

## **COPING STRATEGIES AS COMPONENTS OF PERSONALITY BEHAVIOR IN STRESSFUL SITUATIONS**

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The quality of an individual's mental health is measured by their ability to overcome various difficulties. Throughout life, a person constantly encounters stressful circumstances, conflicts, fears, crises, and other challenges. The most crucial aspect of maintaining mental well-being and psychological stability is how and through what means an individual helps themselves effectively navigate these difficulties.

Coping strategies are a key concept in psychological science that studies methods of adaptation and overcoming stress, difficulties, and negative events in human life. The study of people's reactions to stressful and unpleasant situations over many years has led to the development of various concepts that attempt to explain the nature of coping behavior in different ways.

The term "coping" was first used by L. Murphy to describe an individual's efforts to solve problems as positive attempts to overcome difficult situations. Later, R. Lazarus used this term to define conscious techniques for overcoming stress and anxiety-inducing events. Individual psychological differences in people's reactions to various stressful events, as well as their thoughts and emotions, are central to his cognitive-motivational-relational theory. According to S. Folkman and R. Lazarus, coping is a continuously changing effort within the cognitive and behavioral domains of the human psyche to manage specific external or internal demands that are assessed as excessive or surpassing an individual's available resources [2]. In their view, coping serves two main functions: managing or changing the problem (problem-focused coping) and regulating the emotional response to the problem (emotion-focused coping).

S. Folkman and R. Lazarus identify two forms of coping strategies: active and passive [2]. The first form involves active overcoming and purposeful elimination of the stressful situation's influence, striving to reduce its impact on an individual's well-being and psychological state. The second form refers to passive coping behavior, which includes a range of psychological defense mechanisms aimed at reducing emotional tension but does not change the stressful situation itself.

According to B. Compas, J. Connor-Smith, H. Saltzman, A. Thomsen, and M. Wadsworth, coping is a conscious and goal-directed activity, as individuals are driven by clear intentions to resolve a problematic situation, where the perceived

threat is primarily external. By employing coping strategies, individuals exhibit constructive activity, meaning they experience an event rather than attempt to hide from it behind psychological defense mechanisms.

One of the representatives of the resource-based coping theory is S. Hobfoll, whose approach considers various types of resources—both environmental and social—as fundamental components of an individual's adaptive capacity, playing a crucial role in stress management [1]. S. Hobfoll noted that in cases of prolonged chronic stress, individuals often lose their resources, and their recovery requires a certain amount of time. He believed that stress resistance increases when individuals actively apply coping strategies, utilizing social resources and seeking social support. Such support can provide individuals with emotional and material resources that help them cope with stress.

Currently, the concept of coping is at the center of various psychotherapeutic and educational programs aimed at developing coping behavior skills. Nowadays, the issue of coping strategies is being studied based on data from representatives of different age, gender, and professional groups, as well as in relation to other psychological phenomena. In Ukraine, special attention is given to studying coping strategies in the context of the social crisis caused by war.

Our study on coping strategies (using Lazarus's methodology) and resilience (using Maddi's methodology) among Ukrainian internally displaced persons (IDPs) showed that the majority of respondents have an adaptive level of coping strategies, using different problem-solving methods situationally, depending on circumstances [3]. The highest-scoring coping strategies were problem-solving planning, seeking social support, and positive reappraisal. Correlation analysis results revealed statistically significant relationships between coping strategies and resilience in IDPs: negative correlations for distancing, avoidance, and taking responsibility, and positive correlations for problem-solving planning and positive reappraisal. In other words, the less Ukrainian refugees distance themselves from the situation, ignore problems, or assume excessive responsibility—and the more they plan their actions to solve problematic situations and attempt to find positive aspects in difficulties—the more resilient they are.

Our study of individual coping strategies among Ukrainian believers (using Hobfoll's methodology) showed a high overall level of constructive coping, indicating a positive ability to overcome stress and overall successful adaptation of the studied sample to difficult circumstances. The predominant coping strategies among the respondents were seeking social support, aggressive actions, and avoidance [4]. Correlation analysis results demonstrated that passive and antisocial

strategies tend to be associated with external religiosity, whereas internal religiosity contributes to reducing antisocial and aggressive behaviors.

Thus, during times of social crises, the pressure and burden on individuals significantly increase, forcing them to rapidly adapt to new challenges and changes. A proper approach to overcoming stressful circumstances and managing stressors can help individuals maintain their mental health, minimize the depletion of essential life resources, and improve their skills in adaptation and crisis management.

## REFERENCES

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