Netzer, Van Kleef, & Tamir, 2015). In fact, people are even willing to make allies (e.g., Netzer et al., 2015) or significant others (Parkinson, Simons, & Niven, 2016) feel bad, when they expect this to lead to instrumental benefits. As with intrapersonal emotion regulation, people are motivated to regulate the emotions of others for instrumental reasons, in both prohedonic and contra-hedonic directions.

Instrumental interpersonal emotion regulation is not limited to dyadic contexts, but extends to the intergroup context as well. In fact, motivated intergroup emotion regulation is likely prevalent in communications between groups. In a series of studies, conducted both in hypothetical contexts and in the context of the Israeli–Palestinian intractable conflict, we found that the higher-order goals people pursue for their group play a causal role in shaping what they want outgroup members to feel (Netzer, Halperin, & Tamir, 2017). The more people were motivated to defend their ingroup against the outgroup, the less anger they wanted outgroup members to feel, whereas the more motivated they were to deter the outgroup, the more fear they wanted outgroup members to feel. These intergroup emotion goals, in turn, influenced how people interacted with members of the outgroup, which in turn, influenced the emotional experiences of outgroup members. The intensity with which people pursued these intergroup emotion goals increased the more people identified with their ingroup and the more they believed the target of regulation had influence over the outgroup.

Although more research is needed to understand the ways in which motivated interpersonal emotion regulation operates within the intergroup context, these findings demonstrate that people try to manipulate the feelings of others in various directions, and that they engage in these attempts to attain higher-order goals. Motivated interpersonal emotion regulation, therefore, may explain why some leaders try to instill hope in their subordinates whereas others try to arouse fear, and why certain groups publish videos of hopeful rescue missions, whereas others publish videos of terrifying beheadings. Adopting a motivational analysis of emotion regulation can help uncover the mechanisms that lead to such behaviors, and point to possible ways to promote healthier communication between individuals and groups, and healthier social outcomes.

### 7.3 Clinical Implications

Studying emotion regulation as a motivated process can inform not only healthy, but also unhealthy emotion regulation. Many psychiatric disorders involve deficits in emotion regulation (e.g., Brockmeyer et al., 2012; Joormann & Siemer, 2014; Kring & Sloan, 2009). Indeed, difficulties to regulate emotions in daily life can prospectively predict the development of disorders, such as depression and anxiety (e.g., Kim & Cicchetti, 2010; McLaughlin & Hatznuehlen, 2009).

Existing research on emotion regulation in psychopathology has focused almost exclusively on the process of emotion regulation rather than its content, focusing on which emotion regulation strategies people use and how well they use them (e.g., Aldao, Nolen-Hoeksema, & Schweizer, 2010; Brockmeyer et al., 2012; D'Avanzato, Joormann, Siemer & Gotlib, 2013). For example, depression, anxiety and eating disorders have been linked to the more frequent use of maladaptive emotion regulation strategies, which are considered to be less effective in modulating emotional experiences (e.g., rumination, avoidance and suppression; Aldao et al., 2010; Nolen-Hoeksema et al., 2008). These disorders are also characterized by the infrequent implementation of more effective emotion regulation strategies (e.g., cognitive reappraisal; Aldao et al., 2010; D'Avanzato et al., 2013; Garnefski & Kraaij, 2006).

As a motivated process, however, emotion regulation involves the use of emotion regulation strategies to attain desired emotional states. This analysis raises the previously unexplored possibility that emotion regulation deficits in psychopathology are related not only to the strategies people use to regulate emotions, but also to the emotional states people desire (i.e., their emotion goals). Given that emotion goals can shape how people eventually feel, maladaptive emotional experiences may be a function of maladaptive emotion goals. Below, we review the potential role of emotion goals in two psychiatric disorders, which are marked by maladaptive emotional experiences—namely, major depression and bipolar disorders (see Joormann & Siemer, 2014).

#### 7.3.1 Emotion Goals in Depression

Depression is characterized by persistent unpleasant emotions, such as sadness, and by diminished pleasant emotions, such as happiness (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). For the first time, we assessed the emotion goals depressed individuals pursue, and compared them to those that

nondepressed individuals pursue (Millgram et al., 2015). We measured the emotion goals of depressed and nondepressed individuals using both self-report and behavioral measures. Depressed individuals explicitly indicated that they wanted to feel more sad and less happy than nondepressed participants. In addition, depressed individuals were more likely than nondepressed to regulate their emotions in a way that maintained or even increased their sadness. This was evident when participants used the strategy of situation selection, which involves selecting stimuli that induce desired emotions. When offered to watch sad or happy pictures or listen to sad, neutral or happy music, depressed participants were less likely to choose stimuli that could decrease their sadness. This was also evident when participants used the strategy of cognitive reappraisal, which involves reinterpreting emotion-inducing stimuli in a way that changes their emotional impact in a desired direction. After being trained in using reappraisal to both increase and decrease emotional reactions to both sad and happy stimuli, depressed participants were more likely than nondepressed to use reappraisal to increase, rather than to decrease, reactions to sad pictures.

Depressed participants who chose to increase their emotional reactions to sad stimuli ended up feeling sadder than depressed participants who chose to decrease their emotions. These findings show, first, that psychologically healthy and unhealthy individuals differ in the emotion goals they pursue. Second, these findings suggest that the emotion goals of depressed individuals may contribute to their emotional experiences. In the specific context of clinical depression, trying to maintain or increase sadness may be maladaptive, potentially leading to the maintenance of depressive symptoms.

Why do depressed and nondepressed individuals pursue different emotion goals? Although further research is needed to address this important question, several possibilities exist. One possibility is that the experience of sadness feels authentic to depressed (but not to nondepressed) individuals and offers them information that reaffirms their self-beliefs. Given that people are motivated to confirm their beliefs about themselves, whether they are positive or negative (e.g., Swann, Wenzlaff, Krull, & Pelham, 1992), depressed individuals may seek sadness to confirm their view of themselves as sad individuals. Another possibility is that the experience of sadness might confirm more general beliefs of self-worth. Because depressed individuals generally hold negative self-views (Orth & Robins, 2013), they might believe they deserve to experience unpleasant emotional experiences, such as sadness. Supporting both of these options, Wood et al. (2009) found that people with low self-esteem were less motivated to repair their sad

mood, partly because these moods were familiar to them and they believed they did not deserve to feel better.

