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# EMOTION REGULATION GOALS AND STRATEGY USE IN ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

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Little is known about why people regulate their emotions using different strategies. This matters because strategies can have important emotional and social consequences. The purpose of this study was to see whether emotion regulation goals, motivation behind using strategies, could predict emotion regulation strategy use during a conflict conversation between romantic partners. Based on previous research, we expected that self-oriented goals, such as impression management goals (i.e., managing impression on partner) would predict more suppression; relationship-oriented goals, such as eudemonic goals (i.e., gaining meaning from the conflict) would predict more rumination; and that other-oriented goals, such as rapport goals (i.e., maintaining the relationship) would predict more masking. To test these hypotheses, we had 113 romantic couples, ages 17-55 years, engage in a conversation about a topic they mutually disagreed on. Couples then filled out questionnaires about their emotion regulation goals and strategy use during the conversation. The results indicated that impression management goals and eudemonic goals were positively associated with suppression and rumination, respectively. Rapport goals were not associated with masking. Such results broadly suggest that different types of goals might be associated with different strategies. More specifically, these results suggest that more self-oriented goals (e.g., impression management) might motivate suppression, while relationship-oriented goals (e.g., eudemonic) might motivate rumination. Future research could examine what types of goals predict masking, as well as, how other types of goals predict other strategies.