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## BOOK REVIEWS

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**James J. Gross (Editor)**

*Handbook of emotion regulation (second edition)*

The Guilford Press, New York, London, 2014, 669 pp.

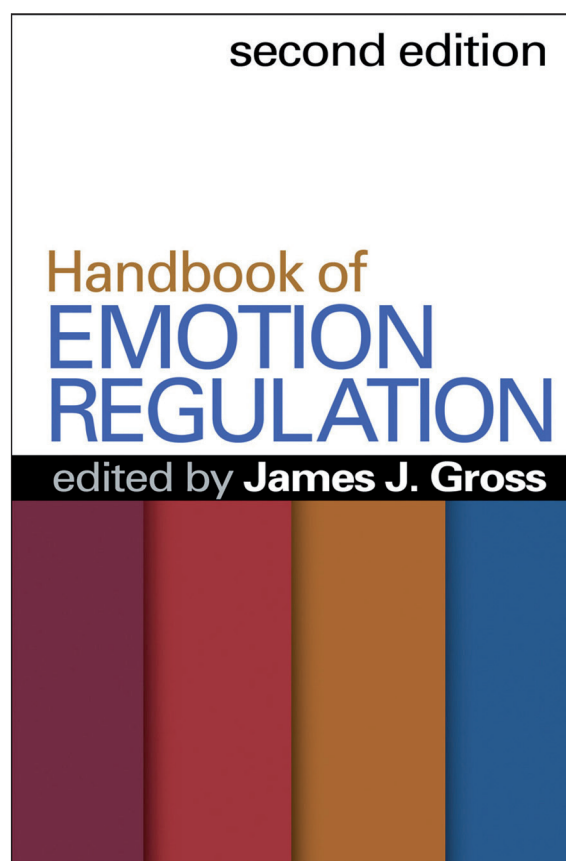
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James J. Gross, PhD, the editor of the book entitled *Handbook of emotion regulation* (second edition) is Professor of Psychology at Stanford University and Director of the Stanford Psychophysiology Laboratory. He is a leading scholar in the field of emotion and emotion regulation. His seminal work and theory, the process model of emotion regulation has been adapted by many other scholars in this field and provided a basic background for empirical studies. He has received many awards for teaching, won several grants and has been running several interdisciplinary research projects to understand emotion and emotion regulation.

The first edition of the Handbook was published in 2007. However, since the first edition, so many new conceptual and empirical results have been published that a new edition with new topics (and chapters) was needed.

The book is divided into nine sections. In the first section Gross provides an introduction that includes fundamental knowledge and questions in the field of emotion regulation. The modal model of emotion and the process model of emotion regulation, goals, strategies and outcomes are discussed. Furthermore, emotions are clearly distinguished from other affective processes, just like emotional regulation is distinguished from other self-regulatory processes.

The second section discusses the biological bases of emotion regulation. *Ochsner and Gross* apply a valuation perspective to analyze emotion and emotion regulation, and to describe the neural systems that are implicated in the core, contextual and conceptual level valuations and the neural systems that support the regulation of valuation. *Proudfit, Dunning, Foti and Weinberg* overview EEG studies to help the reader understand the temporal dynamics of emotion regulation. Late positive potential is believed to reflect the flexible and dynamic deployment of motivated attention, and possibly indexing the activity of fronto-parietal attention network. However, it remains a question whether



LPP reflects enhanced attention to emotional stimuli or “only” reflects the suppressed processes of competing stimuli. *Johnstone and Walter* analyze emotion dysregulation and its biological bases: the network of prefrontal and subcortical brain structures and they cite evidence that dysregulation of emotion is not limited to negative emotions in psychopathologies (for example in depression or in anxiety disorders). Finally, *Gyurak and Etkin* propose that emotion regulation happens along a spectrum of explicit to implicit regulation. Furthermore, from a neurobiological point of view a lateral-medial differentiation between explicit and implicit processes could be useful.

