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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5779951>**PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING IN YOUTH: REFLECTIVE ASPECTS***Olena GOROVA**University of Educational Management, Ukraine*

The article analyses the content and structural features of the representation of the category of "psychological well-being" in the perception of youth. The study observes the reflection of individual components of psychological well-being as a resource for maintaining the life quality during social crises. We highlighted and analysed the content of the activity, socio-psychological, personal-value components of the reflection of psychological well-being. We revealed that the personal-value component forms the basis of youth understanding of psychological well-being. Reflection of the activity component of psychological well-being reflects the awareness of resource activities. Reflection of the social network is one of the leading ways of maintaining an individual's psychological well-being. The most represented in the youth understanding are personal resources, which can be conditionally attributed to the components of positive relations with the environment, autonomy and competence.

**Keywords:** *psychological well-being, the reflection of the activity, socio-psychological, personal-value components of psychological well-being.*

**REFLECȚII PRIVIND STAREA PSIHOLGICĂ DE BINE LA TINERI**

În articol sunt analizate conținutul și componentele structurale ale reprezentării „stării psihologice de bine” în viziunea tinerilor. Studiul arată că „starea psihologică de bine” este percepută ca o resursă de menținere a calității vieții în situații de criză socială. Sunt evidențiate și analizate componente ale procesului de reflecție cu referire la starea psihologică de bine (specificul activității, factorii psihosociali și percepția sinelui). Studiul relevă că valorizarea sinelui este o componentă esențială în reprezentarea cu referire la starea de bine. Reflecțiile privind specificul activității, o altă componentă a acestei reprezentări, exprimă modul de conștientizare a resurselor oferite de activitate. Respectiv, semnificațiile atribuite rețelelor sociale sunt aspecte esențiale în menținerea stării de bine la nivel individual. O parte importantă din conținutul reprezentării tinerilor se referă și la resursele personale, care pot fi direct relaționate de interacțiunile favorabile cu ceilalți, nivelul de competență și gradul de autonomie.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *stare psihologică de bine, componente ale procesului de reflecție privind starea psihologică de bine.*

**Formulation of the problem.** The society's constantly growing demand for improving the life quality attracts the attention of psychologists to the problem of an individual's psychological well-being. At the same time, psychological research increasingly focuses on the mental health topic, which is interesting for the interdisciplinary research and scientific research of psychologists. Other aspects that determine the strengthening of scientific interest in the problems of psychological well-being are the needs of the psychological assistance practice to people with mental disorders, especially during periods of social crises, in particular, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. A distinctive feature of our time is not only the growth of the physical load but rather the emotional and psychological, and informational load on all members of society, which leads to increased attention to aspects of mental health, everyday psycho-hygiene, professional and educational activities. A series of Ukrainian authors, in particular A.Gubenko [1], adhere to similar thoughts.

Personal mental health is considered by the World Health Organization as a state of well-being, in which everyone can fulfil their potential, successfully overcome stress, work and contribute to the life of their society [2]. This state of well-being determines the quality of human life (in the physical, social, psychological and spiritual aspects), and therefore deserves special attention of researchers.

N.Bradburn initiated the theoretical studies of psychological well-being, and considered this phenomenon in the context of the balance between positive and negative emotions throughout a person's life [3]. At the same time, the subjective nature of psychological well-being is noted [3, 4]. So, C.Ryff's six-component theory reflects precisely the subjective components of mental well-being (self-perception, life goal, personal growth, relationships with others, autonomy, comprehension of the surrounding reality) [5].

The resources and the degree of satisfaction of the basic needs of the individual (biological and social) are an important aspect of the psychological well-being. Considerable attention is paid to the description of the

signs of psychological well-being due to the number of positive emotions and the ability to quickly adapt and respond to life challenges, personal growth, and self-realization, based on reflexive mechanisms (N.Berdburn, A.Watman, E.Diener) [3, 6, 7]. In favour of the integral nature of "psychological well-being" is evidenced by its interdependence with an individual's well-being and health, which is one of the prerequisites for the formation of intrinsic motivation as the core driving force of personal development (R.Ryan) [8]. The interest of modern Ukrainian psychology in the problems of mental health and psychological well-being in its various aspects seems relevant. Psychological well-being is an integral personal education as a type of motivational parameter based on the system of relations between the personality and the components of life perspective (L.Serdyuk) [9]. A review and analysis of the spheres of the mental health competence of professionals in the Western culture (V.Gorbunov, V.Klimchuk) was carried out in the context of the development of the National Plan for Mental Health [10]. The study was conducted taking into consideration the problems related to psychological well-being of children and youth, who experience the greatest changes in conditions of social instability and presents a review of the levels and strategies of maintaining and preventing mental health of children and youth [11].

Thus, the psychological community is unambiguously inclined to understand the psychological well-being as one of the vital factors of adaptation and self-preservation of the individual in conditions of social instability. Even more, the topic becomes more important in times of social crisis (including the COVID-19 pandemic). The conditions of well-being in such a context are resilience that will allow overcoming obstacles while maintaining the ability to recover from the resources of the personality and the environment (natural and social). Generalisation of the above-mentioned provisions and approaches suggests the need to analyse psychological well-being as a phenomenon; it integrates two core components: a positive effect arising in the process and as a result of a person's vital activity, and awareness of one's life (meaning-forming and resource components). Apparently, reflexive components such as education (O.L. Muzika) allow managing effective ways of maintaining a sense of well-being and, at the same time, being a means of personal growth, and, consequently, the development of new individual resources for maintaining mental health and restoring stressful situations.

