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EXPLORATION OF PERSONALITY FACTORS AND THE PREDICTIVE IMPACT ON THERAPY UTILIZATION: THE EXTERNALIZING MODE OF FUNCTIONING
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Introduction: In recent years more attention has been paid to non-responders, i.e. patients who do not benefit from therapy, do not engage in treatment or terminate therapy prematurely.

Study 1/ objectives: It was to identify personality factors predicting psychotherapy utilization on the basis of personality pathology, affect regulation and interpersonal functioning.

Methods: Affectivity (AREQ), the interpersonal context (QORS) and character pathology (SWAP-200) were assessed.

Results: Combination of instruments showed one stable factor predictive for non-engagement in psychotherapy, revealing an externalizing personality dimension, dominated by externalizing defenses, acting out, deficient super-ego functions, impairment in reflective functioning and in relating to others ($n_{sample\ 1} = 129$). Stability of the predictive power of this personality factor for therapy engagement could be shown and a replication in two other samples ($n_{sample\ 2} = 95$, $n_{sample\ 3} = 94$) confirmed the findings.

Study 2/ objectives: Further we examined the question if the externalizing mode of functioning is relevant for the course of psychoanalytic treatments.

Methods: In 38 psychoanalytic treatments, severity of symptoms (SCL-90-R), interpersonal problems (IIP), character traits and psychostructural functioning (SWAP-200) were investigated half-yearly.

Results: For the first year denial of needs for closeness, and fears of an impulsive breakthrough of negative affects predicted dropout of therapy. During the second year externalizing defence, projection/projective identification, somatisation, hypochondria and dismissive interpersonal behaviour predicted break-ups.

Conclusion: The studies point at the necessity of interpreting affect-regulatory parameters, such as the externalizing parameter, from the very beginning and during the course of the treatment.