

THE CURRENT MENTAL STATE OF MODERN SOCIETY

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Abstract: This study presents an analysis of the mental state of modern society. The results of the studies conducted by psychologists in the global community show that there is the direct relationship between mental state and well-being and life satisfaction index. Stress and destructive states predominate among people with a low level of self-regulation. The most preferred methods of self-regulation for modern people include the following: communication, relaxation, meditation, reflection, passive recreation, listening to music and positive visualizations. The typical methods for regulating negative states are auto-training, physical exercise, reflection, and self-control.

Keywords: self-regulation, stress, stress resistance.

The purpose of the study: is the theoretical analysis and synthesis of studies examining the people's mental states, identifying common patterns, and discerning their origin.

Introduction: Modern human life, filled with various activities, everyday situations, a barrage of information, and interpersonal interaction, in a varying degree actualizes a person's specific mental state. It is peculiar for a person to remain in a stable psychoemotional state, but under the conditions of modern life it is becoming a problem, since ever more often high intensity states (particularly stress) are predominating in people, which are energy-consuming not only at the physiological level but also at the mental level.

The predominance of negative conditions and an unstable emotional state lead to the phenomenon of more people becoming vulnerable to stress and neurosis. Stress not entails more than mere psychoemotional tension accompanied by changes in one's mental activity in the problematic situation and a sharp deterioration of his or her physical condition. Stress is also associated with a defect in a human's own regulation, both entering one in a frustrated state and forming a neurotic state.

Stressful situations for a person may possibly serve entail a "check" of the functional reserves of the person. Stress is a motivating and energizing tool for human psychic activity, forcing an organism to work at the limit of a person's possibilities and revealing the latent potential of the human organism. However, this is possible in the case of a person being in a stable mental state; otherwise, the process turns into distress, which "drains" a person, reducing his or her adaptive capabilities with the person thus becoming vulnerable to rapid exhaustion, fatigue, apathy, etc. Permanent distress for a human can lead to the formation of a chronic form of stress.

Modern psychology has repeatedly raised the issue of studying mental states peculiar to modern society. The Institute of Psychology of RAS repeatedly conducted an expert survey studying the dynamics of society's mental state. Thus, in 2011, the final assessment performed by RAS showed that such mental states of people are more prevalent among those coming from a negative background, rather than those from positive ones. The social status, social identity, values, and beliefs, age, and gender of the person were all taken into account. According to the data, it turned out that modern society is prone to an apathetic state, the manifestation of chronic depression, aggression, and anxiety. For some people, these states manifested in a pronounced form (the psychosomatic complex). However, the most important aspect that was highlighted during the study was the fact that in society there is a deficiency of life-meaningful orientations

for the majority of the population; meanwhile, the purpose of human life consists only of survival and satisfaction of their primary material needs [1].

According to G.M. Zarakovsky, "Actuality of life depends more on the presence of personal growth and the existence of meaning in life than on the satisfaction of basic needs." He also argues that the satisfaction with life depends not so much on the material state of a person as on his/her mental state. In other words, everything comes from a person's psyche; only it determines if the person is happy, and if the person is unhappy despite having everything. In the study by S. A. Druzhilov, "The negative impacts of the modern information environment on a person: psychological aspects" the aspects of information that impact modern society are at the forefront. At the conclusion of the study, Druzhilov established that the negative information and psychological effects on a person affect his or her behavior through the psyche, changing the components of consciousness, regulation, and contributing to the formation of psychoemotional disorders [2].

Domestic researchers write that *"the concern is not the progress of information technology itself, but the existing practice of their use."* Special attention is paid to the fact that the information breakthrough contributed to the emergence of neuropsychiatric aspects in the modern generation. In particular, people have become more irritable and prone to emotional outbreaks [3].

