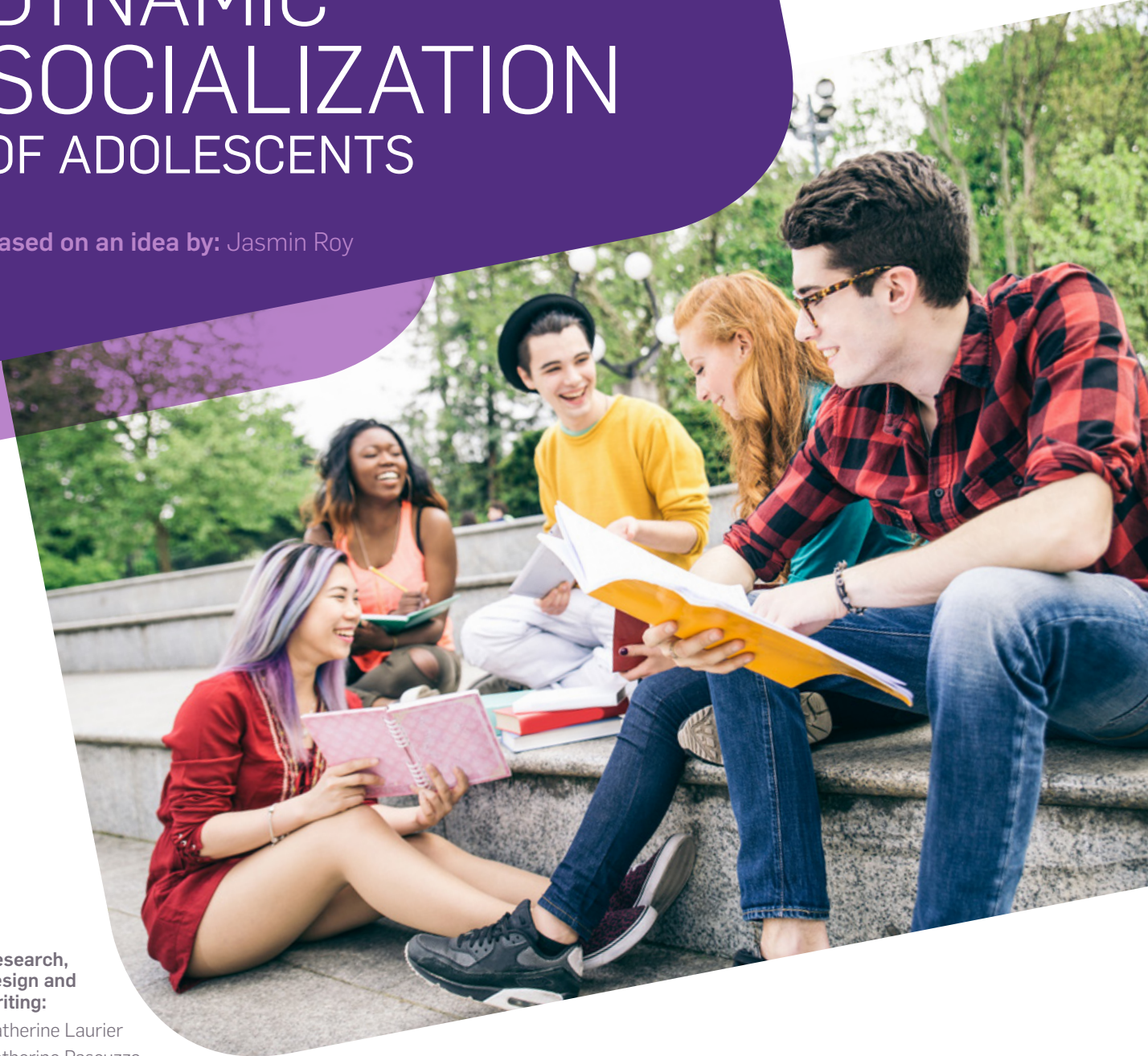


A GUIDE TO PROMOTE THE DYNAMIC SOCIALIZATION OF ADOLESCENTS

Based on an idea by: Jasmin Roy



**Research,
design and
writing:**

Catherine Laurier
Katherine Pascuzzo
Rémi Paré-Beauchemin
Jean-Sébastien Bourré

Schäfer et al. (2017) provide an excellent presentation of maladaptive and adaptive strategies in their article's introduction. The following is a summary:

Various strategies for regulating emotions can be divided into two main categories: maladaptive strategies (i.e., associated with various long-term problems, e.g., more depressive and anxiety symptoms); and adaptive strategies (i.e., associated with various long-term benefits, e.g., fewer depressive and anxiety symptoms).

MALADAPTIVE STRATEGIES

AVOIDANCE: Avoidance consists in avoiding experiences felt and experienced internally (e.g., emotions) and avoiding various objects, people, situations, etc. In the short term, avoidance may reduce negative emotions, however, in the long term, avoidance has negative impacts that exceed the short-term benefits, since negative emotions such as anxiety tend to persist. Avoidance may prevent children from getting used to negative emotions, as habituation gradually leads to a decrease in these emotions. Avoidance prevents children from seeing that their negative emotions can decrease and be replaced by positive emotions, which also prevents them from experiencing a feeling of self-efficacy regarding the regulation of their emotions.

SUPPRESSION OF EMOTIONS: The suppression of emotions refers to (1) the suppression of emotions and thoughts felt and experienced internally or (2) suppressing the expression of our emotions. This strategy may have the opposite of the desired effect, since it maintains or even increases the intensity of the suppressed negative emotions. It is assumed that children aged 10 and over have a sufficient understanding of this strategy and are able to use it intentionally, for example, smiling when they receive a gift that disappoints them.

RUMINATION: Unlike avoiding or suppressing emotions, which usually aim to decrease the emotional experience, rumination involves repeatedly focusing on emotional experiences and their causes and consequences. Rumination is even linked to other maladaptive emotion regulation habits, for example, substance abuse and food problems.

ADAPTIVE STRATEGIES

REINTERPRETATION/REASSESSMENT: Reinterpretation/reassessment consists in changing our thoughts and beliefs about the meaning of an event, situation, context, etc. Instructions can be given to adolescents to help them reinterpret/reassess events and thus decrease negative emotions and rumination.

PROBLEM SOLVING: Problem solving consists of reflection, thoughts and behaviours aimed at changing adverse circumstances that cause unwanted emotions. This strategy has two components: (1) the belief that we have the skills required to solve the problem and (2) that we actually have the skills required to solve the problem. Some cognitive and behavioural skills needed to do effective problem solving include, for example, knowing how situations may influence our emotions and how to change these situations.

ACCEPTANCE: Accepting our emotions means allowing them to be freely experienced without trying to resist their presence in any way. Accepting emotions is an appropriate way to manage them, since when we accept them, dysfunctional reactions are less likely, for example, judging or suppressing our negative emotions. Using this acceptance strategy also allows adolescents to experience that negative emotions are tolerable and transient/temporary, which can help them better manage these emotions. However, a lower level of acceptance makes emotional avoidance habits more likely.

