

Rationale for directions of psychological coaching of educational organizations employees working with adolescents showing self-injurious behavior

Elvira V. Leus,
Department of Psychology, High School of Psychology, Pedagogy and Physical Culture, Northern (Arctic) Federal University named after M.V. Lomonosov, Arkhangelsk, Russia
 e.leus@mail.ru.

Department of Psychiatry and Clinical Psychology, Northern State Medical University,
 Arkhangelsk, Russia
 ASoloviev1@yandex.ru

Department of Family Medicine and Internal Diseases of the Northern State Medical University, Arkhangelsk, Russia
 ianovikova@mail.ru

Andrew G. Soloviev,

Irina A. Novikova

Abstract — Nowadays the emergence of psychological and pedagogical assistance programs or “coaching” programs is on the front burner. It is associated with the need to establish conditions for healthy personality development in the process of working activity. Coaching is an activity aimed at creating a system of socio-psychological conditions that contribute to the successful implementation of the professional activity of each professional; coaching is understood as an organized psychological and pedagogical assistance and support in order to increase the efficiency and quality of his professional activity. The article provides study data on factors of occupational and personal satisfaction of professional activity, development of professional deformation of educational organizations employees with adolescents showing self-injurious behavior.

Key words — *psychological coaching, professional personality deformation, self-injurious behavior, self-injury.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Currently the issue of preserving the mental health of educational organizations employees has become particularly pressing. The paradigm shift in the education of children, accompanied by a shift in priorities and value change, the widespread introduction of Federal State Education Standards of new generation resulted in a significant rise in demands on the professional activity of educators. At the same time social demands on the personality of educators, their role in the educational process (knowledge, pedagogical skills, work methods and personality traits) are increasing. Furthermore they have a special responsibility, as the result of the entire educational process depends on the quality of their activities. Everyone knows that the professional work of educational organizations employees is associated with a high emotional load, and the gain in work experience creates prerequisites for “pedagogical crises”, “exhaustion” and “burnout”. This situation contains a significant potential for neuropsychic

tension which further leads to the emergence of neurotic disorders and psychosomatic diseases [1].

On the other hand, as the research practice shows, a significant part of the educational organizations employees experience difficulties in adapting to rapidly changing socio-economic and professional conditions. The unwillingness to rethink their own role in the modern educational process and the inability to overcome arising professional difficulties (external and internal conflicts, crisis and stressful situations, etc.) sometimes become the causes of serious social and psychological problems: from intensifying self-chastising to increasing social confrontation and aggression. Mood swing of educational organizations employees not only reduces the quality of the educational process, but also affects the nature of interaction with students. The existence of the above mentioned problems necessitates the development of appropriate psychological coaching programs for educational organizations employees, which can be classified as health-saving technologies in the field of education.

The study and analysis of the extensive theoretical and practical material accumulated in modern science allows us to state that the problem of psychological coaching of educational organizations employees is very important, but not sufficiently theoretically and practically developed. Despite rather large number of publications on the problem of coaching schoolchildren and university students, the coaching specificity of educational organizations employees in particular, and especially those who work with adolescents showing self-injurious behavior, is understudied. This problem can be classified as poorly understood [2].

The term “coaching” in literature is considered from different perspectives: as a common to humanity support; as one of the components of the activities of professionals working with children and adolescents, as a specially organized system aimed at developing certain personal qualities and professional competencies [3]. In our

understanding, psychological coaching of educational organizations employees working with adolescents showing self-injurious behavior is a continuous, holistic, systematically organized cooperative movement of subjects of coaching, aimed at creating optimal conditions for improving the quality and effectiveness of the activity and professional health of educators.

These days the self-injurious and life-threatening behavior of juveniles has its own characteristics: the epidemic spread of such trends among adolescents in Russia places it among the general social problems; group methods of influence, such as infection (including emotional), suggestion, imitation, the phenomenon of group pressure on an individual, greatly reinforce such tendencies, contributing to a deeper destruction of the personality; self-injurious behavior is closely correlated with the socio-psychological misadaptation of the individual; its debuts among adolescents, and often its implementation occur earlier from year to year. It is the peculiarities of self-injurious and suicidal behavior of juveniles that necessitate the closest attention of all professionals in the education system, from educational to specialized institutions and psychological centers [4]. The activity of a psychologist in this direction is leading and above all organizational, as it brings together all professionals, acts as the creator, distributor and curator of information, training and correctional programs for both employees and juveniles [3].