Another possibility is that depressed individuals might be more motivated to experience sadness because they do not believe they can actually feel better. Depressed individuals are more pessimistic about attaining their personal goals (Dickson, Moberly, & Kinderman, 2011), and this may lead them to be pessimistic about attaining emotion goals as well. If depressed individuals view happiness as less attainable, they may fail to direct emotion regulation efforts towards decreasing their negative emotions. Further research is needed to test this possibility.

Existing evidence suggests that depressed individuals are less motivated to decrease their sadness, and as a result, maintain higher levels of sadness. However, an important next step is to test whether the emotion goals of depressed individuals also shape the means depressed people use to regulate their emotions. Depression has been consistently linked with the excessive use of rumination (Aldao et al., 2010; Nolen-Hoeksema et al., 2008). Rumination involves repetitively thinking about ones' emotional state, its causes and implications (Nolen-Hoeksema et al., 2008). Rumination has been linked to increased negative emotionality and predicts future depressive episodes (Nolen-Hoeksema et al., 2008). Given the detrimental effects of rumination, researchers have tried to understand why depressed individuals engage in it so frequently.

Some researchers have proposed that depressed individuals engage in rumination as a mental habit, which is triggered automatically in response to negative stimuli, even if ruminating is inconsistent with the individual's goals (Hertel, 2004; Watkins & Nolen-Hoeksema, 2014). The underlying assumption of this approach is that depressed individuals are motivated to decrease their negative emotions, and therefore, use rumination because they are habituated to respond in this way to negative stimulation.

A motivational analysis of emotion regulation, however, offers an alternative explanation. Depressed individuals may use different emotion regulation strategies because they pursue different emotion goals. Because rumination is a strategy that is likely to increase emotional intensity (e.g., Rusting & Nolen-Hoeksema, 1998), and because depressed individuals are more motivated to increase sadness (Millgram et al., 2015), they might select rumination as a means to attain their emotion goals. We recently tested whether and how emotion goals influence the selection of emotion regulation strategies among depressed individuals (Millgram, Gruber, Rappaport, & Tamir, 2017). We instructed depressed and nondepressed

participants to either increase or decrease their emotional reactions to either negative or positive stimuli, and asked them to choose whether to use rumination or distraction to do so. People diagnosed with depression were more likely to choose rumination when motivated to increase emotional intensity than when they were motivated to decrease emotional intensity. Thus contrary to the idea that depressive rumination is a mental habit, we found that depressed individuals select emotion regulation strategies to match their emotion goals. Future research should test whether emotion goals in depression may be responsible for the excessive use of rumination in depression.

### **7.3.2 Emotion Goals in Bipolar Disorder**

Maladaptive emotion goals may not be limited to clinical depression. Considering emotion regulation as a motivated process can potentially inform the understanding of other disorders, especially those that are marked by emotional deficits, such as bipolar disorder (e.g., Gruber, 2011; Gruber, Kogan, Mennin, & Murray, 2013). Bipolar disorder is an affective disorder, characterized by fluctuations in mood, with periods of extremely elevated mood, periods of depressed mood and mixed episodes involving both mania and depression (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Bipolar disorder is also linked to deficits in emotion regulation (e.g., Gruber, Harvey, & Gross, 2012; Townsend & Altshuler, 2012). Such deficits have been studied to date only with respect to the use of adaptive or maladaptive strategies in emotion regulation (Gruber, Eidelman, Johnson, Smith, & Harvey, 2011; Gruber et al., 2012, 2013). Such deficits, however, may also be related to pursuing adaptive or maladaptive goals in emotion regulation.

Bipolar disorder involves intense pleasant and unpleasant emotional experiences. Therefore, one possibility is that people with bipolar disorder direct emotion regulation attempts in a manner that preserves variable emotional states. Consistent with this possibility, we found that people at risk for bipolar disorder prefer more volatile emotional experiences than controls (Millgram et al., 2017). Furthermore, when given the opportunity to alternate between stimuli that elicit different emotional states (i.e., happiness, sadness, neutral), people at risk for bipolar disorder made different choices than healthy controls. Whereas healthy participants consistently wanted to switch to happy stimuli (i.e., maintain high levels of happiness), people at risk for bipolar disorder were less likely to alternate from sad or neutral stimuli to happy stimuli and more likely to alternate from happy or neutral stimuli to sad stimuli. These patterns suggest that people at risk

for bipolar disorder may be less motivated to experience pleasant emotions, and instead, prefer more diverse emotional experiences.

This emerging evidence on emotion goals in depression and bipolar disorder suggest that a motivational analysis of emotion regulation can offer new and important insights to understanding emotion regulation in psychopathology. The goals people pursue as they regulate emotions, for instance, may shape how people who suffer from mental disorders regulate their emotions and how they feel as a consequence, which could ultimately exacerbate their clinical symptoms.

## **7.4 Implications for Well-Being and Adaptive Functioning**

A motivational analysis of emotion regulation considers it as the process by which people pursue emotion goals. This conceptualization points to at least two ways by which emotion goals can shape psychological well-being. First, by setting the direction of emotion regulation, emotion goals can shape emotional experiences. Emotional experiences, in turn, are linked to psychological health and well-being (e.g., Ford & Mauss, 2014). Therefore, the pursuit of healthy emotion goals should promote well-being. Second, the pursuit of emotion goals is an instantiation of goal pursuit. The process of goal pursuit itself is linked to both emotional experiences and well-being (e.g., Elliot, Sheldon, & Church, 1997; Emmons, 2003; Sheldon & Elliot, 1999). Therefore, the healthy pursuit of emotion goals should promote well-being. We discuss each of these options below.