In the third section emotion regulation is examined from a cognitive approach. The four articles give an insight into the relationship between our choices, decision and emotion regulation. *Miller, Rodriguez, Kim and McClure* for example discuss how

delay discounting (and intertemporal choice) could be a useful framework for studying emotion regulation. There are strategies that we can use to overcome temptations in intertemporal choices – such as precommitment, thinking of the future in a more specific manner, focusing one’s attention to the future consequences of an action. The authors believe that all these strategies work through a common pathway that suppresses reward-related activation in nucleus accumbens and reduce impulsivity. *Luerssen and Ayduk* review how ‘prior affective state’ and ‘affective states induced by tasks and their regulation’ impact delay of gratification, and vice versa, how delay of gratification (DG) abilities influence emotion regulation. They also list evidence that early caregivers’ emotions and responsivity influence children’s ability to delay gratification. The authors suggest that performance on both DG tasks and emotion regulation may reflect a domain-general regulatory ability, which is influenced by lateral prefrontal cortex activity. *Sheppes* introduces the concept of emotion regulation choice, and

illustrate this topic with results of studies using a novel paradigm in which participants freely choose between the two strategies: distraction and reappraisal. This chapter also investigates the emotional, cognitive and motivational determinants of emotion regulation choices and their underlying mechanisms. Studying regulatory choices could be a new way to understand emotion regulation difficulties in different psychopathologies. Finally, *Grecucci and Sanfey* reviews evidence that emotion regulation strategies used in a decision-making situation could moderate not only the affective inputs but the behavior as well.

In the fourth section emotion regulation is analyzed from a developmental point of view. *Eisenberg, Hofer, Sulik and Spinrad* create a distinction between (a more automatic) reactive control and self-regulation. They focus their review on effortful control processes and their impact on the socioemotional development. *Thompson* presents evidence that both top-down and bottom-up processes play a significant role in emotion regulation and both are shaped by early experiences and family processes. *Riediger and Klipker* deal with adolescents' emotional life and emotion regulation. They chose the topic of neurophysiological development and family context to highlight how different factors can influence the development of emotion regulation skills in this developmental period. Emotion regulation motivation and strategies are also analyzed in this chapter. For instance, adolescents tend to report more contra-hedonic motivation (wanting to enhance or maintain negative emotions or dampen positive emotions) behind their emotion regulation compared to other age groups. Concerning the effectiveness of emotion regulation strategies more studies are needed to derive a cohesive picture about the developmental changes. Finally, *Charles and Carstensen* interpret the well-being of older adults in the framework of two theories: the socioemotional selectivity theory and strength and vulnerability integration theory. From an emotional regulation perspective, selection as a key mechanism along with the changes in goals is believed to play a role in the greater well-being with age, but further studies are needed to investigate other strategies and online emotion regulation as well.

In the fifth section social aspects of emotion regulation are discussed in five chapters. *Coan and Maresh* use social baseline theory as a framework to highlight the prominent role of the quality of relationships and proximity in (brain) response to perceived threats. The chapter raises the question how satisfactory social relations economize neural activity and behavior. *Shaver and Mikulincer* analyze this topic from the attachment theory perspective, and argue that the attachment figure's reaction to distress creates the basis of appraisal and regulation of negative emotions and/or stressful events. *Jones, Kirkland and Cunningham* review attitude models, emphasize dynamic perspectives and the difference between attitude and evaluation to show the iterative nature of evaluative processes and their possible role in emotion regulation strategies. *Levenson, Haase, Bloch, Holley and Seider* review emotion regulation in couples and list several issues that need to be resolved in order to gain a much deeper insight of dyadic emotion regulation processes. Finally, *Mesquita, De Leersnyder and Albert* consider emotion regulation from a cultural point of view and draw attention to the fact that the prevalent cultural model of self and emotions

may shape our emotion regulation efforts and the preferred or chosen strategies.

The sixth section considers personality processes and individual differences in emotion regulation. *Rothbart, Sheese and Posner* discuss temperamental differences in effortful control and its contribution to the development of emotion regulation. *John and Eng* review how individual differences are conceptualized and operationalized in self-report measurements. *Hofmann and Kotabe* consider appetitive desires from an emotion regulation point of view and list the (possible) factors that may contribute to the successful regulation of desires. *Mauss and Tamir* analyze the content, structure, operation of emotion goals to highlight their roles in automatic and deliberate emotion regulation. Finally, *Leary and Gohar* list evidence of how the human ability to self-reflect influences the emotions we feel and the ways we regulate them highlighting the role of self-relevant or self-evaluative thoughts in emotion generation and regulation.