The goal of the research was to identify the professional and personality factors of educational organizations employees working with adolescents showing self-injurious behavior to develop recommendations on psychological coaching.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

In order to provide a rationale for Psychological coaching program and prevention of professional personality burnout for educational organizations employees working with adolescents showing self-injurious behavior a psychological evaluation was conducted. The study participants were represented by 69 professionals at the age of 23-59 years (37.5 ± 1.2 years) working at psychological centers and educational organizations of the Arkhangelsk Region. Moreover 360 professionals working at psychological centers and educational organizations in the Arkhangelsk Region who have been trained in the advanced training program "Principles of prevention and correction of juvenile suicidal behavior" over the past three years were surveyed.

The experimental psychological method of research was used: survey, questionnaire "Assessment of Professional Well-being" Ruth E.I., Berezovskaya R.A. [5], "Test Professional Deformation" A.K. Markova [6], questionnaire "Professional Burnout" (Russian version by Vodopyanov N., Starchenkova E.) [7], "Depression Scale" Beck A. [8], "Reactive (situational) and Personality Anxiety Scale" (Spielberger C.D., Khanin Yu.L.) [9], questionnaire "Current Status" [10], questionnaire "Coaching for professionals working with destructive adolescents" developed by us.

Statistical data analysis was carried out using the IBM SPSS Statistics Base software package (version 23.00, license Z125-5301-14) and standard computational methods, included various static types of analysis: correlation analysis

was used to identify the link between indicators in one data sample and to determine the extent of their influence on each other; cluster analyses was performed for grouping experimental data into clusters and separating the set of objects into groups on the basis of formal data on the features of the objects, allowing to assess their similarity or difference; factor analysis was made to determine the hidden reasons for the coherent variability of the observed variables and to explain abstract concepts through concepts under observation [11].

III. RESULTS OF RESEARCH AND THEIR DISCUSSION

Conducting a psychodiagnostic study was preceded by a questionnaire that allows you to create an image of the contingent of study participants. These are predominantly women (men made up less than 1%) at the age of 23-59 years (37.5 ± 1.2 years) having work experience in this position from 1 to 39 years (11.3 ± 1.2 years). The study involved professionals from educational and pedagogical institutions, psychological and pedagogical centers working with juveniles, including 13.0% teachers, 59.4% psychologists, 15.9% social workers, 11.7% representatives of other qualifications (medical workers, educators). An analysis of marital status is important for understanding a person's mental state, since the presence or absence of a family or partner, children affects the emotional background, satisfaction with one's life, breadth or limitation of interests and hobbies, obsession with work, ability and / or desire to relax and shift focus from work to other activities not related to it. All this can affect the formation of professional and personal deformation. According to the survey, 52.2% of study participants are in registered marriage, 1.5% – in common law marriage, 15.9% – divorced. While 79.7% of respondents have from one to five children at the age from a few months to 35 years, which is not surprising, taking into account the age of the parents (up to 59 years).

8.8% of respondents constantly work with adolescents showing self-injurious and other kinds of deviant behavior, 19.1% - often, 47.1% - regularly. At the same time 61.8% feel confident and 11.7% - disconfident. 55.9% of professionals note the lack of knowledge and skills to work with above mentioned categories of juveniles. 73.7% never or rarely participated in various educational programs, trainings, coaching seminars on the problems of working with adolescents showing self-injurious behavior. The survey data exposes the existing problem of absence or lack of activities for professionals in order to increase their professional competence when working with troubled categories of juveniles, as well as the lack of an organized coaching system and preventive measures for emotional burnout.

Analysis of the results of psychodiagnostic studies revealed the following trends. For all employees situational, unstable emotional self-regulation is typical; feeling of high tonus and increased performance (83.8%), favorable physical well-being and physical comfort (54.4%). The majority of professionals belongs to highly anxious category and is prone to perceive a threat to their self-esteem and life-sustaining activity in a wide range of situations, to respond with a pronounced anxiety state, which suggests that anxiety will

appear in various situations, especially when they relate to competency and prestige assessment (89.9%).

The professional and life situation triggered manifestation of depression and depressed mood from mild to severe grade (27.5%), as an affective state with a negative emotional background, changes in the motivational sphere, cognitive representations and general passivity behavior [12], unmotivated persistent inadequate decrease in mood, accompanied by a decrease in physical, mental activity, instinctive activity, vital functions [13].