### **7.4.1 Pursuing Healthy Emotion Goals**

Which emotions should people pursue to promote well-being? According to one approach, well-being involves maximizing pleasant emotions and minimizing unpleasant emotions (e.g., Diener, 1984; Kahneman, Diener, & Schwarz, 1999; Lucas, Diener, & Suh, 1996). According to this approach, therefore, healthy emotion goals should involve increasing pleasant emotions and decreasing unpleasant ones. Whereas multiple studies assessed links between well-being and emotional experiences (e.g., Kuppens, Realo, & Diener, 2008), relatively few studies assessed links between well-being and emotion goals. Some of these studies provide partial support for the above prediction. For instance, people who wanted to feel happier and less angry, in general, reported greater well-being (Tamir & Ford, 2012a) and less depression (Kim, Ford, Mauss, & Tamir, 2015). However, these patterns no longer held when examining emotional preferences in specific contexts. Furthermore, in a recent cross-cultural study, we found no associations

between desired emotions and life satisfaction or depression, when controlling for actual emotions (Tamir, Schwartz, Oishi, & Kim, 2017). Therefore, there is only partial evidence suggesting that seeking to increase pleasant emotions and to decrease unpleasant emotions is necessarily healthy.

According to another approach, well-being involves the effective pursuit of goals, such as environmental mastery and the promotion of positive social relations (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff, 1989). According to this approach, therefore, healthy emotion goals should involve increasing emotions that promote the attainment of other personal goals, and decreasing emotions that impair their attainment. Some evidence provides indirect evidence for this prediction, showing that the pursuit of instrumental emotions (i.e., emotions that operate in the service of higher-order goals) is linked to greater well-being. For instance, people who were more motivated to feel happy when they needed to collaborate, but who were similarly more motivated to feel angry when they needed to confront, reported greater satisfaction with life, greater psychological well-being, and better social functioning (Tamir & Ford, 2012a). The same pattern was found in a daily diary study, as people reported on the goals they pursued in their daily lives (Kim et al., 2015). People who wanted to feel happier in contexts that called for collaboration, but who also wanted to feel angrier in contexts that called for confrontation experienced less depression and reported better psychological functioning. This research suggests that seeking emotions that could promote the attainment of higher-order goals may be healthy.

#### **7.4.2 The Healthy Pursuit of Emotion Goals**

Regardless of which specific emotion goal people pursue, the pursuit of such goals may itself be healthy or unhealthy. For instance, more (vs. less) effective pursuit of personal goals is healthier and is linked to greater well-being (e.g., Brunstein, 1993; Emmons, 1986; Sheldon & Elliot, 1999). Considering emotion regulation as an instance of goal pursuit suggests that regardless of which emotion goals people pursue, well-being may be related to how effectively people pursue them. Therefore, whether people are motivated to experience pleasant or unpleasant emotions, and whether people are motivated to experience emotions that promote or impair the attainment of personal goals, people who effectively pursue their emotion goals may experience greater well-being.

There is some support for this prediction. On average, smaller absolute discrepancies between actual affect and desired affect were linked to greater life satisfaction (Kampfe & Mitte, 2009). Similarly, we found that across

diverse cultural contexts, smaller absolute discrepancies between actual and desired emotions were linked to higher life satisfaction and to lower depression (Tamir et al., 2016). We found these patterns when examining both pleasant and unpleasant emotion goals, when people wanted to feel less pleasant emotions or more pleasant emotions than they actually felt, and when controlling for the individual effects of actual and desired emotions. Such research suggests that if successful emotion regulation involves the effective pursuit of emotion goals (and feeling the emotions one wants to feel), such pursuit may be healthy.

A healthy emotion goal pursuit is an effective emotion goal pursuit, but there may be other features of goal pursuit that render it healthy. For instance, an approach-oriented goal pursuit is generally healthier than an avoidance-oriented goal pursuit (e.g., Elliot et al., 1997). This implies that approach-oriented emotion regulation may lead to greater well-being than avoidance-oriented emotion regulation. There is already evidence suggesting that approach-oriented strategies in emotion regulation may be healthier than avoidance-oriented strategies. For instance, avoidant forms of emotion regulation (e.g., suppression, distraction) are generally linked to maladaptive outcomes (e.g., Kashdan, Barrios, Forsyth, & Steger, 2006). Future research should test whether pursuing approach-oriented emotion goals (e.g., seeking to increase pleasant emotions) may be healthier than pursuing avoidance-oriented emotion goals (e.g., seeking to decrease unpleasant emotions).

### 7.4.3 Summary

Conceptualizing emotion regulation as a motivated process points to novel aspects of emotion regulation that could promote (or impair) well-being. The emotion goals people pursue can shape emotional outcomes, which in turn, influence well-being. In addition, the manner in which people pursue such goals can carry healthy or unhealthy consequences. To optimize well-being, it is likely that one should pursue healthy emotion goals in a healthy manner.



---

## 8. EXTENDING THE MOTIVATIONAL ANALYSIS OF EMOTION REGULATION

Adopting a motivational analysis of emotion regulation affords researchers opportunities to apply any motivational construct and theory

to the emotion domain. Viewed in this light, it becomes clear that we have barely begun to examine the multiple possibilities that lie ahead. In what follows, we highlight two of the domains that we believe are promising avenues for future research. These include questions about the development of emotion goals, and the temporal stages of emotion goal pursuit.

## 8.1 The Development of Emotion Goals

The motivational analysis of emotion regulation propelled researchers to identify a universe of motives and goals in emotion regulation that vary across people (e.g., Tamir & Ford, 2012a; Tamir et al., 2016; Tsai, Knutson, & Fung, 2006) and across contexts (Kalokerinos et al., 2017; Tamir & Ford, 2012b). Individuals differ in the motives they pursue, in which emotions they expect might help them achieve their motives, and in how strongly they associate these emotions with their motives. However, what determines the nature and strength of these associations? For instance, why do certain people associate successful confrontation with anger and others associate it with calmness?

