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DATASET : Perceived ability to regulate love

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Abstract

Research has shown that romantic love can be regulated. We investigated perceptions about love regulation, because these perceptions may impact mental health and influence love regulation application. Two-hundred eighty-six participants completed a series of items online that assessed perceived ability to up- and down-regulate, exaggerate and suppress the expression of, and start and stop different love types. We also tested individual differences in perceived love regulation ability. Participants thought that they can up- but not down-regulate love. Participants thought they were able to regulate attachment the most, followed by sexual desire, and they thought they were least able to regulate infatuation. Participants also thought that they were able to down-regulate sexual desire more than infatuation and attachment. Participants thought that they could exaggerate and suppress love, but that they could not start and stop infatuation and attachment, or to start sexual desire. The more participants habitually used cognitive reappraisal, the more they thought that they can up- and down-regulate infatuation and attachment and up-regulate sexual desire. The more participants habitually used expression suppression, the less they thought that they can exaggerate love expressions. These findings are a first step toward development of psychoeducation techniques to correct inaccurate love regulation perceptions, which may improve mental health and love regulation in daily life.

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