The study showed that professionals highly appreciate their own professional well-being in general (88.4%); they tend to have skills and professional competence, the ability to carry out various activities within their knowledge and skills, the ability to find optimal ways of behavior and interaction in practically under any work circumstances (71.0%); the ability to act according to their personal attitudes and standards independently of others, personal professional opinion (52.2%); positive attitude to their professional attainment (69.5%); personal meaning and goals of professional activity (91.3%); the desire for self-improvement and gaining new experience (78, 3%); presence of warm, trusting and constructive relations in the working team (75.4%).

At the same time manifestations of professional deformation of professionals were revealed: lack of desire to take into account the feelings, rights and interests of other people, irony, sarcasm and labeling, reduced self-criticism and reduced ability to solve conflicts constructively (33.3%); aligning oneself predominantly with orders, recommendations, instructions, intolerance towards criticism, decreased reflection, arrogance and features of despotism (67.9%); emotional behavior, the desire to appeal, the desire to be in the foreground, demonstration of superiority (56.2%); dominance associated with the assessment and control actions creates favorable conditions for satisfying the need for power, in suppression and self-affirmation at the expense of others (71.8%); ignoring others' personality traits, interaction without regard for their personality traits (52.8%); conservatism and prejudice against innovations, adherence to well-established technologies and regular use of the same well-established forms and methods of work (42.8%); total immersion in the profession, the prevalence of accusatory and instructive statements, black-and-white judgments, hard role-playing behavior outside of work (46.1%); social hypocrisy, social desirability as the need to justify high moral expectations, to promote moral principles and norms of behavior (78.4%). Professionals working with juveniles have opposite tendencies - awareness of the importance and significance of their activities, presence of goals and high motivation, and presence of the image of a professional in this area, endowed with certain personality traits and behavioral characteristics, being an expert in many areas of activity, sometimes having unrated working day, resulting in the arrogation of professional and personal experience, the emergence of a professional personality deformation not dependent on the work experience.

The cluster analysis allowed us to differentiate the indicators into two large sets - related to the professional sphere and to the psychological level of the actual mental state. The first set includes indicators related to professional

activity: starting from work experience, frequency of interaction with adolescents showing self-injurious behavior, self-reliance, sufficiency of knowledge and skills for this, opportunities for advanced training through participation in various training programs, training sessions, coaching seminars on the problems of working with adolescents showing self-injurious behavior. It also includes indicators that allow to identify professional deformations of professionals - professional aggression, authoritarianism, demonstrativeness, didacticism, professional dogmatism, dominance, professional indifference, conservatism, role-oriented expansionism, social hypocrisy, behavioral transfer; as well as assessment of professional well-being of professionals - autonomy in professional activities, professional self-acceptance (satisfaction with the level of competence and satisfaction with occupational attainments), professional development (professional growth and professional goals), positive relations in the work team. The same cluster includes such an indicator as the level of depression. All this indicates the general tendencies to deep immersion in the professional sphere. The second set includes indicators related to a general psychological state: reactive (situational) and personal anxiety; indicators of stress state - readiness to overcome difficulties and the presence of vitality, working capacity, physical well-being and physical comfort, self-reliance, tension and nervousness. All this describes the manifestation of a state of increased psychoemotional tension.

Thus, it was found that when dealing with issues of psychological coaching for professionals, firstly it is necessary to take into account conditions that significantly affect their satisfaction with their professional activities, allowing them not to stagnate within the framework of once developed work strategy, avoid static, stagnancy and conservative tendencies with the help of self-development, creation of the special conditions by the institutions management. Satisfaction with work and quality of life significantly activates the potential of employees. Special knowledge is needed no less concerning work with adolescents showing self-injurious and other deviating behavior. Therefore special sections should be laid down, which allow expanding the theoretical basis, working out practical skills of interacting with troubled categories of juveniles and rendering them necessary help within the framework of the creation and implementation of coaching programs.

The analysis of the factor structure of professional satisfaction and personal traits of professionals of educational and pedagogical organizations showed that the leading factor was the "psychoemotional state" (25.0%). This factor included such characteristics as: self-acceptance and satisfaction with the level of competence directly related to performance capability, physical well-being, anxiety, a sense of emotional exhaustion, and a general level of depression. The second most important factor was "professional satisfaction and success" (15.0%), which includes confidence in working with self-injurious adolescents, closely related to the intensity of intentions to change the situation, occupational attainments and success, as well as satisfaction with them, professional growth and general awareness of

professional well-being. The third was the factor of “professional personality deformation” (8.5%). The third factor reflects the problems of professionals in the field of professional activity and the influence that problems assert over the person, forming the destructiveness of character, which results in the manifestation of authoritarianism, satisfaction of the need for power, dominance of behavior, prejudice against innovations, total immersion in the profession, aligning oneself with instructions, suspicious diligence and control of other people activities. These traits are compensated by the ability to withstand social pressure and act according to personal attitudes, although with a deformed personality such attitudes may also be conservative, established over many years of work and not subjected to revision for a long time.