Section 7 introduces emotion dysregulation in different psychopathologies. *Campbell-Sills, Ellard and Barlow* focus on anxiety disorders and argue that the basic features of anxiety disorders are the sources of regulation difficulties experienced by people with anxiety disorders. Furthermore, the consequences of emotion regulation strategies for people with anxiety disorders may differ from the consequences for healthy people and this may be a perpetuating factor in anxiety disorders. *Joormann and Siemer* focus on mood disorders and draw our attention to the fact that difficulties in the regulation of both positive and negative affect should be considered when studying major depressive disorder and bipolar disorder. *Kober* considers the role of dysregulated emotion as a distal and proximal risk factor in drug use and argues that chronic drug use may further impair emotion regulation via the long-term effects of chronic drug use on the structure and function of the prefrontal cortex. Finally, *Feldman-Barrett, Wilson-Mendenhall and Barsalou* define emotion regulation in the framework of situated conceptualization and emphasize the role of psychological construction and meaning making processes in emotion (dys-)regulation.

Section 8 presents therapies that specifically target emotion regulation. *Menin and Fresco* describe their Emotion Regulation Therapy targeting motivational-emotional activation, perseverative thinking and narrowed learning repertoires as transdiagnostic features of major depressive disorder and generalized anxiety disorder conceptualized as 'distress disorders'. *Neacsiu, Bohus and Linehan* examine Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) from emotion regulation perspective, and present how DBT targets different emotion components with regulatory strategies to enhance skills that are needed for successful and/or adaptive emotion regulation in daily life. The starting point of the chapter by *MacLeod and Grafton* is that biased attentional selectivity is responsible for emotional vulnerability and pathologies. They list evidence on how single session or extended Attentional Bias Modification can attenuate emotional symptoms. *Berking and Schwarz* describe Affect Regulation Training, the aim of which is to improve general emotion regulation skills, such as perception and awareness of affective states, identification and correct labelling of affective states, tolerance of negative affective states when necessary. Finally, *Farb, Anderson, Irving and Segal* raise the question as to why mindful emotion regulation is unique. Their answer

is that mindfulness promotes meta-awareness of emotion regulation strategies, detection and reduction of rumination and therefore enables self-change. There are psychological and neural mechanisms that support the positive effect of mindfulness training on emotion regulation.

Section 9 considers the health implications of emotion regulation and dysregulation. *Cole* discusses the potential (and mainly indirect) role of emotion regulation (emotional inhibition/suppression) on gene expression. *Chen and Miller* argue that social inequality in health is partially due to emotion regulation indicating that emotion regulation can be either a mediator or a moderator between socio-economic status (SES) and disease. For example, evidence suggests that different strategies can be beneficial to low-SES individuals than to high-SES individuals. These findings implicate, for example, that emotion regulation strategies should be considered in resilience studies. *Appleton and Kubzansky* consider emotion regulation as a factor that contributes to poor cardiovascular disease risk. Physiological and behavioral pathways of emotion regulation are also listed. Finally, *Wagner and Heatherton* focus on the impact of negative affect on self-regulation and review findings on how negative affect impairs the pursuit of long-term goals. Mechanisms

through negative affective states which deplete self-regulatory capacity may give insight as to why negative affective states compromise health behavior change and consolidate health risk behaviors such as drinking and tobacco use or other addictive behaviors.

A great merit of the book is that each chapter gives a comprehensive and elaborated overview of the topic. The present book offers the latest work in thirty six chapters written by leading researchers in the field. Both beginners and advanced experts in the field of research or practice will find the handbook a very useful and fascinating tool.

While reading the book, many new questions or research ideas may come to our mind demonstrating that these excellent book chapters not only offer a synthesis of a given field but inspire scholars, clinicians and students to ‘dig deeper’ and try to find answers for new or unresolved issues with new methodologies.

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**Michael S. Ascher (Author, Editor) and Petros Levounis (Editor)**

***The behavioral addictions***

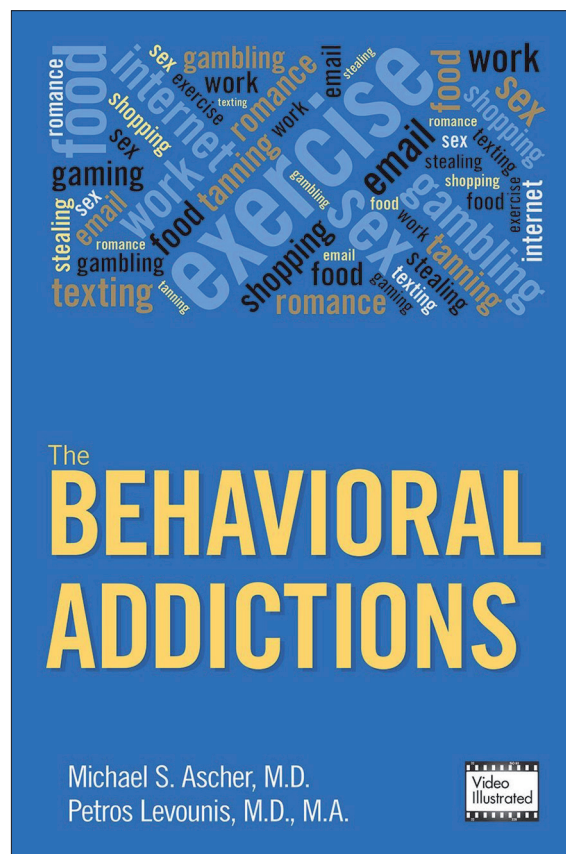
American Psychiatric Publishing, Arlington, 2014, 235 pp.

