

## EMOTIONAL BURN-OUT OF THE YOUNG PSYCHOLOGIST WHILE PERFORMING JOB FUNCTIONS

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The authors present the results of their study of the factors of professional environment, which transform the young psychologist's emotional sphere. While performing job functions, the consulting psychologist undergoes informative and emotional attack of negative assessments or facts of the client's life and unintentionally projects them on the world around. The concepts of the values and meanings idealized by the young people are destroyed, leading in some cases to emotional burn-out and in 12 per cent of the latter to abandoning the profession.

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The importance of stabilization of mental states in the young psychologist's professional development cannot be overestimated. Some scientists associate this process with self-regulation of mental states, with satisfaction of job requirements [5]. It has been established that social behavior of the young psychologist and the nature of his interpersonal relationships depend on the general social situation and, in particular, on the emotional comfort and stability of his mental states [4]. According to A.A. Tsahaeva, "applied psychologist himself needs two consulting psychologists" [7].

The psychologist's emotional sphere undergoes constant overpressure due to specific consulting situations or projection of individual consciousness on the client's problems, which are similar to mental states. Mental state is one of the forms of conscious reflection of the real world, the response to dangers and difficulties of adaptation. However, these mental states are often destabilized and differ from the norm. In this case some cognitive processes, be it memory, imagination, intuition, feeling or others, will not reflect the state of the real world fully and it will adversely affect the young psychologist's professional activity.

The work of mental states depends on the emotional and volitional sphere and its stability. And on the whole, it is an essential aspect of the development of the young psychologist's personality. The problems of emotional and volitional regulation and stabilization are especially acute both while doing important professional tasks and in the everyday life of the young psychologist. Without targeted stabilization of the young psychologist's emotional and volitional sphere, in stress conditions of the current society psychologists turn out to be unable to regulate their professional activities. One of the levels of manifestation of mental states is emotion. Emotions are dynamic and they are subject to burn-out in case of stressful situations in the professional activity.

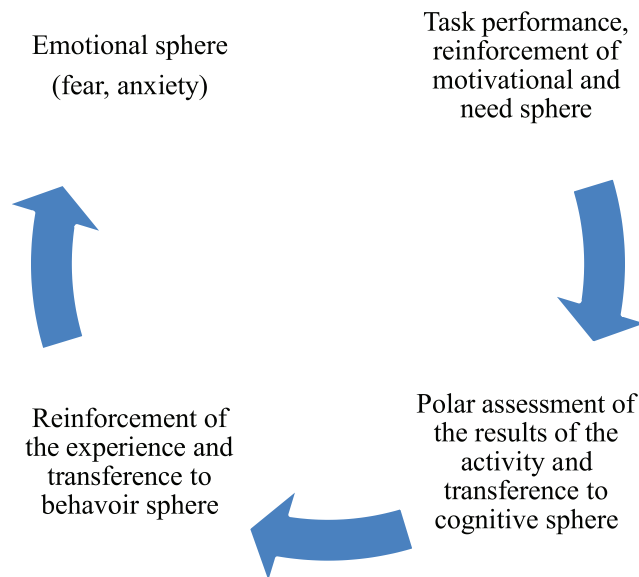
### Materials and methods of research

The problem of identification and stabilization of mental states during the young psychologist's study at the institution of higher professional education falls under competence of diagnostics and subsequent correction, into which we have included the complex method of overcoming of mental states adversely affecting the professional activity (A.Yu. Fedotov, I.N. Medvedev [2]), auto-training, Jacobson's progressive muscular relaxation, modified questionnaire of method of sequential dynamic assessment (MSDA) allowing to identify the determinants of mental states.

We understand that such emotions as feelings cannot last long and they consistently transform into activity aggressive register, which allows to utilize previously needed resources and start targeted expansive activity of implementation of situational task and realization of the need linked with it. And the only effective mechanism for neutralization of aggression is a tolerant worldview [9].

After passing this stage of situational activity, the interest in accomplished situation is gradually weakened, it is already worked out and stored internally as an element of life or professional experience and, therefore, is no longer able to activate the consciousness. This leads to transformation of cognitive emotional register to standby register, search for changes, and opens the subject for active entrance to a new situation. This register can be identified as boredom, sadness, etc. Thus, the cycle is closed and a new situation will again begin with switching on the fear register. For better visualization see the following Figure.

But emotions cannot experience this cycle endlessly. In accordance with the laws of the space-world, they spend part of their energy biological potential, i.e. they grow weak. This is what we call emotional burn-out. In respect to the concept of the emotional burn-out syndrome, introduced into psychological science by the American scholar, psychiatrist Freudenberg (1974), the experts consider it to be usual overfatigue [3]. The characteristic growing indifference to himself, professional and domestic duties, facts of life, the presence of negativity in relationships with patients or clients, as well as the members of the family and professional community, strengthen the person's illusion of professional minimalism, dissatisfaction with his professional level. Some depersonalization takes place and it subsequently leads to the development of neurotic disorders and destructive psychosomatic states.



Implementation of the cycling principle of transformation of emotions

To cope with the task, which professional education gives to practical psychology, of avoiding the transformation of the young psychologist's emotional register and the mechanism of emotional burn-out, and to achieve the goals we used three groups of methods in our research:

- theoretical methods: study and analysis of the literature, comparison, description and schematization of theoretical approaches;

- empirical methods: *diagnostic* methods – the author's version of the form of MSDA retrospective interviewing/individual, L.N. Sobchik's individual typological questionnaire, questionnaire for mental status examination and questionnaire of vital capacity, Boiko's technique of identification of emotional burn-out, data collection and analysis, observation and talks; *correctional* methods: A.Yu. Fedotov and I.N. Medvedev's "Complex method of overcoming of mental states adversely affecting the professional activity", auto-training, Jacobson's progressive muscular relaxation;

- statistical methods. Forms of the techniques were processed on the hardware-software psychodiagnostic system "Multipsychometer" and percentage of indexes was calculated.

