

CHAPTER EIGHT

POSTTRAUMATIC GROWTH IN SPANISH CULTURE

Carmelo Vázquez and Darío Páez

To be published in:

Vázquez, C. y Páez, D. (in press). Posttraumatic growth in Spain. En T. Weiss & Berger, R. eds.), *Posttraumatic Growth and Culturally Competent Practice: Lessons Learned from Around the Globe*. New York: Wiley.

To understand stress, coping and posttraumatic growth (PTG) in Spanish context, it is of utmost importance to understand the country's geographical, social, political, economical, cultural and religious background. Spain is a country of 46.1 million inhabitants, which makes it the fifth most populated country in the European Union. Located in the south-western corner of Europe, with a surface of 195,364 sq. miles (506,000 sq. km), Spain is the second-largest country in Western Europe after France. Altogether, the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean border about 88 percent of Spain's periphery (3,960 km). Spain is one of the few European countries that have maintained its borders since its constitution as a nation (around 1500 A.C.). It has borders with France on the north and Portugal on the west, and at its extreme south, a narrow 13-km strait (8 mi) separates Spain from the African coast.

In part, due to its geographical position, Spain is heterogeneous in terms of culture, climates, feelings of national identity, and languages (the country has four official languages: Spanish or Castilian, which is the official common language of the whole nation, Catalan, Galician, and Basque). Furthermore, although the Spanish population has been relatively homogeneous in its racial and ethnic composition, a large-scale immigration to the country took place in the 1990's. In fact, since 2000, Spain is the second country (after the USA) in the world in the number of immigrants received, and now, almost 10% of the total population is foreign-born (INE, 2006), mainly Latin America, Eastern Europe and Africa.

Because social mobility is scarce and people usually live in the same cities or regions where they were born, they are interconnected with their families and friends over their entire lives (Vázquez, Muñoz, & Rodríguez, 1999). In addition, social ties are enhanced by the fact that Spaniards tend to have more contact with their neighbors than is usual in developed societies partly due to the fact that the great majority of Spaniards live in apartments, usually as owner-occupiers (Spain is the second country in the world in terms of owner-occupancy).

Related to this “familistic” nature has been the stereotype of Spaniards, like other southerners, as emotionally expressive and warm but rather incompetent compared to competent/conscientious, cold and introvert north and central European nations (Terracciano et al., 2005). This stereotype is common in the European culture and even among Spaniards themselves. However, empirical findings are mixed. For example, Pennebaker, Rimé and Blankenship (1996) found that people living in south Spain reported being more emotionally expressive than those living in northern regions but other studies using personality trait tests failed to confirm these stereotypes and found that Spaniards are neither high in extroversion nor low in consciousness (Terracciano et al., 2005; McCrae, Terraciano, et al., 2005).

Since the 1950s, important changes in values and social norms have taken place in Spain, partly related to the large influx of immigrants (Clark 1990) and growing tourism (Spain was the world’s second most popular tourist destination in the early 2000s). Like in many other industrialized societies, the common ground of this change has been a process of secularization. There has been a noticeable shift in attitudes regarding family roles, from a traditional hierarchical and patriarchal to a more individualistic and egalitarian. Changes in legislation also reflect the rapid changes in social norms. For example, laws against adultery were cancelled in 1978, and divorce and abortion were legalized in 1981 (Clark, 1990), which opened the doors to more advanced legislation on gender-equality issues and civil liberties. Contrary to stereotypes, in areas such as gay and lesbian rights, Spain is now at the vanguard of public policies in Europe (Terracciano, Abdel-Khalek, Adam, Adamovova, et al., 2005; Valiente, 2006; Wilson, 2005). For example, in July 2005, under the Socialist party, the Spanish Parliament legalized same-sex marriages (which, according to polls, was supported by 60% of the population) and gave these couples the same rights as heterosexuals, including the adoption of children.

Despite the increase in social changes (e.g., regarding the status of women) and a rapid decline in family size (UNSD, 2009), the family has retained its central position in Spanish life. According to polls, Spaniards regard the welfare of their family as by far their highest priority and they spend the greatest portion of their leisure time within it (Juárez, 1994). Thus the importance of social and family ties is crucial for understanding the reactions to traumatic incidents and the potential for PTG as described later in this chapter.

Together with Portugal, Greece, and Turkey, Spain is one of the most collectivist West European nations and much more collectivistic than the US (score of 51 compared to 91) according to the Individualism/Collectivism dimension of Hofstede's national values survey (2001), which measures the priority given to the person, group or collective, often the extended family (Basabe & Valencia, 2007). Schwartz (1994) specifically identified the Spanish Egalitarianism (or horizontal) compared to the Hierarchical nature of the US culture (5.55 vs. 5.03 and 2.03 vs. 2.39 respectively; Basabe & Ros, 2005). It is important to note that, although Spanish culture stresses more social duties and familism than the USA (Weiss & Berger, 2006), from a global point of view, Spain is less collectivist than Latin American and Asian nations (for instance, the score for China on individualism is 20).

Spain was historically a Catholic country. Nowadays, 77% of the population self identifies as Roman Catholic, 20% as non-believers or atheists and the rest as believers of other religions. However, similar to France, Austria, and Germany only 27% of Spaniards consider themselves highly religious (i.e., religion plays a central role in their life) compared to 62% in the US, 64% in Morocco and 72% in Brazil (Beterlmann Foundation, 2009) and about 17% attend church regularly (CIS, 2008). There is a clear disconnect between official Catholic doctrines and society's behavior relative to divorce, use of contraceptives and attitudes to homosexuality (Valiente, 2006). Although according to the 1978 Spanish democratic Constitution, Church and State are separate, the Church retains a strong presence

in social life in relation to celebration of festival (fiestas) and rituals such as weddings, baptism and funerals, which for most people have a social rather than a spiritual meaning.

The secularization of Spain may be major source of differences in factors related to coping processes and cognitive schemata. Thus, in Spain lower percentage of people reported that they find comfort and strength in religion compared to the US (80% and 54% respectively) as well as Latin American cultures, with which Spain shares language and some values such as the importance of family (Inglehart, Basañez, Diez-Medradno, Halman, & Luijkx, 2004).

Spain has faced dramatic socioeconomic and political changes in the last decades. Whereas as late as the 1950s the United Nations classified Spain as a developing country, by the year 2000, Spain had the world's seventh largest gross domestic product. From a political point of view, Spain is a recent democracy governed by a parliamentary monarchy. After a fierce civil war (1936-39), Spain was ruled by a right-wing authoritarian regime headed by General Francisco Franco who died in 1975. After his death, Spain began a rapid transition to democracy (1975-79) and an active involvement in European institutions (e.g. the European Community now called the European Union), which contributed to deep and far-reaching social and economic transformations (Cordon, 2003) making Spain's per capita GDP nearing the European Union average.