Similar data were obtained in the studies by V.D. Anosov and V.E. Lepsky. They claim that the negative information and psychological effects are *"manipulative effects on personality, on one's beliefs, and in the emotional-volitional sphere"*[4]. Also, in the framework of the study, the facet was highlighted concerning the violation of congruence and perception of the objective world by a person. In general, modern people have begun to understand their emotional state, determine responses at the psyche level worse, and there was also a noticeable decrease in the level of general empathy among young people.

The psychologists at the Institute of Psychology of RAS A.V. Yurevich and M.A. Yurevich in the 2013 study entitled "The morality of modern Russian society: psychological analysis" observed the dynamics of the changes in the mental state of the Russian society, in which they established a direct relationship between mental state and well-being and life satisfaction index. In their opinion, the more often a person is in a good mood, the more often he/she can enjoy a life and have fun, avoiding the influence of the negative factors on his/her mental state [5].

Psychologists emphasize the fact that the modern society is prone to a depressive state. *Depression* is nothing but an affective state characterized by a negative emotional background and changes in the cognitive processes of a person, affecting the motivational sphere and bearing a direct influence on one's personal psyche. The typical conditions that precede depression are negative emotions and feelings, flowing into despondency, standoffishness, apathy, and despair.

It is established that depression affects people whose value orientations, beliefs, and motives are forming and depend on external factors. People whose thoughts relate to the negative self-esteem as well as people who blame themselves for the unpleasant and difficult life events are prone to depression. A sense of guilt for the events of the past and a sense of helplessness in the face of life's difficulties combine with a sense of futility, which leads to low self-esteem and sense of dignity.

Painful events from childhood make a person more vulnerable to depression. However, depression can also occur without predisposing risk factors. Depression affects people of all professions regardless of social status, intellect, or success in the society. Although biological depression occurs for no apparent reason, in most cases it is a reaction to life's changes. If a person suffered severe emotional shocks in the first years of his or her life, he or she will be at greater risk of becoming ill with depression in the subsequent stages of his or her life. Of course, severe feelings at an early age do not necessarily lead to depression. However, they greatly increase the probability of its occurrence.

E. Bibringis, investigating the forms of depression, revealed that *"depression can be defined as an emotional expression of the state of helplessness and weakness of the "Ego", regardless of what could cause a failure in the mechanism regulating self-esteem."* In his opinion, a depressive state is preceded by one that is unfulfilled and blocked by a consciousness unrealized desire. *"Due to the close relationship between the self-representation of the subject and the level of his bodily and mental functioning, the perception of one's own ego as helpless and weak deactivates the aspirations within the object, generating apathy and despondency, which form the central component of the depressive state"*[6].

However, the most important cause of depression is not only the social and psychological aspect, but also the ability of a person to cope with negative mental states. Almost every stressful situation can bring a person into a depressive state; much depends on the degree of psychological self-regulation which one possesses in each case. As a rule, a failure in compensatory possibilities for psychological self-regulation leads to the progression of depressive disorders. Psychological self-regulation is an integral part of every person. The progression of many types of psychological disorders depends on the degree of its development and preparedness.

Modern people are very prone to this kind of stress and destructive conditions, partly due to the fact that people tend to have a low level of self-regulation, and in stress situations people are often prone to avoidance, denial, and negative coping strategies. Namely, it is the ability of a person to influence his mental state via regulation and an adequate response to stress that contributes to the fact that a person can be resistant to psychoemotional stress.

Self-regulation in the daily activity of a person is related to the adaptation process of the personality, with harmonization of the functional systems of the organism and psyche. It is the desire for a state of equilibrium that helps to reduce the disagreement of functional relations, as well as the conscious control of behavior and the formation of a regulatory experience. The functional structure of self-regulation is represented by certain regulation mechanisms in each mental state of a person.

According to A. O. Prokhorov, *"The main components of the functional structure of regulation are psychic processes and psychological properties, semantic structures, reflection of the experienced state of life, the image of the desired state, actualization of relevant characteristics, and the characteristics of self-control"*[7].

