Prior research has reported that dispositional optimists tend to take approach-type coping strategies in response to health threats, and as a result, experience positive health benefits. This study investigated whether dispositional optimism or pessimism interacted with the importance that a participant assigned to stressful events to predict their coping behavior. College students (N=178) participated in the study. The results indicated that the importance participants assigned to stressful events moderated the relationship between dispositional optimism and positive interpretations, as well as the relationship between dispositional pessimism and positive interpretations, abandonment, and avoiding of responsibility. It was concluded that optimistic individuals used positive interpretations for highly important events but not for less- important events. Moreover, less pessimistic individuals also used positive interpretations for highly significant events, and did not use abandonment or avoidance of responsibility; there was no such relationship with less- important events. These findings suggest that individuals high in optimism and low in pessimism are flexible, which plays a valuable role in their self-regulatory behavior.

**Keywords:** dispositional optimism, dispositional pessimism, coping strategy, importance of stress events.

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