A period of social and political turmoil occurred in 2004, when on March 11th (M-11), three days before the general elections for parliament, the worst recent single non-war related terrorist action in a European country killed 192 people and injured more than 1,500 when a coordinated series of bombs exploded on four commuter trains in Madrid during the morning rush hour. The elections resulted in the unexpected defeat of the Popular Party by the Socialist Workers' Party because many citizens accused the government of being too quick to blame ETA, a Basque terrorist group, for political reasons and refused to consider other options

although within a few hours evidence pointed to Muslims linked to Al-Qaeda, the group responsible for the 9/11/2001 (S-11) terrorists attacks in the US. Voters also punished the right-wing party for having drawn Spain into conflict with Islamic extremists by unconditionally supporting the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. Spain's alliance with the US during the Iraqi war was opposed by millions of Spaniards. In February 2003, 90.8% of the Spanish population was against the military intervention in Iraq, and 67% thought that Spain should remain neutral. In April 2003 (after the start of the Iraqi war), 53.9% believed that the Spanish government had acted wrongly or very wrongly during the war (Páez et al., 2007). Mass demonstrations were held for months to protest against Spain's involvement. Indeed, in his first public appearance after winning the elections, the Socialist Prime Minister, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero announced the withdrawal of Spain's 1,300 troops from Iraq.

PTG IN SPAIN

Empirical research on PTG and related concepts (e.g. stress-related growth, benefit finding) is rather scant in Spain. Although there are some data on cancer survivors (e.g., Costa-Requena & Gil, 2007), this chapter will focus on published research related to the aftermath of the 2004 terrorist attack, which provides the most critical mass of knowledge on PTG in Spain. Though the different teams (led by the two authors of this chapter) worked initially independently, eventually they combined their efforts to understand the experience and positive reactions of individuals and communities.

Although the negative impact of terrorism on people and communities is well-known (e.g. a meta-analysis in Danieli, Brom, & Sills, 2005), there is also increasing evidence of positive consequences on diverse domains of personal and group functioning (see chapter 2 in this volume and review by Vázquez, Hervás, & Pérez-Sales, 2008). Whereas the main target of terrorism is to intimidate populations, current available evidence shows that there are often unexpected positive outcomes as reflected in the development of new strengths and skills

(Peterson & Seligman, 2003), altruistic behaviors (Smith, Rasinski, & Toce, 2001; Steinberg & Rooney, 2005), social sharing of emotions (Mehl & Pennebaker, 2003), and an upsurge of certain positive emotions (Vázquez & Hervás, 2009).

Most of the research conducted on traumatic events in general, and terrorism in particular, have been carried out with direct victims (Norris et al., 2002). Yet, with the September 11, 2001 attacks in the US followed by the terrorist attacks in London and Madrid, a series of innovative studies were launched to examine clinical and non-clinical aspects of the general population's reactions to those events (Matt & Vázquez, 2008; Miguel-Tobal et al., 2006; Rubin, Brewin, Greenberg, Simpson, & Wessely, 2005; Schuster et al., 2001; Vázquez, Pérez-Sales, & Matt, 2006). Studies in the US (Bonanno, Galea, Bucciarelli, & Vlahov, 2006; Matt & Vázquez, 2008), London (Rubin et al., 2006) and Madrid (Vázquez et al., 2006; Pérez-Sales & Vázquez, 2007) showed that most people in these countries did not report stress related pathology. Furthermore, two studies followed the general population of Spain between three and eight weeks after the M-11 terrorist attacks in Madrid using the World Assumption Scale (WAS; Janoff-Bulman, 1989). No negative changes in participants' benevolent view of the world or in their faith in other people were found either in Madrid (Techio & Calderón-Prada, 2005; Ubillos, Mayordomo, & Basabé, 2005) or among New Yorkers weeks and months after the attack (Smith et al., 2001). The resilience demonstrated in these studies is complementary to Bonanno's (2004) claim that most people who had directly experienced or witnessed a traumatic event display no significant trauma-related clinical reaction.

There is also evidence that people may experience a rather wide array of positive emotions and cognitions. Recent trauma literature showed that in addition to the widely acknowledged negative effects of stressful events, about two-thirds of survivors also describe PTG or positive personal as well as social life changes (see a meta-analysis on benefit-finding after adversity in Helgeson, Reynolds, & Tomich, 2006). Examples of social benefits include

increased family closeness, social support, empathy, pro-social behavior and, in the case of communal trauma, increased community's cohesion (Vázquez, Pérez-Sales & Hervás, 2008).

In the case of terrorism, research has consistently found that, in the immediate days after the terrorist attacks, for most people, positive emotions outnumber the negative ones (Smith et al., 2001). These findings were confirmed in Spain. Three to four weeks after the Madrid attacks, a sample of 502 students and other individuals, including 20 who were directly exposed and 216 who knew someone who had been directly affected, was assessed. The results showed that 31% of the participants perceived positive consequences from the attacks, whereas 61% reported having experienced learning. The domains of growth most frequently reported were feeling closer to others (80%), higher social cohesion (79%) and feeling personally prepared for similar future situations (31%). Thus, positive emotions (e.g. feelings of solidarity or of belonging to a community) were experienced by the vast majority and, in general, positive emotions were more intense than negative ones (Vázquez, Pérez-Sales & Hervás, 2008).

While PTG was originally conceptualized as personal and interpersonal benefits, in case of collective trauma and in cultures that emphasize collectivistic values like Spain, growth can also be perceived at a societal level. Thus in the S-11 US attack and the M-11 Madrid bombing many reactions revolved around sociopolitical themes and reactions increased political awareness (Ai, Cascio, Santangelo & Evans-Campbell, 2005). In Spain, the attacks triggered active citizens engagement in social and political activities such participation of a quarter of the population in numerous and massive demonstrations against Spanish involvement in the Iraqi war and terrorism. Such political involvement shows an intensification of social sharing and interaction as well as an active resistance to terror (Campos, Páez, & Velasco, 2004; Páez, Basabe, Ubbillos, & Gonzalez, 2007; Rimé, Páez, Basabe, & Martinez, in press; Sabucedo et al., 2000). Furthermore, communal forms of

coping, i.e. collective processes of resilience that occur relative to interpersonal and group processes (related to collectivistic values) also played an important role (Páez et al., 2007; Rimé et al., in press). These forms of coping aim to counteract trauma by means of rebuilding social relationships and reconstructing a sense of belonging and social identity, based on affiliative, relational, and collective values such as solidarity and community cohesion (Hernandez, 2002; Lykes, Cabrera, & Martin Beristain, 2007; Páez et al., 2007). Communal coping, specifically social sharing, interpersonal coping, and participation in demonstrations against war and terrorism, may have an effect on the development of PTG as long as this coping modality includes a positive emotional climate for hope and solidarity and a demonstration of people's power.

The importance of positive emotions for positive growth, which has been highlighted by Fredrickson (2009) in her broaden-and-build theory, applies also to PTG. In assessing PTG following the S-11 attacks, Vázquez and Hervás (2009) used an index derived from the Positive Meaning Scale (Fredrickson et al. 2003). They found positive correlations with perception of growth and positive emotions experienced on the day of the attacks and on following days (feelings of being 'part of a nation', 'determined', 'attentive', 'strong', 'proud', 'grateful') but no significant relationship with the severity of negative emotions experienced. However, it is important to remember that the existence of positive aspects after traumatic events does not mean that the negative aspects are negligible. In fact, in a study of a Spanish sample after the M-11 attacks, a direct and significant relationship was found between the perception of positive and negative changes (Barbero-Val & Linley, 2006), i.e. people who reported more positive changes also reported a high level of negative changes. These results show that to generate changes, people must feel shaken by the traumatic experience (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2006). Coexistence of positive and negative elements can also occur at the social level. For instance, in the case of the fierce civil clash in Sri Lanka, besides huge social and

individual costs, it also promoted cooperation and cohesion in groups and community organizations (Somasundaram, 2004).

To assess the effects of sharing event-related emotions with others data was collected from a sample of 644 individuals, predominantly (70%) female, university students (63%) and their relatives, ranging in age from 17 to 90 ($M = 27.53$, $SD=12$) one, three and eight weeks after the M-11 attacks. No direct victims were included (Páez et. al., 2007; Rimé et al., in press; Jimenez, Páez & Javaloy, 2005).

Positive changes in self and others in reaction to trauma were assessed at three weeks by scales developed on the basis of the Posttraumatic Growth Inventory (PTGI, Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996) and the Stress Related Growth Scale (SRGS, Park, Cohen, & Murch, 1996). The adaptation of these scales for Spain (for a Latin American version, see Weiss & Berger, 2006) included intrapersonal (6 items, e.g., feelings of ‘personal growth’ and ‘changes in appreciation of life’) and interpersonal benefits (4 items of positive e.g., ‘improved relationships with others’). In addition three new items related to collective growth were added (‘reinforces political participation and engagement’, ‘reinforces sensitivity towards human rights violations in this country’, ‘and reinforces awareness of human rights violations in the world’). These items are relevant because they are indexes of a peace culture as proposed by UNESCO (Basabe & Valencia, 2007). The resulting 13 item PTG scale yielded a very satisfactory reliability ($\alpha = .92$) and satisfactory alpha levels, all above .70 for the three subscales.

Perception of emotional climate was measured at one and eight weeks using the 10-item Emotional Climate Scale, which measures both positive and negative emotions (Páez, Ruiz, Gailly, Kornblit, & Wiesenfeld, 1997). Participants were asked to indicate the degree to which a series of statements reflects their perception of the conditions in their country (e.g.,

‘The social environment or climate is one of hope’). A factor analysis yielded a single positive emotion factor (joy/contentment, hope, solidarity, and confidence, $\alpha = .64$).

Positive affect was measured at three and eight weeks by a subscale of the Watson’s PANAS Scale positive affect dimension (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988), which measures on a 10 items five-point scale (1 = “slightly or not at all,” 2 = “a little,” 3 = “moderately,” 4 = “quite a lot,” and 5 = “a lot”), the extent to which respondent has experienced each of the identified positive emotions during the previous month. The scale has good reliability (Cronbach α .81).

Findings relative to PTG indicated a moderate level of intrapersonal benefits, a higher level of interpersonal benefits and a high level of collective growth ($M=4.0$, $SD=1.4$, $M=4.4$, $SD=1.4$, $M=5.2$, $SD=1.7$ respectively on a 7-point Likert-type scale 1= Not at all, 7= A lot). Subscales’ scores were significantly different. These results strongly support that, under conditions of collective trauma, and probably in cultures emphasizing collectivistic values, growth is mainly perceived at societal level such as increase in political participation and cultural values related to peace.

Correlates and predictors of PTG

Studies identified several correlates and predictors of PTG including positive affect, emotional climate, negative affect and rumination, social support, social sharing, communal coping, demonstrations, cultural values as well as spirituality and religiosity. The longitudinal study on the effects of the M-11 bombing (Páez et al., 2007) found a significant association between PTG and personal positive affect (as measured by the PANAS) ($r=.40$, $p<.001$). Moreover, PTG three weeks after the event was predicted by the perception of a positive emotional climate in the nation, assessed one week after the bombing, which suggests a collective resilience process, in which positive collective emotions fuel benefit-finding (see Páez et al., 2007). These findings agree with other research, which found that benefit-finding

and PTG after terrorist attacks is positively related to positive emotions (Vázquez & Hervás, 2009) and positive coping strategies (Park, Aldwin, Fenster, & Snyder, 2008).

Páez and colleagues (2007) found that PTG three weeks later was also predicted by rumination and negative emotional reactions of sadness, anger, and fear at one week ($r=.34$, $p<.01$). Other studies also found that measures of emotional upset were positively associated with a number of benefits. For instance, Davis and Macdonald (2004) observed that distress was a predictor of the extent to which people reported PTG six to eleven weeks after S-11. Similarly, Park and her colleagues (2008) found an association between psychological growth and feelings of anger in an American sample assessed a few weeks after M-11. These findings were confirmed by two meta-analyses (Helgeson et al., 2006; Prati & Pietrantonio, 2007), which found evidence for the association between PTG and sadness and rumination. Furthermore, severity of the event was also a predictor of growth. These findings suggest that some emotional distress may be a necessary condition for the perception of growth (Armeli, Gunther & Cohen, 2001) and provide support to the hypothesis that people who are not distressed by an event and whose personal and socially shared beliefs are not shattered are not motivated to perceive positive social responses (Janoff-Bulman, 2004). However, compared to positive emotions, the pattern of results with negative emotions is more complex. Some studies failed to find a relationship between negative emotion and growth (e.g., Cobb, Tedeschi, Calhoun, & Cann, 2006; Barbero-Val & Linley, 2006) and the aforementioned meta-analyses did not find a connection between PTG and anxiety.

