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**Direct and indirect effects of alexithymia on psychosomatic
symptomatology**

PhD Thesis

This PhD thesis explores the ways that alexithymia construct influences the occurrence of psychosomatic symptomatology.

The theoretical part presents an overview of the concepts that explain the origin of an alexithymia, such as mentalization and attachment theory.

Then, the work clarifies the historical stages in understanding the functioning of a subject, primarily through the psychoanalytic paradigm that underlies the formation of the alexithymia construct.

The etiological factors are presented, in the face of personal, cultural and genetic ones, which underlie the manifestation of the alexithymia characteristics. Particular attention has been paid to the methods of measuring the construct.

Various theoretical models are presented explaining the emergence of psychosomatic symptomatology, depression and perfectionism - the other variables examined.

The choice to examine a subjects of obesity is directly related to the current issue of overweight and its direct relationship to the psychosomatic understanding of the origin of this type of problem.

The next step is an overview of the studies that investigate the links between alexithymia, psychosomatic symptoms, depression and perfectionism.

The main purpose of the thesis is to conduct a study whose theoretical model assumes that alexithymia has both direct and indirect role in the manifestation of psychosomatic symptomatology, such as depression and perfectionism being mediators in this relation.

As a consequence of the conducted study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

The results confirm that alexithymia has a significant impact on the development of psychosomatic symptomatology. This can be directly expressed in the positive connection between alexithymia and psychosomatic symptomatology or indirectly - in the face of the mediating effect of depression

Regarding the mediating role of perfectionism, we can say that this has not been proven. In this case we can say that perfectionism has direct effect on psychosomatic symptomatology.

Our expectations were partly confirmed that there will have a significant relation between obesity and alexithymia, as well as between obesity and psychosomatic symptomatology. The relationship of the body mass index with depression has trending

properties. And the relationship between obesity and perfectionism has not reached a level of significance.

The results of the study will enable the implementation in clinical practice of measurement for detection of affective disturbances and a better clinical understanding of a group that is traditionally associated with somatic symptomatology and suffering and the mental basis of the problem is neglected.