ISBN: 1585624853

In order to be addicted, we do not necessarily need to administer substances – according to Michael S. Ascher and Petros Levounis’ *The behavioral addictions*, since the behaviour itself is enough. This comprehensive volume provides an overview of the current problems in addictions, compulsive and impulsive behaviours and the possible treatments. Alongside classical behavioural addictions, for example, gambling, food, sex, shopping and work addictions, other lesser known behavioural addictions are also discussed, such as tanning, love or texting addiction.

Authors, who are leading clinical experts in the field from all over the USA, focus on practical knowledge rather than on theory or speculations. Each chapter includes a clinical case besides the scientific description, creating a comprehensive “story” around each clinical problem. These stories make the text easy to digest. The style somehow reminds us

of the books of Oliver Sacks, who, by telling stories about patients with different neurological problems, guides read-



ers through the complex world of clinical neuropsychology. Even with the “story-telling” style, the information presented is up to date, and focuses on key concepts citing recent theoretical findings.

In addition to the easy-to-read style, the book also has a clear and easy-to-follow structure. The short introduction with definitions, the current diagnostic validity of the disorders in the DSM-5 and the illustrative clinical cases all contribute towards the understanding of each behavioural addiction problem. There is also a discussion about the problems with the interpretation of clinical cases in the context of current research findings. Treatment possibilities in the presented and other similar cases are also included, with a short conclusion providing a few key points as a take-home message. There is also a list of up-to-date references for further inquiry, together with a few questions to test the reader’s knowledge. This structure makes the

book ideal for educational purposes and thus it is likely to become a popular textbook at universities. For these reasons

the volume can be a great help to those needing a practical guide, an overall understanding or an introduction to clinical knowledge of these psychiatric problems.

Interestingly, there are a few topics in the book that had never before been presented in this clinical context. We all might have noticed or considered strange the frequent openings of new solariums in our neighbourhoods. The same is true for when we see people sitting mesmerised over the screens of their smartphones, pressing the buttons at the speed of light and sending messages like robots. At the same time, however, not many of us would have thought that tanning or texting could be considered addictive behaviours. The book draws our attention to this fact and discusses these recently emerged behaviours on the same basis as food or gambling addictions. This message speaks not only to those who treat these issues but also to those who recognise themselves in the presented cases. The book can thus be useful for everyone who needs a certain professional feedback on behaviour over which they are losing control or which gains the disapproval of those around them. For all those people who ask themselves in front of the mirror: Is everything okay with me? Why is my family continuously disapproving of my behaviour? Is it too much? Am I able to give it up or control it?

When one attempts to provide an overview of a wide range of topics, for everyone from the layman to the professional, there is a risk that the discussion remains superficial. This is exactly what happened in this book. There was insufficient room to provide the reader a deeper knowledge, such as an explanation of the various background mechanisms based on recent findings in neuroscience, biology or

psychology. Like any psychiatric problems, behavioural addictions are also caused and influenced by multiple factors. While biological models are presented in a few chapters, in general the authors stick to the description of the behaviour and its interpretation. This seems a missed opportunity.

Moreover, the cases presented provide the reader a better understanding of the addictive behaviours, but the descriptions stop at the point where the patient realises the need for treatment. Following the presentation of the clinical case in each chapter, there is a description of the possible treatments. At this point, I personally would have liked to read the second part of the story about the patients. It would have been more helpful for readers to learn about the outcome of the given case – what happened to the patients after the treatment, which treatments were successful and which were not. Perhaps a follow-up on the clinical cases could be the focus of a second book.

Overall, however, the book is a great resource for everyone wanting to learn about behavioural addiction from the behavioural perspective. I recommend this volume for all those clinicians who treat people with these problems and for all those people who think that they should receive treatment. In addition to those of course who are simply interested in the topic. This is a book to read, study and use to keep track with the current rapid changes in our society and clinical practice.

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