



ELSEVIER

Available online at www.sciencedirect.com

SCIENCE @ DIRECT®

Personality and Individual Differences 38 (2005) 1609–1619

PERSONALITY AND
INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

www.elsevier.com/locate/paid

Positive and negative perfectionism and the shame/guilt distinction: adaptive and maladaptive characteristics

Brandy A. Fedewa, Lawrence R. Burns *, Alex A. Gomez

Grand Valley State University, 1 Campus Drive, Allendale, MI 49401, United States

Received 10 September 2003; received in revised form 13 August 2004; accepted 30 September 2004

Available online 15 December 2004

Abstract

This study examined relationships among guilt, shame, pride, and perfectionism, with a college sample ($N = 230$). Research has linked shame and guilt to perfectionism, typically viewed as maladaptive. Some theories suggest guilt may be adaptive. The present study draws a distinction between two different kinds of perfectionism, positive and negative. Using Terry-Short, Owens, Slade, and Dewey's (1995). PNP scale to measure positive (PP) and negative (NP) perfectionism, our results support the utility of distinguishing between positive and negative perfectionism. NP correlated positively with state-shame, state-guilt, and shame-proneness. PP demonstrated a positive correlation with pride and negative correlations to state shame and anxiety. These results imply that shame and guilt may differ; though guilt may not always be adaptive.

© 2004 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Keywords: Positive and Negative Perfectionism; Perfectionism; Shame; Guilt; Pride; Anxiety; Hostility

1. Distinguishing shame and guilt

Shame and guilt are similar emotions, but they are commonly distinguished. One way of describing the distinction is the view that shame focuses on the self, while guilt focuses on a

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +1 616 331 2862; fax: +1 616 331 2480.

E-mail address: burnsl@gvsu.edu (L.R. Burns).

specific action (Lewis, 1971; Lewis, 1992; Miller, 1996; Lutwak & Ferrari, 1996; Tangney & Dearing, 2002; Pattison, 2000). After bumping into someone, a guilt-prone person is more likely to say, “sorry, doing that was stupid” while a shame-prone person would say, “I did that because *I*’m stupid.” The guilty wrongdoer feels upset about the action, and then he or she acknowledges that the action has violated or hurt another person, motivating reparative action (Tangney & Dearing, 2002; Lutwak & Ferrari, 1996), like confessing, apologizing, or making-up for the act with compensatory actions. Shame, in contrast, is narcissistic, in that the wrongdoer is mostly concerned about his or her own feelings, rather than those of the person that has been violated (Tangney & Dearing, 2002; Lutwak & Ferrari, 1996). The transgressor becomes more concerned with hiding his or her defective self from others. In this view, guilt may be more adaptive than shame.

It was once believed that shame was experienced only when one’s transgressions were made public, whereas guilt was experienced in private. However, shame and guilt can both be experienced in either public or private (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). Although shamed people may feel more exposed; they do so even when they are the only ones aware of their wrongdoing.

Although Kaufman (1996) suggests a relationship between shame and maladaptive traits, he proposes that guilt is a component of shame. However, some research suggests that guilt may be unrelated to psychological maladjustment, and it may even be an adaptive emotion (Tangney & Dearing, 2002; Kohki, 2001). Guilt is related to factors like empathy that relate to maintaining strong interpersonal bonds. When a guilt-prone person breaches an interpersonal bond, the focus is on reparation (Mascolo, 1995; Tangney & Dearing, 2002). Guilt-prone people are less likely to engage in “destructive, impulsive, and/or criminal activities” (Tangney & Dearing, 2002) than those who are shame-prone. Research indicates that guilt-prone people are also more likely, than shame-prone people to “drive responsibly, apply to college, and to actively contribute to the community” (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). In another study guilt-proneness was not related to intimacy fears or to blaming others for one’s actions, while shame-proneness was positively correlated with behavioral and characterological self-blame, as well as blame of others and self-derogation (Lutwak, Panish, & Ferrari, 2003).

Shame conjures feelings of inadequacy, self-contempt, embarrassment, self-exposure, and indignity (Tangney & Dearing, 2002; Kaufman, 1996; Pattison, 2000). To minimize these encounters that induce such feeling, shame-prone people use defensive strategies or defensive scripts (Kaufman, 1996; Pattison, 2000). Kaufman (1996) suggests that these strategies include rage, contempt, striving for perfection, transfer of blame, and denial; Pattison (2000) adds the scripts of withdrawal, attacking the self, avoidance, and attacking others. These self-defeating strategies are used to cope with a self-defeating emotion, and they also provide the frame for interpreting the relationship between shame and other maladaptive tendencies, such as perfectionism.

2. Perfectionism

The perfectionism construct has long been conceptualized as a pathology-causing personality trait (Pacht, 1984; Flett, Hewitt, & Dyck, 1989; Frost, Marten, Lahart, & Rosenblate, 1990; Hewitt & Flett, 1991; Flett, Hewitt, & DeRosa, 1996); it has been positively correlated with depression (Hewitt & Flett, 1991, 1993), personality disorders (Hewitt, Flett, & Turnbull, 1992), eating

متن کامل مقاله

دریافت فوری ←

ISIArticles

مرجع مقالات تخصصی ایران

- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
- ✓ پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
- ✓ امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
- ✓ امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
- ✓ امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
- ✓ دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
- ✓ پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات