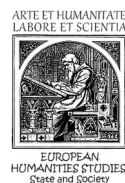


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Natalia Kryvokon

Development of ukrainians' hardiness by means of empowerment

Never before through the years of independence Ukraine has experienced such ambiguous, stormy, dramatic events that shocked not only Ukrainians but the entire world. The confrontation on the Maidan, eliminating the corruption of power, the annexation of the Crimea, separatism, the threat of the terrorism spread, war on the south-east, daily information about the dead, injured, kidnapped compatriots, frightened and dispossessed internally displaced persons, destruction, damages, uncertain future - all this is not a complete list of deeply traumatic events and phenomena that every day holds Ukrainian people in tension, causes stressful reactions, breaks normal existence of most citizens.

In such circumstances, when social and socio-psychological tension in society is increasing sharply due to a systemic crisis, theoretical and applied research acquires the particularly relevant devoted to the hardiness as a combination of qualities and characteristics that endure heavy loads and are the basis of individual endurance. Thus, the development of hardiness is considered as urgent task in the professional communication of social workers and psychologists with clients.

On the other hand, empowerment significantly updated as the another important function in the social and psychological services providing due to the difficulties, very limited state resources and increasing of the responsibility for own life situation. We believe that the result of the empowerment process in psychosocial work is to strengthen the client's position, make one understand one's problems and transform one's needs to solve the problem in a conscious desire to overcome difficulties and gain a new positive experience.

Thus, in our opinion, the foundation of psycho-social support in social work in modern circumstances should be the pursuit for clients' empowerment and promoting the development of their hardiness. Our experience in empowerment training of the individual (not only the client but also the specialist in psychosocial work) allows us to assert about the great possibilities of this methodology that should be actualized in the current difficult times for Ukraine.

This publication is aimed at our opinion expression on empowerment training opportunities for the development of Ukrainian hardiness in a crisis situation.

According to the theory of personality (existential personology) developed by Salvatore Maddi and Suzanne C. Kobasa, «hardiness» means «a pattern of the units and skills structured to transform the surrounding reality changes in human capabilities» [7]. The researchers allocated the three major attitudes groups of hardiness: Commitment, Control, Challenge. Also S. Maddi [8] notes that except the attitudes «hardiness» includes such basic values as cooperation, credibility and creativity.

Russian scientist D. Leontiev describes hardiness as «ability of individual to withstand a stressful situation maintaining internal balance without reducing the activity performance» [5, p. 3]. Developing the concept of the psychology of meaning D. Leontiev introduces the concept of personal potential. The scientist notes that the concept of «personal potential» is the closest in meaning to the concept of «hardiness» in the interpretation of S. Maddi. However, speaking about personal potential D. Leontiev understands not only the basic personality traits or settings but also «a systemic organization features of personality in general, its complicated architecture based on a complex scheme of mediation» [4]. The personal potential acts as integral characteristic of individual maturity, it reflects overcoming defined situations by personality and applied efforts to work on life circumstances.

Ukrainian crisis psychology researcher, T. Titarenko [6] has concluded that hardiness «is not equal to the survival and adaptation» and is needed not only in extreme and stressful conditions, life crisis, but also in everyday life when a person is constantly forced to make responsible decisions, important election and to set vital tasks. We follow the views of T. Titarenko who examines the hardiness not only as physical endurance person possesses but as an important moral and psychological characteristic of personality that determines the way of individual interaction with the world.

Studying the phenomenon of Ukrainian hardiness, authors also use concepts of «stress resistance», «emotional stability», «psychological stability». Stress is associated [1, 2] with genetic and ontogenetic factors while hardiness and psychological stability is more a manifestation of basic personality traits and attitudes, moral and psychological characteristics.

In the context of social work psychology we consider hardiness as a concept that expresses the ability of the individual (biological and psychosocial) for self-regulation that is adequate to circumstances, the ability of the load withstanding, stress and difficulties resistance. Hardy person has (or develops) such traits as poise, confidence, volitional qualities, psychological endurance, healthy critical thinking, responsibility, desire to improvise and find creative solutions etc.

It is important that hardiness can be formed during the life and, in particular, as a result of support from the social environment (or appropriate specialists), it should be supported and fixed by life experience and acted as personal human resources. We can identify biological, psychological (personal) and social components of the hardiness.

Biological components of hardiness are based on a primary stress resistance caused by physiological characteristics of an individual (especially neurohumoral regulation, nervous system, etc.) and included emotional stress resistance as the ability to regulate emotional states.

Psychological components of hardiness include psychological resistance caused by basic personal qualities (level of volitional regulation, moral and psychological characteristics, and personality orientation), personality motivation, its settings, adequate self-concept, coping behaviour strategy and others.

Positive social environment, social support, positive emotional experience in difficult situations, high level of social competence etc. should also be named among the social components of hardiness.

This three-component model of hardiness, in our opinion, makes it

possible to identify specific areas of social and psychological support and contents of clients' support in complex Ukrainian realities. First of all it means the psychosocial services providing to internally displaced persons, participants and victims of warfare (combatants (soldiers) and civilians), released captives and their families, those who experiencing the loss of loved ones or their captivity, volunteers and everyone experiencing high levels of anxiety due to the negative impact of information and different kinds of threats, those looking for both home and earning etc. Note that these groups of potential clients are new to psychosocial work in Ukraine so it is important for us to develop and approve appropriate methods and tools of social and psychological support to these categories of citizens. Moreover, these methods should make a person stronger, more stable and enduring, provide power to find resources and help from outside. These tasks can be implemented through empowerment training.

In previous publications [eg, 3] we described the empowerment in process (as an activity) aspect as reviving of the client's vital position under the influence of a social worker. Actually, the main goal of the developed and repeatedly proven empowerment training is to mobilize the internal personal potential and form the behavioural strategies for finding and updating various types (both internal and external) of resources.

We consider that client empowerment means affecting the person in the special way to make changes in the emotional, cognitive and behavioural aspects of personality. In particular, at the emotional level a sense of self-confidence, energy intensity, some enthusiasm and inspiration should appear. At the cognitive level the opportunities reassessment should occur, positive, convergent thinking should form and potential show up analytical skills should be revealed. Behavioural aspect of personality is characterized by activity, desire to implement plans and specific actions, establishing cooperation with others, building new relationships, finding like-minded etc.

It is important that empowerment supported by a social worker must develop into self-empowerment afterwards. In this aspect, it is worth remembering about prompting and motivation to change as the most important factors of «turning on» the individual activity of the client. Without the client willingness and desire for change we should not even speak about the success of activities to solve humans' problems.

However, to achieve the positive results in the improvement of human life situation and its empowerment not only features of the personality and its social development are important, but also steering, professionally

organized influence of social workers, that use empowerment as the main task and principle. The key function of social workers and practical psychologists in terms of socio-psychological intervention in order to empower the client is, primarily, the organization of motivational process, prompting the person (or group) to active life position, willingness to change, improve quality of life and gain new experiences.

According to the hardiness model and empowerment methodology for assistance to hardiness forming described above, it seems important to solve the following tasks during the training:

- encourage physical activity, vitality, harmonious physical development, maintaining a healthy lifestyle;
- acquire skills of psychoemotional condition regulation and neutralization of negative emotions and feelings of clients;
- promote a higher level of volitional regulation of personality that is going through difficult circumstances;
- assist in the formation of positive thinking by supporting optimistic outlook on life;
- motivate people to develop self-reliance, responsibility, criticality thinking, independence of judgements, resistance to adverse effects, positive perception of the world and life. Create training conditions for the development of these features and characteristics;
- demonstrate and help to realize informational, psychological and other threats and negative influences on the individual, form skills of the active psychological resistance and defence;
- support the self-esteem of client personality; promote skills that help to control the situation;
- induce to changes, adoption of their inevitability and possibility of management;
- direct the activity of individuals to search for and mobilization of all kinds of resources, social and psycho-social support;
- give examples of positive solution of the similar crisis vital situations, create conditions for the experience exchange;
- form an adequate level of social and psychological personality competence in a defined range of issues;
- assist in promoting of a positive social environment, establishing communication systems;
- promote effective strategies and models of adaptation, coping behaviour, active protection and achieving psychological security etc.

Technologically each of the identified areas / tasks can be provided

with various methods, procedures, exercises, depending on the level of psychologist's competence performing the study. Concerning the key provisions of the training, those should be added to the traditional (that are correlated strongly with the principles of hardiness and empowerment): activity, efficiency, involvement in information and activities, inclusion in social groups (eg. community or group of people with similar problems), participation, helping «peer to peer» (exchange of experience), taking into account the experience (even negative), faith in own strength and power, support of the changes importance, their redirection etc.

An interesting and rewarding experience during our empowerment trainings for client groups described above is also in using ethical categories of «belief», «hope», «love» as a source of Ukrainian hardiness.

Thus, self-believing and power possessing strengthens will, inspires resilience, determination, ability to endure. It defines a sense of self-efficiency and performance, inspiring dignity. Belief in yourself is combined with a similar attitude to other close-minded, adding confidence in their integrity, capacity, reliability and confidence that we can rely on them.

Belief can move seamlessly in the hope backed up by it. The hope is opposed to despair and doubt. Hope raises strength; it is active and acting as a regulator of behaviour. Allocating us with inner light, hope and belief reduce anxiety and fear of the unknown future. If belief is hoping, then hope is enjoying.

Love occupies the highest position in the ranking of human values. It inspires, gives tenderness, empathy and responsiveness. Love is varied. But all its forms include a love of life. At the core of this love is the need to realize yourself, update all your strength and abilities.

The notion that «optimistic triad» - belief, hope and love can be a personality resource in empowerment and hardiness is formed during training.

Thus, the development of scientific and applied ideas about the forms and methods of psychosocial work that contributes to the formation of human hardiness is actualized in Ukrainian reality and its crisis characteristics.

Most of the projects currently being implemented in the country (in particular, by the European Union) are directed not only on solution of social and socio-psychologically problems of vulnerable population of Ukraine but also on their empowerment, encouragement to new experience, developing self-responsibility. We consider the development

of hardiness during such training make more effective result of such assistance.

We hope that the materials presented in a paper will help social workers and psychologists to provide truly effective practical support for mobilizing specific personal resources of relevant Ukrainian person.

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Abstracts

НАТАЛІЯ КРИВОКОНЬ. Розвиток життєстійкості українців шляхом розширення прав і можливостей. Публікація присвячена проблемам формування життєстійкості клієнтів психосоціальної роботи в Україні шляхом наснаження. Подано стислий аналіз розуміння понять «життєстійкість» та «наснаження», запропоновано основні напрямки і визначено орієнтовний зміст тренінгу наснаження, що має на меті сприяти актуалізації особистісного ресурсу та становленню життєстійкості.

Ключові слова: життєстійкість, стресостійкість, наснаження, психосоціальна робота.

NATALIA KRIVOKOŃ. Rozwój odporności psychicznej Ukraińców poprzez rozszerzenie praw i możliwości. Niniejsza publikacja poświęcona jest problematyce kształtowania odporności psychicznej klientów korzystających z usług poradnictwa psychospołecznego na Ukrainie z wykorzystaniem metod empowermentu. Została w niej zawarta krótka analiza interpretacji pojęć „odporność psychiczna” i „empowerment”. W artykule przedstawiono również podstawowe kierunki oraz określono przewidywaną treść treningu mającego na celu wspieranie procesów aktualizacji zasobów osobistych i kształtowania odporności psychicznej jednostki.

Słowa kluczowe: odporność psychiczna, odporność na stresy, empowerment, poradnictwo psychospołeczne.

НАТАЛІЯ КРИВОКОНЬ. Развитие жизнестойкости украинцев путем расширения прав и возможностей . Публикация посвящена проблемам формирования жизнестойкости клиентов психосоциальной работы в Украине с использованием методов эмпауэрмента. Представлен сжатый анализ понимания понятий «жизнестойкость» и «эмпауэрмент», предложены основные направления и определено ориентировочное содержание тренинга, имеющего целью способствовать актуализации личностного ресурса и становлению жизнестойкости личности.

Ключевые слова: жизнестойкость, стрессоустойчивость, эмпауэрмент, психосоциальная работа.

NATALIA KRYVOKON. Development of ukrainians' hardiness by means of empowerment. The publication is devoted to the problems of psychosocial work in Ukraine on hardiness development using the methods of empowerment. The training ideas presented are aiming to promote the brief analysis of the concepts of «hardiness» and «empowerment», to suggest the basic directions and define the approximate content of the personal resources and the establishment of the individual hardiness.

Key words: hardiness, stress resistance, empowerment, psychosocial work.