

PRESERVATION OF MENTAL HEALTH OF YOUTH IN THE CONDITIONS ARISING FROM THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR

War is a powerful stressor, the effect of which has a diverse and multi-level impact on people, especially on young people, and exceeds individual norms of their functioning. The social distancing and social isolation of young people that arise as a result of the war, in turn, give rise to the problem of unorganised free time, limited space, reduced physical activity, constant interaction with a limited number of people, but the reaction to such stressors is individual for each young person, due to the peculiarities of the nervous system of their body, as well as the presence of personal experience of similar situations, individual characteristics, a certain level of self-esteem, cognitive assessment of the threat, the ability to analyse their physical condition, and so on.

According to the results of studies conducted in various higher education institutions, young people, in the presence of the above situations, experience psychological stress, which usually has a long-term impact and leads to the emergence of mental disorders such as neurotic disorders, anxiety disorders, neurotic depression, asthenic, conversion, obsessive-compulsive, and vegetative neurotic disorders.

According to the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, about 3-4 million Ukrainians are already in need of psychological support, and the consequences of the war will affect the mental health of the Ukrainian population for at least another 7-10 years. It has been established that the most vulnerable part of the population is women aged 18 to 35, who make up 90% of the cases of psychological crisis assistance, according to the Proinsight Lab study "The Mental State of Ukrainians During the War Against Russia", conducted with the assistance of the National Psychological Association in March-May 2022.

Neurotic disorders are one of the most common mental illnesses, accompanied by symptoms such as anxiety, phobias, depression, and difficulty in social interaction. Anxiety disorders can last for at least six months and can lead to serious mental disorders without appropriate intervention. In the presence of neurotic depression, a person has a feeling of depression and guilt, such a person becomes indifferent to the world around them, does not feel the joy of life, and has a desire to be alone. The presence of neurotic depression can lead to suicidal thoughts, and the presence of asthenic disorder can lead to a weakening or loss of the ability to sustain prolonged physical and mental stress. As a rule, if a person has depression, they are at high risk of developing concomitant somatic diseases, especially cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome. In the case of obsessive-compulsive disorders, a person has obsessive thoughts, most often associated with the fear of harming themselves or making a wrong choice.

According to foreign studies, people who have a level of physical activity even lower than the WHO recommended for the respective age groups have a lower risk of depression compared to those who are not active. Scientists believe that if the activity of every person in the population was at the level of current medical recommendations, 1 in 9 cases of depression could be prevented. Scientists believe that in the case of mild to moderate depression, the effect of exercise can be equated to the effect of antidepressants and the effect of psychotherapy. Scientists have concluded that aerobic exercise with an intensity of 60-80% of the maximum heart rate, 3 times a week, lasting at least 45 minutes, helps to improve general cognitive functions (attention, information processing speed, memory, etc.) and reduce anxiety.

Foreign researchers have also found that walking, jogging, yoga, strength training, Tai Chi Chuan and Qigong training can help to moderately reduce depression, but strength training and yoga have proven to be the most effective. Scientists have concluded that strength training helps to reduce anxiety symptoms in both healthy individuals and individuals with physical or mental illnesses who participate in strength training. The results of the research have shown that the improvement in the condition of individuals occurs regardless of gender or the specifics of strength training.

Given the above, in order to prevent and overcome the manifestations of mental disorders in higher education students, higher education institutions should implement a comprehensive health improvement programme to prevent and overcome the effects of stress, focused on the development of individual and personal resources of stress resistance in young people. Such a programme should take into account the diagnosis of psycho-emotional states, determination of the level of functional state of the body and the psychophysiological profile of higher education students and the development of an integrated physical education course, taking into account the individual characteristics of higher education students in responding to stressors.

Since the determination of methods and means of stress prevention and correction should be based on the understanding of stress as a functional state of the body that arises as a result of the impact of the external and internal environment on the human body and psyche, the theoretical and practical components of the physical education course should have certain features. In addition to knowledge of the theory of physical education, the theoretical course should provide students with knowledge of the principles of healthy eating, optimisation of nutrition in accordance with different training methods, music therapy and herbal medicine, colour therapy, the impact of biorhythms on human health, communication effects on the human body, etc. The practical component, in addition to physical education programmes of various kinds, should also include sets of exercises for neuromuscular relaxation; sets of breathing exercises; sets of exercises for sensorimotor training; autogenous training; self-massage programmes, including fascial massage.

In order to determine the functional state of applicants, functional testing with a dosed load should be carried out (with the subsequent determination of functional groups of applicants, the creation of individual training programmes), in order to determine the psychophysiological profile, we believe that diagnostics should be carried out using the latest technologies, namely, using the computer complex "NS Psychotest", which will allow a comprehensive assessment of the mental, psychological characteristics and functions of the applicants' body. In our opinion, it is advisable to conduct a mental health diagnosis using the PTSD Self-Assessment Scale, the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS); the PSM-25 Psychological Stress Scale; the Stress Resilience Self-Assessment Scale (S. Cowan and G. Williamson), etc. In addition to these activities, roundtables with psychologists to discuss pressing issues, meetings with famous athletes, and discussions of thematic films with specialists can also be part of a youth health programme.

Conclusion. Given the current situation in the country: the presence of hostilities and their consequences, we believe that every higher education institution should have a comprehensive programme for the rehabilitation of student youth, which should include measures to prevent mental disorders and increase stress resistance in participants in the educational process.