The formation of a complex of changing functional states and aspects in these states in life is determined by the conditions of a person's social functioning and the specificity of his/her professional activity, including individual and personal characteristics. The actualization and prolonged maintenance of the regulation mechanisms and the mental states necessary for a person directly depend on a more complex functional structure of regulation which includes structures of social and psychological characteristics, such as social roles, relationships, and dispositions which, in turn, are formed on the basis of the specificity of the blocks, consisting of states and means of regulation, developed in the conditions of human life.

The study of S.A. Prokhorov of 2017 "Self-regulation of mental states in a person's everyday life" revealed that stable daily mental states are formed via self-regulatory processes in person and determine the basic functional complex of frequently employed state regulation methods which were developed not only in stress and crisis situations, but also in the process of society's psychoemotional adaptation. In other words, a person, having gone through stress many times, develops stable means of regulation for his/her state of stress, thus reducing its influence on the psyche and boosting stress resistance. When the high stability in the person's behavior is in adaptive norm, he or she is characterized by constructive thinking. With low resistance, various forms of destructive behavior are manifested. For example, for an average person, this pattern of behavior is not peculiar compared to the employees of the EMERCOM whose stress resistance in crisis situations allows them to overcome the manifestation of fear, panic, and anxiety. However, it is worth taking into account that life is not filled with extreme conditions;

these states are not a constant phenomenon. The main part of life a person lives prosily without emergency, and that, in turn, means that the methods and techniques for self-regulation of mental states in everyday life can entail their own individual content.

The important factor of the presence of positive states in a person is the fact of how often a person uses even the most ordinary methods of self-regulation, such as relaxation, thinking, reflection, passive rest, listening to the music, and positive visualizations. For the regulation of negative states, the typical methods are auto-training, physical exercise, reflection, and self-control.

"Today, people try to reduce the intensity of the experience of positive states by switching, rationalizing, arguing, and distracting. Moreover, it turned out that the older a person is, the more he/she treats his/her positive states more rationally and the younger a person is, the more intense, more impulsive, and more expressed the state manifestations are".

The most preferred methods of self-regulation for modern people are switching and communication. An important aspect is that as experience accumulates, people use more techniques and methods of self-regulation for intense negative states; they use them more often and to a lesser extent allow other people to control themselves; they approach to their states rationally and regulate them consciously. Actions are most amenable to self-regulation with feelings and thoughts less so. Also, the number of self-regulation techniques and methods used increases due to the complexity, the duration, and the stability of mental states. Their main function is to reduce the level of intensity of the current state and to transfer it to the "average" (equilibrium) level.

The universal means of regulation is communication as a specific form, integrating into itself different forms of interaction empirically established in the course of human life: communicative, empathic, etc.

Such method of regulation, as *autosuggestion*, is often used in the form of volitional receptions. People with a high level of reflection are prone to this method. They also prefer an intelligent method that includes logical constructs and scripts.

Thus, regardless of the type of human activity, it is possible to identify "common" methods of regulation, typical for all people, characterized by minimal energy costs, and the possibility of application. But there are also differences in the functional mental states regulation structures caused by the specific nature of a person's life. There are "transitional" states from negative to positive states in the dynamics, as well as certain means of self-regulation, accounting for this process. The number of "links" in transitional states is varies. The most common transitional states are the following: *humility, tranquility, relaxation, and calm*. Such transitional mental states as sadness and *standoffishness* are also peculiar.

It is established that the regulation of each mental state in the course of a person's life is defined by a functional complex consisting of separate techniques and methods of self-regulation. The typical functional structure of self-regulation is conditional upon situations entailing repetitive activity and often occurring conditions, "learnt" or developed via typical means of overcoming states.

The study of the self-regulation of a person's mental states in his or her daily activities is quite an important aspect, as it provides a basis to affect all spheres of a person's activity and not only determine one's regulation strategy, but also form a complex that increases a person's self-regulation efficiency.

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