PTG three weeks after the Madrid attacks was also predicted by a factor score including coping through reappraisal, emotional expression and seeking social support during the first week ($r=.36$, $p<.01$) and associated with the perception of social support at three weeks ($r=.16$, $p<.001$; Páez et al., 2007). These findings agree with a series of studies (Helgeson et al., 2006; Prati & Pietrantonio, 2007), which found that posttraumatic benefit-finding was predicted

by positive reappraisal or reevaluation, coping through emotional social support and perceived social support.

Moreover, a factor analysis showed that positive reappraisal combined with seeking social support and instrumental coping loaded on a factor of 'adaptive coping'. This finding is consistent with previous research which found that coping by seeking emotional and informational support, emotional expression, and reappraisal converge in a second-order factor, along with instrumental coping, to form an adaptive dimension of coping (Compas, Connor-Smith, Salzman, Harding, & Watson, 2001).

That both using social support and emotional expression predicted PTG, and the perception of social support was associated with PTG, suggest that in the Spanish context some level of social reintegration and mobilization could be a precondition for growth. Seeking for and actual social support affords positive changes in others to be perceived, supporting interpersonal growth (Armeli et al., 2001). Furthermore, the results suggest that positive reevaluation is based on a social or communal form of meaning-making and problem-solving interpersonal rumination (Berger & Weiss, 2009).

Seeking social support and communication about emotions related to trauma are very common and fulfill important psychosocial functions. Because social sharing of emotions generally involves manifestations of social support, empathy, and pro-social behavior, it is conceivable that combined with enhanced perceived social integration (Rimé, 2009) they can predict PTG. In fact, in their theoretical model of factors facilitating the process of PTG, Tedeschi and Calhoun (2004) made explicit mention of emotional disclosure. According to their view, narratives of trauma and survival are always important in PTG, because the development of these narratives forces survivors to confront issues of meaning and its reconstruction (McAdams, 1993). Informal social communication emphasizing collective positive reactions such as altruistic and pro-social behaviors can restore basic assumptions

about the benevolence and controllability of the social world when they are shattered by traumatic events such as S-11, 2001, in New York, or March 11th, 2004, in Madrid (Janoff-Bulman, 1992). Because of the reinforcement of social integration and positive beliefs, social sharing of emotions and coping by seeking social support enhance benefit-finding, together with more collective forms of coping, like rituals (Rimé, 2007).

Either objective or subjective obstacles to these expressive needs may impede a positive adaptation after trauma. Vázquez and colleagues (2008) found that in a sample of the general population, people with a tendency to block or repress negative thoughts (measured by Wegner's White Bear Suppression Inventory, Wegner & Zanakos, 1994), tended to cope by praying and avoidant behaviors (e.g., not watching TV news). Conversely, more positive coping behaviors such as taking part in social or public activities to acknowledge what happened were negatively related to a tendency to chronically suppress negative thoughts. This seems to imply that certain cognitive styles may be related to different patterns of coping and expressive behaviors that can facilitate or impede adaptation to trauma.

There is also evidence that PTG both at the individual and communal level is associated with communal coping and social processing (Páez et. al., 2007) in the Spanish context. That finding relative to the individual PTG emerged in the context of a unique cross-cultural comparison of expressive writing following S-11 in the US and M-11 in Spain. Despite their differences on the collectivistic/ individualistic dimension, strong similarities were found between American and Spanish participants in the emotional content of accounts about reactions to the terrorist attacks, including similar weight attached to interpersonal social support and the importance of others. However, congruent with the relatively more collectivistic Spanish culture, Spaniards reported higher levels of social processes ('communication', 'friends', 'family', and 'other people'), and used third-person pronouns in their writings whereas Americans were more likely to use first-person. This significant

difference is also reflected in the difference in public reaction and media coverage in the two countries. The intense demonstrations in various Spanish cities after M-11 had no parallels in the US after the S-11 attacks. These results suggest that people sharing collectivist values use more communal coping as a resource for addressing with collective traumatic events like M-11 (Fernandez, Páez, & Pennebaker, 2009).

Demonstrations can be viewed as secular rituals involving collective gatherings in a public space aimed at transmitting a symbolic message to an audience with both expressive (e.g., criticism towards a government) and instrumental goals (e.g., claims for political changes). At the same time, they also represent a form of communication that supports a "we-them" differentiation by reinforcing the collective identity of a group or a subgroup though not necessarily implying consensus or absence of conflict within that group. In most cases, protest rituals constitute "sociodramas" that intensify value conflicts within the framework of a power struggle. In the aftermath of the M-11 bombings, demonstrations expressed and accentuated political conflicts between opposing left- and right-wing ideologies as well as dominant anti-war attitudes among Spaniards. The latter are manifested in their extremely negatively evaluation of World War II and relatively low willingness to fight in a war for the country (43% compared to 73% in the US and a world mean of 75%; Basabe & Valencia, 2007). Participation in secular rituals fulfils psychosocial functions such as social integration, construction of positive shared social beliefs, and reinforcement of societal cohesion and, thus indirectly contributes to PTG (Páez et al., 2007). Furthermore, Páez and colleagues (2007) also found that PTG, as assessed by a short version of the PTGI three weeks after the attacks, was also predicted by the frequency of participation in demonstrations and of social sharing (with control for the score on Izard's Differential Emotional Scale) one week after the M-11 bombing ($r=.21, p<.01$; partial $r=.19, p<.01$ respectively).

In the context of the Madrid bombing, cultural values were found to be correlates and predictors of PTG. The values of tradition and conformity associated with collectivism (Schwartz, 1994), measured one week after the attacks, predicted PTG at three weeks ($r=0.15$, $p<.001$) but were not correlated with participation in demonstration or coping by seeking social support or reappraisal. The egalitarian value of benevolence related to Schwartz' (1994) hierarchy dimension was also associated with PTG ($r=.28$, $p<.001$) as well as with seeking social support ($r=.26$, $p<.001$) and participation in demonstration ($r=.11$, $p<.001$) as indicating communal coping (Jimenez et al, 2005). These findings indicate that in Spanish culture, communal coping seems to be the mechanism through which the egalitarian value of benevolence facilitates PTG but it does not play a role in the association between collectivist values and PTG. The later is also consistent with Taylor and colleagues' (2004) conclusion that people who adhere to collectivist as well as hierarchy values tend to seek less social support, because they try to avoid disturbing others and resort to stoicism as a form of maintaining a good image.

Compared to the massive participation in secular ritual, Spaniards reported praying for the victims of M-11 less frequently ($M=1.96$ vs. $M=.2.98$, $t(1100)=24.64$, $p<.001$). Yet, praying for the victims the first week strongly predicted PTG at three weeks ($r=.32$, $p<.001$), almost as much the correlation of PTG and social support, reappraisal, and participation in demonstrations combined ($r=.31$, $p<.001$). As religious coping by praying correlates with collectivistic values (Tradition $r=.21$ and Conformity, $r=.34$, both $p<.001$), it could be hypothesized that the collectivist facet of the Spanish culture affords benefit-finding through the social component of religious rituals (Jimenez et al, 2005; Calderón et al, 2004; Campos et al., 2004).

Table 1 (based on data from www.helping.apa.org, Bilbao, 2009, Gasparre, Bosco, Bellelli, & Páez, in press) presents a comparison of findings relative to PTG dimensions Spain with the US and Guatemala.

INSERT TABLE 1

Given the high level of secularization and lower religious coping in Spain, studies using the PTGI and similar scales usually find lower level of spiritual growth in Spain than in the US and in traditional collectivist Latin American nations like Guatemala.

CONCLUSIONS

The studies described in this chapter support the idea that the concept of PTG is applicable to Spain and has deep community components, specifically as it relates to those vicariously traumatized by national trauma, Positive and negative emotions, communal coping, social sharing, coping by social support and demonstrations are the main correlates/predictors of perceived individual and community benefit-finding. These relationships could be explained, at least partially, by the egalitarian characteristic of the Spanish culture (Basabe & Ros, 2005) as well as by its secular nature.

Although Spain shares its official common language and important values with other Spanish-speaking countries, it would be inappropriate to apply data and conclusions to other countries belonging to the so-called Spanish culture. This offers implication for practice as well as for future research, as Latin American countries seem to be particularly resilient when facing adversity (Pérez-Sales, Cervellón, Vázquez, Vidales & Gaborit, 2005) and most of them rank very high in terms of happiness and psychological well-being (Gallup Report, 2007). The complex social structure of these societies as well as their highly functional communal ways of coping, stressed by strong solidarity ties, are likely factors to promote resilience and perhaps PTG in these communities (Gasparre et al., in press).

The Spanish studies to date, like most other research on PTG, are cross-sectional or with short follow-ups. However, in a longitudinal study on the effects of the S-11 attacks, Butler et al. (2005) showed that initial PTG levels might decline, with the exception of spiritual changes. Therefore, it is unknown whether the findings concerning benefit-finding and psychological and social growth will be sustained for long periods.

Results need to be interpreted with caution because the studies reviewed in this chapter, as the vast majority of PTG research, used self-report measures (Hegelson et al., 2006) and, even more important, they do not measure “real” changes (see a thoughtful review of these conceptual and methodological issues in Tennen & Affleck, 2009). Although we have consistently used the concept PTG throughout this chapter, we are aware that the use of this term is controversial when one is restricted, as in our series of studies, to assessing the subjective perception of benefits or psychological growth. As Park (2009) clearly stated, the subjective reports of change could be either transitory or even illusory (for a discussion of these issues see Sumalla et al., 2008). There is a need to diversify the spectrum of measures of benefit-finding and to clarify the conceptual limits of this concept and related ones (Park & Lechner, 2006). This is particularly important in PTG research as it can be vulnerable to social desirability effects and illusory self-deceit (Ochoa et al., 2008 ; Tedeschi, Calhoun, & Cann, 2007; Zoellner, & Maercker, 2006). Future research should include behavioral and performance measures as well as information from significant others like spouses, parents, or colleagues.

With regard to practical implications for intervention derived from our empirical findings, we can conclude that reinforcing participation in secular communal coping, getting people to focus on performing altruistic behavior, seeking and giving social support, and increasing social sharing of positive reactions in victims, secondary victims, and witnesses can help to overcome trauma and facilitate perceived post-traumatic growth in contexts like that of

Spain. Our results emphasize the need to pay attention not only to individual mechanisms of change but also to social and community pathways that can facilitate change. Evidence shows that, at least in countries like Spain, public demonstrations and commemorations can help to gain a sense of positive changes after terrorist attacks aimed at the community. These secular rituals can be very important for a population, like that of Spain, which basically shares egalitarian or horizontal collectivistic values. As a participant in a demonstration after the Madrid March 11th attacks said: “ People come here to be united, to share their pain... After the act ends, people still stand there, talking in small groups and wanting to stay together” (Caravaca in Díaz, 2004, p. 165). Yet, we must remember that collective religious rituals could also play a positive role in the development of PTG in some special groups (e.g., immigrants from Latin-American and African countries).

The results of Jiménez et al.’s study (2005) confirm that participation in public demonstrations predicted an increase in well-being, positive affect, and sense of social support three weeks later. Two testimonies can illustrate this finding: “[...] the common tie still predominates. Against terror and barbarism, be with the victims... There is no excuse for this slaughter... the important thing is... to snap out of the paralysis... to shatter the stupor, for hundreds of thousands of us to come together to express our feelings... All the good people of Madrid will be there... The faces have changed... The pain and the indignation remain. But we have broken out of the paralysis caused by stupor and anguish... life goes on... We want to prolong these communal moments we have experienced...” (Díaz, 2004, pp.29-33). Likewise, Fredrickson (2009) has described how she coped with her husband’s illness, mainly supported by a social network within her neighborhood that helped her to overcome stress and facilitate growth. The data described in this chapter suggest that this type of social factors can be a central process for post-traumatic growth even in individualistic cultures, as Fredrickson’s own experience reveals (see Calderon et al, 2004, for a discussion of collective resilience).

Finally, if PTG is related to a restructuring of narratives and schemas (Neimeyer & Levitt, 2000; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004), social values and identities may play a significant role. Personal growth may be a more attainable goal in some cultures, like the US that hold optimistic view of human life and emphasize the idea that after traumatic events one can reinvent oneself to some extent, but not in others (Fredrickson, 2009; Martín-Baró, 1990). In such cultures, people's implicit theories of change, which are fostered by institutions like the American Psychological Association, may lead them to create unrealistic expectations of positive personal changes in the aftermath of trauma (Park, 2009; Tennen & Affleck, 2009). Yet, this issue must be empirically examined as, for instance, in some stoic and collectivistic cultures, like Guatemala, people report higher levels of positive change, suggesting that these positive perceptions of change after trauma are not limited to "unrealistic optimistic" individualistic cultures.