Theoretical and statistical methods are well-known, so we will not elaborate on them and will analyze the use of empirical methods and their validity. Complex method of overcoming of mental states was used by A.Yu. Fedotov and I.N. Medvedev to identify mental states adversely affecting the professional activity of psychologists [2, p. 65–72]. Basing on the criteria for determining stability of the psychologists' emotional sphere and permissible variations from the norm, we have constructed the diagnostic process consisting of several stages:

1. Revealing of stable personality traits, which point at the certain employee's predisposition to particular ways of emotional response in the future professional activity.

2. Determination of actual peculiarities of the employee's emotional response in various situations of professional activity. During the study we used system-situational analysis of activity (SSAA) – a complex method of research of professional activity, based on the formation of a data bank on the situations in the "client-psychologist" system and its psychological interpretation in order to obtain reliable information about psychological determinants of its effectiveness. For the purpose the system-situational analysis of activity was used as a basic method, it involves the integral study of activity by generalization of information about a large number of typical situations of professional activity. SSAA is based on the analysis of situations, and introduction of the concept 'situation' requires some explanations. SSAA includes the method of sequential dynamic assessment (MSDA). The authors' version of the form of MSDA retrospective interviewing/individual includes six units:

1. Task.
2. Subject.
3. Objective conditions.
4. Situation in the narrow sense.
5. Situational activity.
6. Result.

The content of each unit depends on the specifics of individual psychological data of the respondents. There are several modifications of the MSDA and they differ in the following criteria:

- the subject of activity – an individual and a group. The MSDA for the analysis of group and individual activities differ in the content of the studied features (individual psychological qualities);

- the type of analysis: retrospective. Retrospective analysis is studying the situations, which occurred in the past. A retrospective type of analysis is divided into content analysis (printed sources) and retrospective interview (personal experience of the participants or eyewitnesses of the situation).

### Results of research and their discussion

Our study of the presence of the emotional burn-out syndrome in young psychologists (the sample consisted of 118 people with length of service less than 3 years) shows that in 76 per cent of cases the very conditions of realization of professional tasks and job functions give rise to the emotional burn-out syndrome. The level of the young psychologist's professional register comprises of the list of the following features.

The client with this syndrome complains of progressive fatigue; low efficiency; poor tolerance of everyday physical activity; muscle weakness, often accompanied by pain; sleep disorder; amnesia; irritability; weakening of active attention.

In order to understand the details of manifestations of mental states we will focus on the personal data of the respondent A-a G.A., born in 1981. After processing of the obtained data we can state the following in the psychological characteristic of this personality.

High level of mental and behavioral disadaptation. The respondent is characterized by frank anxiety, nervousness, inadequacy of reactions, lack of self-trust, rapid emergence of negative emotions. The subject poorly adjusts to new conditions of life, establishes contacts slowly, as a rule, and does not enjoy authority with the clients. The subject is apt to hypochondria, has a large number of negative feelings, is anxious, irritable, is prone to bad mood, apt to see everything black, and is not satisfied with the profession.

The extent of conflict is increased, the outside world is perceived mainly as a source of threat, and there is vigilance towards the others, rejection of criticism.

Very high level of depression. The respondent is characterized by a high tendency to feel guilty for failing to help the client, increased vulnerability, underestimation of the professional abilities, knowledge and skills. Most of the time the respondent is in alarm, depressed, anxious mood, is prone to various fears and feels bitter about any failures.

The respondent is easily led, feels uneasy and awkward in consulting situations, has modest manners and keeps apart. This complex of symptoms can be, in particular, the result of past traumatic events (post-traumatic stress syndrome, the client's suicide). It needs psychocorrection.

Extremely high values of the scale may indicate a predisposition to abandoning the profession (high level of self-aggression).

In the socially significant situation rigidity may to some extent be softened by focusing on the opinions of others.

Psychosomatic predisposition: conflict multidirectionality of trends allows to compensate some polar features by the others.

The following block of techniques was also processed by multipysychometer and gave the following data.

The respondent believes that people are hostile to him and that any individual and long contact will end in troubles, and, therefore, does not try to make friends and have warm human relations. The respondent works with the clients only in the "client – psychologist" mode and tries not to meet with them again after the professional actions. Thus, actually the respondent has no friends for extraprofessional communication and that is why often feels unwanted and isolated.

Typical is the feeling of helplessness, doubt of the ability to influence the events which happen to him and around him; the belief that everything that happens is the result of external factors (luck, fortuitous combination of circumstances, help of other people, etc.).

Typical is the desire to avoid competition, innovation, changes and other situations connected with uncertainty and risk. Such people prefer stability, regulated activity, are able to do routine work, are rigid and committed to traditional views and rules.

### Conclusions

The young psychologists' emotional states, which, in the respondents' opinion, hindered their work, were anger, perplexity, fear, spite, dreaminess, and panic. Professional reflection acts as an effective mechanism of saving of psychic forces through the extension of transcendental experience of the applied psychologist on the results of activity [6]. But it should be noted that the participants unwillingly answered the question about the hindering emotional states because reflecting the person avoids wrecking of his own value system of self-evaluation [8]. Perhaps, this is due to the peculiarities of general professional competence and unwillingness to admit the existence of emotional states, which can be regarded as a failure of the implementation

of job functions. The index of the personality's individual psychological security works as the factor of preventing wrecking of the professionalization [1]. This supports the idea that the young psychologist's emotional burn-out leads to the transformation of the professional register of the young psychologist's personality.

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