MALIN ANNIKO is a clinical psychologist and a researcher at the Center for Health and Medical Psychology (CHAMP) at Örebro University. She graduated from the clinical psychology program in 2012 and received her license as a psychologist in 2013. Her main research interests are in the area of health psychology with a developmental focus. More specifically, she has been investigating stress and the development of stress-related mental health problems over the course of adolescence with a specific focus on cognitive processes and emotion regulation.

Adolescent stress and stress-related mental health problems have been recognized as a cause of growing concern over the past decades and the need for effective prevention and early interventions is being stressed. However, although most adolescents, given the many changes and new experiences being encountered in this period, will at times experience heightened perceived stress and negative emotions, most do not go on to develop stress-related mental health-problems. What are the mechanisms involved in the development of stress-related mental health problems in adolescence? Identifying such mechanisms would give imperative clues as to who and what to target in prevention. This dissertation aims to add pieces to the puzzle of what and who should be targeted in preventive interventions for stress-related mental health problems by expanding our knowledge about adolescent stress and investigating the role of transdiagnostic cognitive processes in the development of stress-related mental health problems in adolescence. More specifically, this dissertation investigates the role of two cognitive processes, cognitive avoidance and repetitive negative thinking, in the development of stress-related mental health problems. It also presents a shortened version of a questionnaire, specifically developed to measure stressor load in key life areas in adolescence and explores to which areas adolescents themselves ascribe their stress and how the different areas relate to increases in stress-related mental health problems in the form of anxiety and depressive symptoms over time.

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