REFERENCES

- Ai, A.L., Cascio, T., Santagelo, L.K., & Evans-Campbell, T. (2005). Hope, meaning and growth following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 20*, 523-548.
- Alberdi, I. (1999). *La nueva familia española* (The new Spanish family). Madrid: Taurus.
- Armeli, S., Gunthert, K.C., & Cohen, L.H. (2001). Stressors appraisals, coping and post-events outcomes. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 20*, 366-395.
- Barbero-Val, E., & Linley, P. A. (2006). Posttraumatic growth, positive changes, and negative changes in Madrid residents following the March 11, 2004, Madrid train bombings. *Journal of Loss & Trauma, 11*, 409-424.
- Basabe, N., & Ros, M. (2005). Cultural dimensions and social behavior correlates: Individualism-Collectivism and Power Distance. *International Review of Social Psychology, 18*, (1/2), 189-224.

- Basabe, N., & Valencia, J. (2007). Cultures of Peace: Sociostructural dimensions, cultural values and emotional climate. *Journal of Social Issues, 63*, 405-421.
- Berger, R., & Weiss, T. (2009). The post-traumatic growth model: an expansion to the family system. *Traumatology, 15*, 63-74.
- Bertelsmann Foundation (Ed.). (2009). *What the world believes: Analysis and commentary on the religion monitor 2008*. Gütersloh, Germany: Gütersloher Verlagshaus.
- Bilbao, M.A. (2009). *Creencias sociales y bienestar*. Unpublished PH.D. dissertation. San Sebastian, Spain. Faculty of Psychology, Basque Country University.
- Bonanno, G. (2004). Loss, trauma and human resilience: Have we underestimated the human capacity to thrive after extremely aversive events? *American Psychologist, 59*, 20-28.
- Bonanno, G. A., Galea, S., Bucciarelli, A., & Vlahov, D. (2006). Psychological resilience after disaster: New York City in the aftermath of the September 11th terrorist attack. *Psychological Science, 17*, 181-186.
- Butler, L. D., Blasey, C. M., McCaslin, S. E., Garlan, R. W., Azarow, J., Chen, X. H., Desjardins, J. C., DiMiceli, S., Seagraves, D. A., Hastings, T. A., Kraemer, H. C., & Spiegel, D. (2005). Posttraumatic growth following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001: Cognitive, coping, and trauma symptom predictors in an Internet convenience sample. *Traumatology, 11*, 247-267.
- Calderón, A. Espinoza, A. y Techio, E. (2004). Resiliencia, afrontamiento, bienestar psicológico y clima socio-emocional después del 11-M [Resilience, coping and well-being after the March-11th bombing]. *Ansiedad y Estrés, 10*, 265-276.
- Calhoun, L.G., & Tedeschi, R.G. (2006). The foundations of posttraumatic growth: An expanded framework. In L.G. Calhoun & R.G. Tedeschi (Eds.), *Handbook of posttraumatic growth: Research and practice* (pp. 3-23). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

- Campos, M., Páez, D., & Velasco, C. (2004). Afrontamiento y regulación emocional de hechos traumáticos: Un estudio longitudinal sobre el 11-M [Coping and emotional regulation of traumatic events: A longitudinal study on the March 11th bombing]. *Ansiedad y Estrés*, *10*, 277-286.
- Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (CIS) (2008). National survey poll http://www.cis.es/cis/opencms/Archivos/Marginales/2760_2779/2761/e276100.html
- Cobb, A.R., Tedeschi, R.G., Calhoun, L.G., & Cann, A. (2006). Correlates of posttraumatic growth in survivors of intimate partner abuse. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, *19*, 895-903.
- Collins, R. (2004). Rituals of solidarity in the wake of terrorist attack. *Sociological Theory*, *22*, 53-87.
- Compas, B.E., Connor-Smith, J. K., Saltzman, H., Thomsen, A. H., & Wadsworth, M. E. (2001). Coping with stress during childhood and adolescence: Problems, progress and potential in theory and research. *Psychological Bulletin*, *127*, (1), 87-127.
- Cordon, J.A.F. (2003). The situation of families in Spain-2001. European observatory on the Social Situation, Demography and Family. The Clearinghouse on International Developments in Child, Youth and Family Policies at Columbia University. Retrieved from <http://www.childpolicyintl.org/countries/spain.html> on 6/12/2009.
- Costa-Requena, G., & Gil, F. (2007). Crecimiento postraumático en pacientes oncológicos [Posttraumatic growth in oncological patients]. *Análisis y Modificación de Conducta*, *33*, 229-250.
- Danieli, Y., Brom, D., & Sills, J. (2005). *The trauma of terrorism: Sharing knowledge and shared care. An international handbook*. New York: Haworth Press.

- Davis, C.G., & Macdonald, S.L. (2004). Threat appraisals, distress and the development of positive life changes after September 11th in a Canadian sample. *Cognitive Behavior Therapy, 33*, 68-78.
- Díaz, J. et al (2004). *Pásalo/Multitud en Rebelión* [Send this SMS: Crowd in Rebellion]. Madrid: Fundamentos.
- Fernández, I, Páez, D., & Pennebaker, J. (2009). Comparison of expressive writing after the terrorist attacks of September 11th and March 11th. *International Journal of Health and Clinical Psychology, 9*, 89-103.
- Fredrickson, B. (2009). *Positivity*. New York: Crown Publishers.
- Gallup Report (2007).
- Gasparre, A., Bosco, S., Bellelli, G., & Paez, D. (in press). Cognitive and social consequences of participations in social rites: collective coping, social support and posttraumatic growth in Guatemala Genocide's victims. *Revista de Psicología Social, 25*.
- Helgeson, V. S., Reynolds, K., & Tomich, P. (2006). A meta-analytic review of benefit finding and growth. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 5*, 797-816.
- Hernandez, P. (2002). Resilience in families and communities: Latin American contributions from the psychology of liberation. *The Family Journal, 10*, 334-343.
- Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage.
- INE (2006). Instituto Nacional de Estadística. Censo de 2006. Madrid: Ministerio de Trabajo.
- Inglehart, R., Basañez, M., Diez-Medrano, J., Halman, L., & Luijkx, R. (2004). *Human beliefs and values: A cross-cultural sourcebook based on the 1999-2002 values survey*. Mexico: Siglo XXI.
- Janoff-Bulman, R. (1992). *Shattered assumptions: Towards a new psychology of trauma*. New York: The Free Press.