The study revealed a system of factors contributing to the emergence of dissatisfaction with their professional activities among professionals working with juveniles showing self-injurious behavior: psychoemotional state, professional confidence, professional personality deformation.

IV. CONCLUSION

1. Employees of organizations that have completed one-time training program aimed at developing the competencies necessary to work with adolescents showing self-injurious and suicidal behavior also need to continue their training and improve practical skills, which will provide confidence in their actions and reduce anxiety in such situations.

2. More than 50% of professionals of educational and pedagogical organizations working with adolescents showing self-injurious behavior show evidence for professional deformation, which manifest themselves in psychoemotional state, professional satisfaction, professional personality deformation.

3. The development of professional dissatisfaction and disconfidence among professionals when interacting with adolescents showing self-injurious behavior is influenced by a system of factors: the psychoemotional state (satisfaction with the level of competence, physical well-being, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, overall depression); professional satisfaction and success (confidence in working with self-injurious adolescents, professional growth, professional well-being); professional personality deformation (authoritarianism, satisfaction of the need for power, dominance of behavior, the use of stereotypes and clichés at work, immersion in the profession).

4. The trait profile of professionals includes a high situational and trait anxiety, increased performance capability, situational emotional self-regulation, a pronounced desire to overcome difficulties.

REFERENCES

- [1] Dzyuba K.I., Lukyanchenko N.V. The problem of prevention of emotional burnout in the psychological coaching of pedagogues // Materials of the International scientific-practical conference “Youth of Siberia for Russian science”: a collection of materials. – Krasnoyarsk: Siberian Institute for Business, Management and Psychology Publishing, 2017. – P. 111-113.
- [2] Povarenkov Yu.P., Baranova N.A. Classification of the main approaches to the problem of coaching the individual in the domestic pedagogy and psychology / Yaroslavl Pedagogical Bulletin. –2016. – № 4. – P. 124-131.
- [3] Leus E.V. Psychology of troubled adolescents: study guide / Northern (Arctic) Federal University named after M.V. Lomonosov. – Arkhangelsk: CPI NArFU, 2013. – P. 118.
- [4] Leus E.V., Soloviev A.G. Theoretical and practical aspects of juvenile self-injurious behavior // The problem of deviant behavior in modern education: a collective monograph / resp. ed. Nagornova A.Yu. – Ulyanovsk: Zebra, 2018. – P. 88-97.
- [5] Berezovskaya R.A., Ruth E.I. Professional well-being as a resource of occupational health. // Psychology of stress and coping behavior: resources, health, development: materials of the IV Intern. scientific conf. / resp. ed.: Kryukova T.L., Saporovskaya M.V., Khazova S.A. – Kostroma: Kostroma State University named after N. A. Nekrasova, 2016. – Vol. 1. – P. 183-185.
- [6] Markova A.K. Psychology of professionalism. – M.: International Humanitarian Foundation “Znanie”, 1996. – 312 p.
- [7] Vodopyanova N.E., Starchenkova E.S., Nasledov A.D. Standardized questionnaire “Professional burnout” for professionals of socioeconomic occupations // Bulletin of St. Petersburg University. Series 12. Psychology. Sociology. Pedagogy. – 2013, № 4. – P. 17-27.
- [8] Ilyin E.P. Emotions and feelings. St. Petersburg: St. Pete, 2001. – P. 505-507.
- [9] Practical course on the psychology of states: study guide / ed. prof. O.A. Prokhorov. – St. Petersburg: Rech, 2004. – P.121-122.
- [10] Psychodiagnostics of stress: practical course / comp. R.V. Kupriyanov, Yu.M. Kuzmina. – Kazan: Kazan National Research Technological University, 2012. – P. 37-42.
- [11] Nasledov A. D. IBM SPSS 20 Statistics and AMOS: professional statistical data analysis. A practical guide. St. Petersburg: St. Pete, 2013. – P. 416.
- [12] Seredina N.V., Shkurenko D.A. Fundamentals of medical psychology: general, clinical, pathopsychology. – Rostov-on-Don: Phoenix, 2003. – P. 512
- [13] Anufriev A.K. Hidden endogenous depression // Journal of neuropathology and psychiatry. – 1978. – Vol.78, № 6. – P. 857-862.