

Personality, affect and coping style in severe personality disorder (pp. 699-719)

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The concepts of internalization and externalization have been proposed as personality tendencies or traits related to the constructs of neuroticism and extraversion. They have been associated to the bifactorial structure of affect and also to the coping style. This paper examines the interaction of personality, affect and coping in a sample of people diagnosed with personality disorder ($n= 358$). Negative affect (NA) in internalizers is higher than in externalizers ($g= 0.62$), and so is the severity of symptoms (GSI: $g= 0.60$). Mediation analyses show that personality type produces an indirect effect on GSI, with NA and coping style as partial mediators. 88.1 % of the sample has an unfavourable coping style (U-CS). The frequency of U-CS among internalizers is bigger than among externalizers (93% vs 83%; $\chi^2= 7.23$, $p= .007$). However, the subgroup of internalizers with a favourable coping style (F-CS) shows no difference with externalizers with the same F-CS, either in NA ($p= .428$) or in GSI ($p= .082$). Regardless of personality structure, promoting adaptive strategies of coping can alleviate the psychopathology of severe patients.