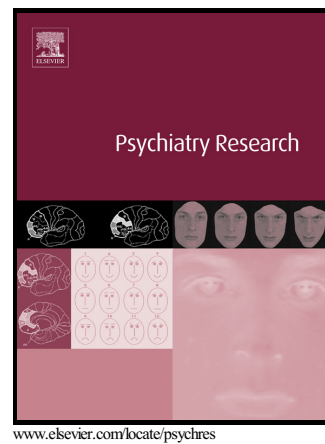


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Cognitive emotion regulation in patients with schizophrenia:

Evidence for effective reappraisal and distraction

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Negative emotions trigger psychotic symptoms, according to a growing body of evidence. Thus, there is a need for effective emotion regulation in schizophrenia. Reappraisal is an effective, cognitive emotion regulation strategy in healthy individuals. However, it is an open research question whether individuals with schizophrenia have difficulties in successfully applying reappraisal. This study experimentally tests the efficacy of reappraisal compared to distraction in patients with schizophrenia and non-clinical controls. An experimental design with *group* as between-subject factor (non-clinical controls versus patients with schizophrenia) and *emotion regulation* during anxiety induction as within-subject factor (reappraisal, distraction, no regulation). Seventeen patients with schizophrenia and 27 healthy participants were instructed to respond to anxiety-inducing stimuli by either using reappraisal, distraction or by just watching. Both reappraisal and distraction were effective in down-regulating anxiety, compared to no regulation. The main effect of group and the interaction of emotion regulation condition and group were not significant indicating that the efficacy of both cognitive emotion regulation strategies was independent of group. Patients with schizophrenia are able to apply reappraisal successfully under experimental conditions. Conclusions are limited by the small sample size of this pilot study. Clinical implications for cognitive behavioral therapy for psychosis are discussed.

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