- Jimenez, A., Paez, D., & Javaloy, F. (2005). Correlatos psicosociales de la participación en manifestaciones el 11-M [Psychosocial correlates of participation in March 11th demonstrations]. *Revista de Psicología Social*, 20, 263-275.
- Juárez, M. (1994). *V Informe sociológico sobre la situación social en España* [V Sociological report on the social situation in Spain]. Madrid: Fundación FOESSA.
- Lykes, B., Cabrera, M. L., & Martin Beristain, C. (2007). Political violence, impunity and emotional climate in Maya communities. *Journal of Social Issues*, 63, 207-323.
- Martin Baró, I. (Ed.). (1990). *Psicología social de la guerra: trauma y terapia* [Social psychology of war: Trauma and therapy]. El Salvador: UCA Editores.
- Matt, G. E., & Vázquez, C. (2008). Anxiety, depressed mood, self-esteem, and traumatic stress symptoms among distant witnesses of the 9/11 terrorist attacks: Transitory responses and psychological resilience. *Spanish Journal of Psychology*, 11, 503-515.
- McAdams, D. P. (1993). *The stories we live in: Personal myths and the making of the self*. New York: Morrow.
- Mc Crae, R., Terraciano A., Leibovich de Figueroa, N., & Schmidt, V., (2005). Universal features of personality traits from the observer perspective: Data from 50 cultures. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 88, 547-561.
- Mehl, M. R., & Pennebaker, J. W. (2003). The social dynamics of a cultural upheaval: Social interactions surrounding September 11, 2001. *Psychological Science*, 14, 579-585.
- Miguel-Tobal, J. J., Cano-Vindel, A., Gonzalez-Ordi, H., Irurarrizaga, I., Rudenstine, S., Vlahov, D., & Galea, S. (2006). PTSD and depression after the Madrid March 11 train bombings. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 19, 69-80.
- Moreno, L. (2007). Federalization in multinational Spain. In M. Burgess & J. Pinder (Eds.), *Multinational federations* (pp. 86-107). New York: Routledge.

- Neimeyer, R. A., & Levitt, H.D. (2000). What's narrative got to do with it? Construction and coherence in accounts loss. In J. H. Harvey and E.D. Miller (Eds.), *Loss and trauma. General and close relationship perspectives* (pp.401-412). New York: Taylor & Francis.
- Norris, F. H., Friedman, M., J., Watson, P. J., Byrne, C. M., Diaz, E., & Kaniasty, K. (2002). 60,000 disaster victims speak: Pt. I. An empirical review of the empirical literature, 1981-2001. *Psychiatry: Interpersonal & Biological Processing*, 65, 207-239.
- Páez, D., Basabe, N., Ubillos, S., & Gonzalez, J.L. (2007). Social sharing, participation in demonstrations, emotional climate, and coping with collective violence after the March 11th Madrid bombings. *Journal of Social Issues*, 63, 323-337.
- Páez, D., Ruiz, J. I. Gailly, O., Kornblit, A. L., & Wiesenfeld, E. (1996). Clima emocional: Su concepto y medición mediante una investigación transcultural [Emotional climate: Concept and measurement by means of a cross-cultural investigation]. *Revista de Psicología Social*, 12, 79-98.
- Park, C. L. (2009). Overview of theoretical perspectives. In C. L. Park, S. C. Lechner, M. H. Antoni, & A. L. Stanton (Eds.), *Medical illness and positive life change. Can crisis lead to personal transformation?* (pp. 11-30). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Park, C. L., & Lechner, S. (2006). Measurement issues in growth research. In L. G. Calhoun & R. G. Tedeschi (Eds.), *Handbook of posttraumatic growth: Research and practice* (pp. 47-67). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Park, C. L., Aldwin, C. M., Fenster, J. R., & Snyder, L. (2008). Pathways to post-traumatic growth versus post-traumatic stress: Coping and emotional reactions following the September 11th terrorist attacks. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 78, 300-312.

- Park, C., Cohen, L., & Murch, R. (1996). Assessment and predictions of stress related growth. *Journal of Personality, 64*, 71-105.
- Penley, J. A., Tomaka, J., & Wiebe, J. S. (2002). The association of coping to physical and psychological health outcomes: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine, 25*, 551-603.
- Pennebaker, J.W., Rimé, B., & Blankenship, V.E. (1996). Stereotypes of emotional expressiveness of northerners and southerners: A cross-cultural test of Montesquieu's hypotheses. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 70*, 372-380.
- Pérez Sales, P., Cervellón, P., Vázquez, C., Vidales, D., & Gaborit, M. (2005). Post-traumatic factors and resilience: The role of shelter management and survivors' attitudes after the earthquakes in El Salvador (2001). *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology, 15*, 368-382.
- Pérez-Sales, P., & Vázquez, C. (2007). Planning needs and services after collective trauma: Should we look for the symptoms of PTSD? Intervention: *International Journal of Mental Health, Psychosocial Work and Counseling in Areas of Armed Conflict, 5*, 27-40.
- Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. (2003). Character strengths before and after September, 11. *Psychological Science, 14*, 381-384.
- Prati, G., & Pietrantonio, L. C. (2007). *Psychosocial predictors of post traumatic growth and benefit finding: A meta-analysis*. Paper presented at the 10th European Conference on Traumatic Stress, June 5-9, 2007, Opatija, Croatia.
- Rimé, B. (2007). Interpersonal emotion regulation. In J. J. Gross (Ed.), *Handbook of emotion regulation* (pp.466-485). New York: Guilford.
- Rimé, B. (2009). Emotion elicits the social sharing of emotion: Theory and empirical review. *Emotion Review, 1*, 60-85.