There are likely various factors that determine whether an individual associates a particular emotion goal with a particular motive. Proponents of the basic approach to emotion (e.g., Ekman, 1994) argue that each emotion is linked to a fixed set of emotion-specific behaviors. According to this approach, therefore, the possible set of associations between goals and emotions is constrained (e.g., anger can be associated with aggression, but not with avoiding threat). These associations, in turn, may be either accessible from birth or learned from experience. In contrast, proponents of constructivist approaches to emotion (for reviews, see Barrett & Russell, 2014) argue that emotions are psychological constructions that are based on the conceptualization of repeated associations. According to this approach, any emotion can be linked to any outcome, depending on the unique learning history of the individual. The existing evidence indicates that associations between motives and emotion goals are highly malleable (e.g., Porat et al., 2016; Tamir et al., 2015), but whether there are boundaries to such malleability and what they might be remains to be tested.

We currently know little about the ways in which people come to associate emotions with motives in emotion regulation and what determines the strength of these associations. For instance, how do people become aware of certain emotion goals and what propels them to pursue them? Some research suggests that parents convey information about the usefulness of emotions to their offspring (e.g., Rogers, Halberstadt, Castro,

MacCormack, & Garrett-Peters, 2016; Rothenberg et al., 2017). Other research suggests that information about the usefulness of emotions varies across and is transcribed by cultures (e.g., De Leersnyder, Boiger, & Mesquita, 2013). Future research is needed to build on these fascinating lines of research and identify the mechanism and developmental trajectory of motivated emotion regulation.

## 8.2 The Temporal Stages of Emotion Goal Pursuit

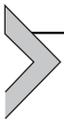
Our motivational analysis of emotion regulation has focused on identifying what people want to achieve and why. However, the selection of a goal is but the first step in its pursuit. Goal pursuits are not merely a function of what people want, but also of how intensely they want it and how hard they work to get it. Models of action phases (e.g., Gollwitzer, 1990; Heckhausen, 2000) distinguish between different stages of goal pursuit, including stages pertaining to goal selection and initiation, as well as stages pertaining to goal implementation and monitoring. To develop a more comprehensive understanding of emotion regulation as a motivated process, it is necessary to move beyond the selection phase and examine other stages involved in the dynamic pursuit of emotion goals.

First, although people want to feel good, they often fail to initiate emotion regulation, even when they have access to effective regulation strategies (Suri, Whittaker, & Gross, 2015). Instead, people often act out of inertia when regulating emotions (Kuppens, Allen, & Sheeber, 2010; Suri, Sheppes, Schwartz, & Gross, 2013). Understanding when people choose to act on their emotion goals and what might lead them to initiate emotion goal pursuit, therefore, is an important challenge for future research.

Second, once people select a goal, they need to engage in effective steps to pursue it. People are likely to pursue goals more effectively if they form implementation intentions—that is, concrete plans for when, where and how to act (Gollwitzer, 1990). These ideas have now been extended to the domain of emotion regulation. Evidence suggests that using implementation intentions (vs. not) leads to more successful regulation of emotions (for a review, see Webb, Schweiger Gallo, Miles, Gollwitzer, & Sheeran, 2012). Understanding the various factors that influence the pursuit of emotion goals, as they evolve over time, is another important direction for future research.

Third, as people pursue their goals, they need to monitor their progress. Such monitoring is critical, because it informs people when they need to

increase or decrease their efforts and when goal pursuit is complete. How do people monitor progress in emotion goal pursuit? According to cybernetic models of goal pursuit, affect signals progress in goal pursuit (e.g., Carver & Scheier, 2000; Higgins, 1987). Pleasant affect signals that goal pursuit is progressing as planned or faster, whereas unpleasant affect signals that goal pursuit is not progressing at a desired rate. When people pursue nonemotion goals, the affect resulting from goal monitoring is independent of the desired outcome itself. However, when people pursue emotion goals, the affect resulting from goal monitoring can alter the desired outcome. This may lead to ironic effects. For example, Mauss and colleagues found that the more people wanted to increase their happiness, the less happy they ultimately felt, potentially because failing to reach high standards resulted in negative affect, rendering emotion goal pursuit less effective (Mauss, Tamir, Anderson, & Savino, 2011). Understanding the dynamic aspects of emotion goal pursuit, and how they might differ from the pursuit of other goals, is an important challenge for future motivational analyses of emotion regulation.



## 9. CONCLUSIONS

The motivational analysis of emotion regulation described in this chapter has helped to change how we think about emotion regulation. Rather than being helplessly pulled by wild horses that are our emotions, it appears that we can tame, care for, and harness them to help us get to our desired destinations. How we control our emotions, in turn, critically depends on where we are trying to go and on whether and how we expect emotions to get us there. We are only just beginning to understand the motivational factors that shape emotion regulation, but acknowledging them allows us to develop a deeper and more sophisticated understanding of both the adaptive and maladaptive regulation of emotions.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge the support of the Israel Science Foundation (grant #934/15).

## REFERENCES

- Aldao, A., Nolen-Hoeksema, S., & Schweizer, S. (2010). Emotion-regulation strategies across psychopathology: A meta-analytic review. *Clinical Psychology Review, 30*, 217–237.
- American Psychiatric Association (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association.

