

CORRESPONDENCE AMONG EMOTIONAL REGULATION, MENTALIZATION AND BURN-OUT AT HUNGARIAN HEALTH CARE WORKERS

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Introduction: Several studies have shown that excessive emotional involvement of health care professionals may lead to burnout (Zapf et al 2001; Brotheridge&Grandey 2002). As our previous studies (Fülöp, Devecsery & Csabai 2012) also showed, medical and paramedical professionals who are prone to overinvolve in the interactions of the patients experiencing distress, may suffer from emotional exhaustion for long run.

Objective: We looked for correlations between disturbances of emotional regulation, lack of mentalization, and intensive emotional distress.

Methods: We used a descriptive approach, where a set of questionnaires were applied. The sample consisted of 200 health care professionals - nurses, and assistants for oxyology-, from all over Hungary. Questionnaires used: Maslach Burnout Inventory, (Maslach and Jackson, 1986), Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1980), Difficulties in Emotional Regulation Scale, (Gratz és Roemer, 2004) and Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale (Bride 2003). Our research team developed a test for mentalization consists of 3 pictures of provider/patient interactions, and exposed with different instructions according to 3 levels of mentalization.

Conclusion: Our preliminary results show that the “3-picture test“, as a global one, can be useful to measure the complexity of mentalization, its components, as spontaneous mentalization, emotional identification, and emotional anticipation. This test may help the further understanding of the relationships between emotional regulation and the phenomenon of burn-out.