- Rimé, B. , Paez, D., Basabe, N., & Martinez, F. (in press). Effects of the social sharing of emotions and coping in post-traumatic growth and emotional climate: A longitudinal study on March 11th bombing in Madrid. *European Journal of Social Psychology*.
- Rubin, G. J., Brewin, C. R., Greenberg, N., Simpson, J., & Wessely, S. (2005). Psychological and behavioral reactions to the 7 July London bombings: A cross-sectional survey of a representative sample of Londoners. *British Medical Journal*, *331*, 606-611.
- Sabucedo, J.M., Rodríguez, M., & López, W. (2000). Movilización social contra la violencia política: sus determinantes [Social mobilization against political violence: Its determinants]. *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología*, *32*, 345-359.
- Schuster, M. A., Stein, B. D., Jaycox, L. H., Collins, R. L., Marshall, G. N., Elliott, M. N., Zhou, A. J., Kanouse, D. E., Morrison, J. L., & Berry, S. H. (2001). A national survey of stress reactions after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. *New England Journal of Medicine*, *345*, 1507-1512.
- Schwartz, S. H. (1994). Beyond individualism and collectivism: New cultural dimensions of values. In U.Kim, H.C. Triandis, C. Kagitsibasi, S. Choi, & G. Yoon (Eds.), *Individualism and Collectivism* (pp. 85-119). Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Smith, T. W., Rasinski, K. A., & Toce, M. (2001). America rebounds: A national study of public responses to the September 11th terrorist attacks—Preliminary findings. Chicago: National Organization for Research at the University of Chicago (NORC). Retrieved June 10, 2002, from www.norc.uchicago.edu/projects/reaction/pubresp.pdf.
- Somasundaram, D. (2004). Short- and long-term effects on the victims of terror in Sri Lanka. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment, and Trauma*, *9*, 215-228.
- Steinberg, K., & Rooney, P. (2005). America gives: A survey of American's generosity after September 11. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, *31*, 110-135.

- Sumalla, E. C., Ochoa, C., & Blanco, I. (2009). Posttraumatic growth in cancer: Reality or illusion? *Clinical Psychology Review, 29*, 24-33.
- Taylor, S. E., Sherman, D.K., Kim, H. S., Jarcho, J., Takagi, K., & Dunagan, M. S. (2004). Culture and social support: Who seeks it and why? *Journal of Personality and Social Support, 87*, 354-362.
- Techio, E., & Calderón-Prada, A. (2005). Relaciones intergrupales, valores, identidad social y prejuicio en España después del 11-M [Intergroup relations, values, social identity and prejudice in Spain after March 11th]. *Revista de Psicología Social, 20*, 277-288.
- Tedeschi, R.G., & Calhoun, L.G. (1996). The Posttraumatic Growth Inventory: Measuring the positive legacy of trauma. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 9*, 455-471.
- Tedeschi, R.G., & Calhoun, L.G. (2004). Posttraumatic growth: Conceptual foundations and empirical evidence. *Psychological Inquiry, 15*, 1-18.
- Tennen, H., & Affleck, G. (2009). Assessing positive life change: In search of meticulous methods. In C.L. Park, Lechner, S.C., Antoni, M.H., & Stanton, A.L. (Eds.), *Medical illness and positive life change. Can crisis lead to personal transformation?* (pp. 31-49). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Terraciano, A., Leibold, N., et al., (2005). National character does not reflect mean personality trait level in 49 cultures, *Science, 310*, 96-100.
- Ubillos, S., Mayordomo, S., & Basabe, N. (2005). Percepción de riesgo, reacciones emocionales e impacto del 11-M [Perception of risk, emotional reactions and impact of M-11]. *Revista de Psicología Social, 20*, 301-314.
- United Nations Statistics Division. Retrieved from <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic>
6/11/2009
- Valiente, C. (2006). *Why a Southern European country is now at the vanguard of Europe. Spanish gender equality policy making since the 1970s*. Presented at the Annual

Meeting of the American Sociological Association, 11-14 August, Montréal, Canada.

Available at: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/eoss/research_en.html

- Vázquez, C., & Pérez, P. (2003). Emociones positivas, trauma y resistencia [Positive emotions, trauma, and resilience]. *Ansiedad y Estrés*, 2-3, 231-254.
- Vázquez, C. (2005). Stress reactions of the general population after the terrorist attacks of S11 (USA) and M11 (Madrid, Spain): Myths and realities. *Annuary of Clinical and Health Psychology*, 1, 9-25.
- Vázquez, C., & Hervás, G. (2009). Terrorist attacks and benefit finding: The role of positive and negative emotions. Manuscript submitted for publication.
- Vázquez, C., Cervellón, P., Pérez Sales, P., Vidales, D., & Gaborit, M. (2005). Positive emotions in earthquake survivors in El Salvador (2001). *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, 19, 313-328.
- Vázquez, C., Hervás, G., & Pérez-Sales, P. (2008). Chronic thought suppression as a vulnerability factor to posttraumatic symptoms: Data from the Madrid March 11, 2004 terrorist attack. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, 22, 1326-1336.
- Vázquez, C., Muñoz, M., & Rodriguez, A. (1999). Spain. In C. O. Helvie and W. Kunstmann (Eds.), *Homelessness in the United States, Europe and Russia: A comparative perspective* (pp. 169-205). Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.
- Vázquez, C., Pérez-Sales, P., & Hervás, G. (2008). Positive effects of terrorism and posttraumatic growth: An individual and community perspective. In A. Linley & S. Joseph (Eds.), *Trauma, recovery, and growth: Positive psychological perspectives on posttraumatic stress* (pp. 63-91). New York: Erlbaum.

- Vázquez, C., Pérez-Sales, P., & Matt, G. (2006). Post-traumatic stress reactions following the Madrid March 11, terrorist attacks: A cautionary note about the measurement of psychological trauma. *Spanish Journal of Psychology*, 9, 161-174.
- Watson, D., Clark, L. A., & Tellegen, A. (1988). Development and validation of brief measures of positive and negative affect: The PANAS scale. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54, 1063-1070.
- Wegner, D. M., & Zanakos, S. (1994). Chronic thought suppression. *Journal of Personality*, 62, 616–640.
- Weiss, T., & Berger, R. (2006). Reliability and validity of a Spanish version of the Post-Traumatic Growth Inventory. *Research on Social Work*, 16, 191-199.
- Wilson, A. R. (2005). *The deconstruction of family values*. Paper presented at American Political Science Association, 2005, Washington, DC. Available at: http://www.allacademic.com/ /meta/p_mla_ap_a_research_citation/0/4/2/7/1/pages42714/p42714-3.php
- Zoellner, T., & Maercker, A. (2006). Posttraumatic growth in clinical psychology: A critical review and introduction of a two-component model. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 26, 626-653.

Table 1. Mean scores of Posttraumatic Growth in samples from three nations

	USA		Guatemala		Spain	
	M	Rank	M	Rank	M	Rank
Changes in relationships	3.28	4 th	3.90	3-4 th	2.89	2 nd
New opportunities	3.60	3 rd	3.70	5 th	2.66	4 th
Personal strength	3.75	1 st	3.90	3-4 th	3.0	1 st
Changes in priorities	3.66	2 nd	4.00	2 nd	2.87	3 rd
Spiritual growth	2.50	5 th	4.30	1 st	1.76	5 th

Note: Scores 0-5