- Andrade, E. B., & Cohen, J. B. (2007). On the consumption of negative feelings. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *34*, 283–300.
- Atkinson, J. W. (1957). Motivational determinants of risk-taking behavior. *Psychological Review*, *64*, 359–372.
- Augustine, A. A., Hemenover, S. H., Larsen, R. J., & Shulman, T. E. (2010). Composition and consistency of the desired affective state: The role of personality and motivation. *Motivation and Emotion*, *34*, 133–143.
- Averill, J. R. (1983). Studies on anger and aggression: Implications for theories of emotion. *American Psychologist*, *38*, 1145–1160.
- Bargh, J. A., Gollwitzer, P. M., Lee-Chai, A., Barndollar, K., & Trötschel, R. (2001). The automated will: nonconscious activation and pursuit of behavioral goals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *81*, 1014–1027.
- Barrett, L. F. (2012). Emotions are real. *Emotion*, *12*, 413–429.
- Barrett, L. F., & Gross, J. J. (2001). Emotional intelligence: A process model of emotion representation and regulation. In T. J. Mayne, & G. A. Bonanno (Eds.), *Emotions: Current issues and future directions* (pp. 286–311). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Barrett, L. F., & Russell, J. A. (2014). *The psychological construction of emotion*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Bonanno, G. A. (2001). Emotion self-regulation. In T. J. Mayne, & G. A. Bonanno (Eds.), *Emotions: Current issues and future directions* (pp. 251–285). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Brockmeyer, T., Bents, H., Holtforth, M. G., Pfeiffer, N., Herzog, W., & Friederich, H. C. (2012). Specific emotion regulation impairments in major depression and anorexia nervosa. *Psychiatry Research*, *200*, 550–553.
- Brunstein, J. C. (1993). Personal goals and subjective well-being: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *65*, 1061–1070.
- Butler, E. A. (2011). Temporal interpersonal emotion systems the “TIES” that form relationships. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *15*, 367–393.
- Cameron, C. D., & Payne, B. K. (2011). Escaping affect: How motivated emotion regulation creates insensitivity to mass suffering. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *100*, 1–15.
- Carver, C. S., & Scheier, M. F. (1998). *On the self-regulation of behavior*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Carver, C. S., & Scheier, M. F. (2000). On the structure of behavioral self-regulation. In M. Boekaerts, P. R. Pintrich, & M. Zeidner (Eds.), *Handbook of self-regulation* (pp. 41–84). San Diego, CA, US: Academic Press.
- Clark, M. S., Pataki, S. P., & Carver, V. H. (1996). Some thoughts and findings on self-presentation of emotions in relationships. In G. J. O. Fletcher, & J. Fitness (Eds.), *Knowledge structures in close relationships: A social psychological approach* (pp. 247–274). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Clore, G. L. (1994). Why emotions are felt. In P. Ekman, & R. J. Davidson (Eds.), *The nature of emotions: Fundamental questions* (pp. 103–111). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Clore, G. L., Gasper, K., & Garvin, E. (2001). Affect as information. In J. P. Forgas (Ed.), *Handbook of affect and social cognition* (pp. 121–144). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Cohen, J. B., & Andrade, E. B. (2004). Affective intuition and task contingent affect regulation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *31*, 358–367.
- De Leersnyder, J., Boiger, M., & Mesquita, B. (2013). Cultural regulation of emotion: Individual, relational, and structural sources. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *4*, 55.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1991). A motivational approach to self: Integration in personality. In R. Dienstbier (Ed.), *Nebraska symposium on motivation: Perspectives on motivation* (Vol. 38, pp. 237–288). Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

- Dickson, J. M., Moberly, N. J., & Kinderman, P. (2011). Depressed people are not less motivated by personal goals but are more pessimistic about attaining them. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 120*, 975–980.
- Diener, E. (1984). Subjective well-being. *Psychological Bulletin, 95*, 542–575.
- D'Avanzato, C., Joormann, J., Siemer, M., & Gotlib, I. H. (2013). Emotion regulation in depression and anxiety: examining diagnostic specificity and stability of strategy use. *Cognitive Therapy and Research, 37*, 968–980.
- Eid, M., & Diener, E. (2001). Norms for experiencing emotions in different cultures: inter- and intranational differences. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 81*, 869–885.
- Ekman, P. (1992). An argument for basic emotions. *Cognition & Emotion, 6*, 169–200.
- Ekman, P. (1994). All emotion are basic. In P. Ekman, & R. J. Davidson (Eds.), *The nature of emotions: Fundamental questions* (pp. 15–19). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Elliot, A. J. (2006). The Hierarchical model of approach-avoidance motivation. *Motivation and Emotion, 30*, 111–116.
- Elliot, A. J., & McGregor, H. A. (2001). A 2 × 2 achievement goal framework. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 80*, 501–519.
- Elliot, A. J., Sheldon, K. M., & Church, M. A. (1997). Avoidance personal goals and subjective well-being. *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin, 23*, 915–927.
- Emmons, R. A. (1986). Personal strivings: an approach to personality and subjective well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 51*, 1058–1068.
- Emmons, R. A. (2003). Personal goals, life meaning, and virtue: Wellsprings of a positive life. In C. L. M. Keyes, & J. Haidt (Eds.), *Flourishing: Positive psychology and the life well-lived* (pp. 105–128). Washington, DC, US: American Psychological Association.
- Epstein, M. L. (1973). Effect of response set on a test of unlearning. *Psychological Reports, 33*, 439–445.
- Erber, R., & Erber, M. W. (2000). The self-regulation of moods: Second thoughts on the importance of happiness in everyday life. *Psychological Inquiry, 11*, 142–148.
- Erber, R., Wegner, D. M., & Theriault, N. (1996). On being cool and collected: mood regulation in anticipation of social interaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 70*, 757–766.
- Feather, N. T. (1982). Expectancy-value approaches: Present status and future directions. In N. T. Feather (Ed.), *Expectations and actions: Expectancy-value models in psychology* (pp. 395–420). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Fischer, A. H., Manstead, A. S. R., Evers, C., Timmers, M., & Valk, G. (2004). Motives and norms underlying emotion regulation. In P. Philippot, & R. S. Feldman (Eds.), *The regulation of emotion* (pp. 187–210). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1975). *Belief, attitude, intention, and behavior: An introduction to theory and research*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Fiske, S. T. (2003). Five core social motives, plus or minus five. *Motivated Social Perception: The Ontario Symposium, 9*, 233–246.
- Forbes, D. L. (2011). Toward a unified model of human motivation. *Review of General Psychology, 15*, 85–98.
- Ford, B. Q., & Mauss, I. B. (2014). Emotion experience and well-being. In E. Diener, & R. Biswas-Diener (Eds.), *Noba textbook series: Psychology*. Champaign, IL: Diener Education Fund Publishers. <http://nobaproject.com/modules/emotion-experience-and-well-being>.
- Forgas, J. P. (2013). Don't worry, be sad! On the cognitive, motivational, and interpersonal benefits of negative mood. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 22*, 225–232.
- Frijda, N. H. (1986). *The emotions*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Frijda, N. H., & Mesquita, B. (1994). The social roles and functions of emotions. In S. Kitayama, & H. R. Markus (Eds.), *Emotion and culture: Empirical studies of mutual influence* (pp. 51–87). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Garnefski, N., & Kraaij, V. (2006). Relationships between cognitive emotion regulation strategies and depressive symptoms: A comparative study of five specific samples. *Personality and Individual Differences, 40*, 1659–1669.

