

In 2015, there were approximately 30.3 million adults with diabetes in the United States, creating a pressing need to understand the potential role of psychosocial influences on disease self-care. Thus, the present study examines the relationship between counterfactual thinking (CFT), coping mechanism selection, and disease self-care practices of individuals with diabetes. Using a mixed-methods approach, 10 participants (3 male, 7 female) have currently completed our protocol. Quantitative measures include optimism, diabetes self-efficacy, and guilt. Participants also completed a 45-minute interview which assessed cognitive and affective reactions to living with diabetes, particularly with respect to CFT. Participants ranged in age from 21-93 (M=58.7). Three individuals report having type 1 diabetes, and seven report having type 2 diabetes. Preliminary results indicate that the tendency to engage in self-referent upward CFT is associated with feelings of guilt. In turn, guilt is associated with coping through behavioral disengagement. However, CFT is also related to improved blood glucose testing (BGT). In comparison to individuals with type 2 diabetes, those with type one diabetes have higher diabetes self-efficacy scores, and reported better diet, exercise, and BGT. At this juncture, the challenge may be to understand how to encourage counterfactual thinking without promoting guilt or behavioral disengagement.