- Gneezy, U., & Imas, A. (2014). Materazzi effect and the strategic use of anger in competitive interactions. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, *111*, 1334–1337.
- Gollwitzer, P. M. (1990). Action phases and mind-sets. In E. T. Higgins, & R. M. Sorrentino (Eds.), *Handbook of motivation and cognition: Foundations of social behavior* (Vol. 2, pp. 53–92). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Gollwitzer, P. M., Kappes, H. B., & Oettingen, G. (2012). Needs and incentives as sources of goals. In H. Aarts, & A. J. Elliot (Eds.), *Frontiers of social psychology: Goal-directed behavior* (pp. 115–150). New York, NY: Psychology Press.
- Gollwitzer, P. M., & Moskowitz, G. B. (1996). Goal effects on action and cognition. In E. T. Higgins, & A. W. Kruglanski (Eds.), *Social psychology, handbook of basic principles* (pp. 361–399). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Grant, H., & Gelety, L. (2009). Goal content theories: Why differences in what we are striving for matter. In G. B. Moskowitz, & H. Grant (Eds.), *The psychology of goals* (pp. 77–97). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Gross, J. J. (1998). The emerging field of emotion regulation: An integrative review. *Review of General Psychology*, *2*, 271–299.
- Gross, J. J. (1999). Emotion regulation: Past, present, future. *Cognition & Emotion*, *13*, 551–573.
- Gross, J. J. (2007). *Handbook of emotion regulation*. New York, NY, US: Guilford Press.
- Gross, J. J., & Thompson, R. A. (2007). Emotion regulation: Conceptual foundations. In J. J. Gross (Ed.), *Handbook of emotion regulation* (pp. 3–24). New York, NY, US: Guilford Press.
- Gruber, J. (2011). Can feeling too good be bad? Positive emotion persistence (PEP) in bipolar disorder. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *20*, 217–221.
- Gruber, J., Eidelman, P., Johnson, S. L., Smith, B., & Harvey, A. G. (2011). Hooked on a feeling: rumination about positive and negative emotion in inter-episode bipolar disorder. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, *120*, 956–961.
- Gruber, J., Harvey, A. G., & Gross, J. J. (2012). When trying is not enough: Emotion regulation and the effort–success gap in bipolar disorder. *Emotion*, *12*, 997–1003.
- Gruber, J., Kogan, A., Mennin, D., & Murray, G. (2013). Real-world emotion? An experience–sampling approach to emotion experience and regulation in bipolar I disorder. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, *122*, 971–983.
- Hackenbracht, J., & Tamir, M. (2010). Preferences for sadness when eliciting help: Instrumental motives in sadness regulation. *Motivation and Emotion*, *34*, 306–315.
- Hart, W., & Albarracín, D. (2009). The effects of chronic achievement motivation and achievement primes on the activation of achievement and fun goals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *97*, 1129–1141.
- Heckhausen, J. (2000). Developmental regulation across the life span: An action-phase model of engagement and disengagement with developmental goals. *Advances in Psychology*, *131*, 213–232.
- Hertel, P. T. (2004). Memory for emotional and non-emotional events in depression: a question of habit. In D. Reisberg, & P. Hertel (Eds.), *Memory and emotion* (pp. 186–216). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Higgins, E. T. (1987). Self-discrepancy: a theory relating self and affect. *Psychological Review*, *94*, 319–340.
- Higgins, E. T. (2014). *Beyond pleasure and pain: How motivation works*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Huron, D. (2011). Why is sad music pleasurable? A possible role for prolactin. *Musicae Scientiae*, *15*, 146–158.
- Joomann, J., & Siemer, M. (2014). Emotion regulation in mood disorders. In J. J. Gross (Ed.), *Handbook of emotion regulation* (2nd ed., pp. 361–375). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Jost, J. T., Federico, C. M., & Napier, J. L. (2009). Political ideology: Its structure, functions, and elective affinities. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *60*, 307–337.

- Kahneman, D., Diener, E., & Schwarz, N. (1999). *Well-being: Foundations of hedonic psychology*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Kalokerinos, E. K., Tamir, M., & Kuppens, P. (2017). Instrumental motives in negative emotion regulation in daily life: Frequency, consistency, and predictors. *Emotion* (in press).
- Kampfe, N., & Mitte, K. (2009). What you wish is what you get? The meaning of individual variability in desired affect and affective discrepancy. *Journal of Research in Personality, 43*, 409–418.
- Kashdan, T. B., Barrios, V., Forsyth, J. P., & Steger, M. F. (2006). Experiential avoidance as a generalized psychological vulnerability: Comparisons with coping and emotion regulation strategies. *Behaviour Research and Therapy, 44*, 1301–1320.
- Keltner, D., & Gross, J. J. (1999). Functional accounts of emotions. *Cognition & Emotion, 13*, 467–480.
- Keltner, D., & Haidt, J. (1999). Social functions of emotions at four levels of analysis. *Cognition & Emotion, 13*, 505–521.
- Kim, J., & Cicchetti, D. (2010). Longitudinal pathways linking child maltreatment, emotion regulation, peer relations, and psychopathology. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 51*, 706–716.
- Kim, M. Y., Ford, B. Q., Mauss, I. B., & Tamir, M. (2015). Knowing when to seek anger: Psychological health and context-sensitive emotional preferences. *Cognition & Emotion, 29*(6), 1126–1136.
- Kring, A. M., & Sloan, D. M. (2009). *Emotion regulation and psychopathology: A transdiagnostic approach to etiology and treatment*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Kruglanski, A. W., Chernikova, M., Babush, M., Dugas, M., & Schumpe, B. (2015). The architecture of goal systems: Multifinality, equifinality, and counterfinality in means-end relations. *Advances in Motivation Science, 2*, 69–98.
- Kruglanski, A. W., Shah, J. Y., Fishbach, A., Friedman, R., Chun, W. Y., & Sleeth-Keppler, D. (2002). A theory of goal-systems. In M. P. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 34, pp. 331–378). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Kunda, Z. (1990). The case for motivated reasoning. *Psychological Bulletin, 108*, 480–498.
- Kuppens, P., Allen, N. B., & Sheeber, L. B. (2010). Emotional inertia and psychological maladjustment. *Psychological Science, 21*, 984–991.
- Kuppens, P., Realo, A., & Diener, E. (2008). The role of positive and negative emotions in life satisfaction judgment across nations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 95*, 66–75.
- Lane, A. M., Beedie, C. J., Davenport, T. J., & Stanley, D. M. (2011). Instrumental emotion regulation in sport: Relationships between beliefs about emotion and emotion regulation strategies used by athletes. *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports, 21*, 445–451.
- Levenson, R. W. (1994). Human emotion: A functional view. In P. Ekman, & R. J. Davidson (Eds.), *The nature of emotions: Fundamental questions* (pp. 123–126). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Levenson, R. W. (1999). The intrapersonal functions of emotion. *Cognition & Emotion, 13*, 481–504.
- Lewin, K., Dembo, T., Festinger, L., & Sears, P. S. (1944). Level of aspiration. In J. Hunt (Ed.), *Personality and the behavior disorders* (pp. 333–378). Oxford, England: Ronald Press.
- Lucas, R. E., Diener, E., & Suh, E. (1996). Discriminant validity of well-being measures. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 71*, 616–628.
- Martin, L. L. (2000). Wag the dog: Do individuals regulate moods or do moods regulate individuals? *Psychological Inquiry, 11*, 192–195.
- Maslow, A. H. (1943). Theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review, 50*, 370–396.
- Mauss, I. B., Tamir, M., Anderson, C. L., & Savino, N. S. (2011). Can seeking happiness make people unhappy? Paradoxical effects of valuing happiness. *Emotion, 11*, 807–815.

- McLaughlin, K. A., & Hatzenbuehler, M. L. (2009). Mechanisms linking stressful life events and mental health problems in a prospective, community-based sample of adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 44*, 153–160.
- Millgram, Y., Gruber, J., Rappaport, A., & Tamir, M. (2017). *Emotion regulation goals among individuals at risk for bipolar disorder* (Manuscript in preparation).
- Millgram, Y., Joormann, J., Huppert, J. D., & Tamir, M. (2015). Sad as a matter of choice? Emotion-regulation goals in depression. *Psychological Science, 26*, 1216–1228.
- Millgram, Y., Sheppes, G., & Tamir, M. (2017). *Do the ends dictate the means in emotion Regulation? Implications for adaptive and maladaptive regulation* (Manuscript under review).
- Netzer, L., Halperin, E., & Tamir, M. (2017). *Toying with the enemy's emotions: Motivated intergroup emotion regulation* (Manuscript under review).
- Netzer, L., Van Kleef, G. A., & Tamir, M. (2015). Interpersonal instrumental emotion regulation. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 58*, 124–135.
- Niedenthal, P. M., & Brauer, M. (2012). Social functionality of human emotion. *Annual Review of Psychology, 63*, 259–285.
- Nolen-Hoeksema, S., Wisco, B. E., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2008). Rethinking rumination. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 3*, 400–424.
- Oettingen, G., & Gollwitzer, P. M. (2015). Self-regulation: Principles and tools. In G. Oettingen, & P. M. Gollwitzer (Eds.), *Self-regulation in adolescence* (pp. 3–29). New York, NY, US: Cambridge University Press.
- Oliver, M. B., & Raney, A. A. (2011). Entertainment as pleasurable and meaningful: Differentiating hedonic and eudaimonic motivations for entertainment consumption. *Journal of Communication, 61*, 984–1004.
- Orth, U., & Robins, R. W. (2013). Understanding the link between low self-esteem and depression. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 22*, 455–460.
- Parkinson, B., Simons, G., & Niven, K. (2016). Sharing concerns: Interpersonal worry regulation in romantic couples. *Emotion, 16*, 449–458.
- Parkinson, B., & Totterdell, P. (1999). Classifying affect-regulation strategies. *Cognition & Emotion, 13*, 277–303.
- Parrott, W. G. (1993). Beyond hedonism: Motives for inhibiting good moods and for maintaining bad moods. In D. M. Wegner, & J. W. Pennebaker (Eds.), *Handbook of mental control* (pp. 278–305). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Pavey, L., Greitemeyer, T., & Sparks, P. (2012). “I help because I want to, not because you tell me to”: Empathy increases autonomously motivated helping. *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin, 38*, 681–689.
- Pessoa, L., Padmala, S., & Morland, T. (2005). Fate of unattended fearful faces in the amygdala is determined by both attentional resources and cognitive modulation. *NeuroImage, 28*, 249–255.
- Porat, R., Halperin, E., & Tamir, M. (2016). What we want is what we get: Group-based emotional preferences and conflict resolution. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 110*, 167–190.
- Rogers, M. L., Halberstadt, A. G., Castro, V. L., MacCormack, J. K., & Garrett-Peters, P. (2016). Maternal emotion socialization differentially predicts third-grade children's emotion regulation and lability. *Emotion, 16*, 280–291.
- Rothenberg, W. A., Husson, A. M., Langley, H. A., Egerton, G. A., Halberstadt, A. G., Coffman, J. L., ... Costanzo, P. R. (2017). Grateful parents raising grateful children: Niche selection and the socialization of child gratitude. *Applied Developmental Science* (in press).
- Rozin, P., Guillot, L., Fincher, K., Rozin, A., & Tsukayama, E. (2013). Glad to be sad, and other examples of benign masochism. *Judgment and Decision Making, 8*, 439–447.
- Rusting, C. L., & Nolen-Hoeksema, S. (1998). Regulating responses to anger: effects of rumination and distraction on angry mood. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 74*, 790–803.

- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, *55*, 68–78.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2001). On happiness and human potentials: A review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *52*, 141–166.
- Ryff, C. D. (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *57*, 1069–1081.
- Schwartz, S. H. (1992). Universals in the content and structure of values: Theoretical advances and empirical tests in 20 countries. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, *25*, 1–66.
- Sheldon, K. M., & Elliot, A. J. (1999). Goal striving, need satisfaction, and longitudinal well-being: The self-concordance model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *76*, 482–497.
- Sheppes, G., & Gross, J. J. (2011). Is timing everything? Temporal considerations in emotion regulation. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *15*, 319–331.
- Small, D. A., & Verrochi, N. M. (2009). The face of need: Facial emotion expression on charity advertisements. *Journal of Marketing Research*, *46*, 777–787.
- Suri, G., Sheppes, G., Schwartz, C., & Gross, J. J. (2013). Patient inertia and the status quo bias: When an inferior option is preferred. *Psychological Science*, *24*, 1763–1769.
- Suri, G., Whittaker, K., & Gross, J. J. (2015). Launching reappraisal: It's less common than you might think. *Emotion*, *15*, 73–77.
- Swann, W. B. (1987). Identity negotiation: Where two roads meet. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *53*, 1038–1051.
- Swann, W. B., Wenzlaff, R. M., Krull, D. S., & Pelham, B. W. (1992). Allure of negative feedback: self-verification strivings among depressed persons. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, *101*, 293–306.
- Tamborini, R., Bowman, N. D., Eden, A., Grizzard, M., & Organ, A. (2010). Defining media enjoyment as the satisfaction of intrinsic needs. *Journal of Communication*, *60*, 758–777.
- Tamir, M. (2005). Don't worry, be happy? Neuroticism, trait-consistent affect regulation, and performance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *89*, 449–461.
- Tamir, M. (2009). What do people want to feel and why? Pleasure and utility in emotion regulation. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *18*, 101–105.
- Tamir, M. (2016). Why do people regulate their emotions? A taxonomy of motives in emotion regulation. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *20*, 199–222.
- Tamir, M., Bigman, Y., Rhodes, E., Salerno, J., & Schreier, J. (2015). An expectancy-value model of emotion regulation: Implications for motivation, emotional experience, and decision-making. *Emotion*, *15*, 90–103.
- Tamir, M., Chiu, C. Y., & Gross, J. J. (2007). Business or pleasure? Utilitarian versus hedonic considerations in emotion regulation. *Emotion*, *7*, 546–554.
- Tamir, M., & Ford, B. Q. (2012a). Should people pursue feelings that feel good or feelings that do good? Emotional preferences and well-being. *Emotion*, *12*, 1061–1070.
- Tamir, M., & Ford, B. Q. (2012b). When feeling bad is expected to be good: Emotion regulation and outcome expectancies in social conflicts. *Emotion*, *12*, 807–816.
- Tamir, M., Ford, B. Q., & Ryan, E. (2013). Nonconscious goals can shape what people want to feel. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *49*, 292–297.
- Tamir, M., Mitchell, C., & Gross, J. J. (2008). Hedonic and instrumental motives in anger regulation. *Psychological Science*, *19*, 324–328.
- Tamir, M., Schwartz, S. H., Cieciuch, J., Riediger, M., Torres, C., Scollon, C., ... Vishkin, A. (2016). Desired emotions across cultures: A value-based account. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *111*, 67–82.
- Tamir, M., Schwartz, S. H., Oishi, S., & Kim, M. Y. (2017). *The secret to happiness: Feeling good or feeling right?* (Manuscript under review).

- Thompson, R. A. (1991). Emotional regulation and emotional development. *Educational Psychology Review*, 3, 269–307.
- Thrash, T. M., & Elliot, A. J. (2001). Delimiting and integrating achievement motive and goal constructs. In A. Efklides, J. Kuhl, & R. M. Sorrentino (Eds.), *Trends and prospects in motivation research* (pp. 3–21). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Tooby, J., & Cosmides, L. (1990). The past explains the present: Emotional adaptations and the structure of ancestral environments. *Ethology and Sociobiology*, 11, 375–424.
- Townsend, J., & Altshuler, L. L. (2012). Emotion processing and regulation in bipolar disorder: a review. *Bipolar Disorders*, 14, 326–339.
- Tsai, J. L., Knutson, B., & Fung, H. H. (2006). Cultural variation in affect valuation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90, 288–307.
- Van Kleef, G. A. (2016). *The interpersonal dynamics of emotion: Toward an integrative theory of emotions as social information*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Van Kleef, G. A., De Dreu, C. K. W., & Manstead, A. S. R. (2004). The interpersonal effects of anger and happiness in negotiations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 86, 57–76.
- Watkins, E. R., & Nolen-Hoeksema, S. (2014). A habit-goal framework of depressive rumination. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 123, 24–34.
- Webb, T. L., Miles, E., & Sheeran, P. (2012). Dealing with feeling: a meta-analysis of the effectiveness of strategies derived from the process model of emotion regulation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 138, 775–808.
- Webb, T. L., Schweiger Gallo, I., Miles, E., Gollwitzer, P. M., & Sheeran, P. (2012). Effective regulation of affect: An action control perspective on emotion regulation. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 23, 143–186.
- Westfall, J., Mrkva, K., & Van Boven, L. (2014). Attention increases emotional intensity. In J. Cotte, & S. Wood (Eds.), *Na-advances in consumer research* (Vol. 42, pp. 163–167). Duluth, MN: Association for Consumer Research.
- Wood, J. V., Heimpel, S. A., Manwell, L. A., & Whitting, E. J. (2009). This mood is familiar and I don't deserve to feel better anyway: mechanisms underlying self-esteem differences in motivation to repair sad moods. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 96, 363–380.
- Zaki, J., & Williams, W. C. (2013). Interpersonal emotion regulation. *Emotion*, 13, 803–810.