The presented review proves that modern psychology has significant achievements in the field of theoretical analysis of the constructs "mental health", "psychological well-being", and a means of psychological assistance to the individual in the context of maintaining mental health. At the same time, there are not sufficient works that analyse the needs and reflections of the young people, their perception regarding psychological well-being and about personal resources for its preservation. Accordingly, we need to examine not only the objective state of well-being, but also the subjective feelings of the individuals about their well-being, as well as, what are the reflexive mechanisms of its development.

We assumed that the reflection of psychological well-being is carried out by young men and women not only on the basis of conceptual models but rather on the basis of their own practical experience and individual strategies for maintaining "life balance and a sense of satisfaction", realising that the very concept of "psychological well-being" is usually not the subject of special reflection. Obviously, categorical analysis and the content of "psychological well-being" will have certain differences due to the youth experience.

**Purpose and objectives.** We aimed to study the content of the category of "psychological well-being" in the youth understanding, alongside the content of the reflection of individual components as resources for maintaining psychological well-being and life quality under conditions of social crises.

**Presentation of the main content.** The youth carried out the analysis of the reflection of psychological well-being in the following directions: 1) analysis of the subjective idea of the content of the category of "psychological well-being" based on the content analysis of the definitions proposed by the respondents; 2) analysis of the reflexive mechanisms of methods and resources for maintaining psychological well-being by youth in the context of educational activities.

The construction of research procedures takes into account the classical general psychological principle of unity of consciousness and activity, the idea of subjectivity and individuality of the mental reality of the respondents, alongside reflexivity as an explanatory principle of consciousness, as well as the idea of value and ability of consciousness (A.L. Muzika) [12]. This allowed us to see the activity, socio-psychological and personal-value components of the reflection of the resources for maintaining the psychological well-being of youth.

We developed the criteria for the content analysis of the reflection of resources and components of psychological well-being of young people based on the accepted quality of life structure (WHO) and methodological provisions on the structure of psychological well-being (C.Ryff and C.Keyes) [2, 5, 13]. The integration of these indicators allowed analysing the integrity of the content of the category of "psychological well-being" in the youth perception, alongside the possibility of conscious use of different resources of maintaining psychological well-being.

The analysis of the obtained results allowed establishing the representation of specific indicators of life quality in the youth understanding and the perception of "psychological well-being" in conceptual aspects (Table 1).

**Table 1****Conceptual model of psychological well-being in the youth perception (reflexive component)**

<b>The Quality of Life Scale (WHO)</b>	<b>An individual's psychological well-being (C.Ryff and C.Keyes, 1995) [5]</b>	<b>Components described by young people</b>
Physical sphere		Feeling healthy
Psychological sphere	Personal growth Self-perception	No internal barriers
		Achieving a balance of emotions
		Inner harmony (with yourself and your body), a sense of happiness, comfort
		Self-satisfaction
		Satisfaction with life, activity
		I have no feelings, nothing to worry about, peace of mind
Social activity	Positive relationships with others	Interaction with different people
Independence	Autonomy	
Environment	Competence	Understands the world and the place in it
Spirituality	Life goals	Sense of life
		Meaningfulness of life
		Life goals and values

We revealed that the components of the psychological sphere (including personal growth and self-perception) form the basis of youth understanding the psychological well-being. According to the respondents, the basis of the life quality is a sense of harmony with their inner world, a perception of happiness. The concretisations of this construct are the following: the investigated components of the awareness of pleasure in various aspects of life, in particular oneself; the results of one's activity, as well as a feeling of emotional balance. Sufficiently conscious is the component of spirituality, which for the researched acquires not so much a religious context as shades of filling with life sense, meaningfulness and goals. The fragmented nature of the reflection of the components associated with social activity and interaction with the environment can be explained by the actual situation of public life. The introduction of quarantine measures led to an increase in the importance of individual components of well-being and somewhat reduced the resource of social factors. The minimum representation of the components of the physical sphere can be explained by age tendencies (the components of physical health are not a priority in adolescence).

In parallel, we observed the reflection of the resources of maintaining psychological well-being. We analysed that these resources form the basis of a conscious attitude to the quality of one's life. According to the ideas of the new psychotherapeutic practice, the core of psychological well-being is the components of activity of various types, the establishment of a social network and personal resource of values. Based on the results of the research, we carried out a systematisation of all the methods of maintaining psychological well-being within each of the named areas.

Reflection of the activity component of psychological well-being is presented in the youth understanding as a list of resource types of activity that fill the sense of harmony. The generalisation of the results obtained made it possible to identify the core spheres of student activity (Table 2).

Table 2

## Reflection of resource types of youth activity

Components of psychological well-being	Conscious ways to maintain psychological well-being	Response rate (average)
Physical activity	Physical health support	2
	Exercise (dancing)	3
	Walk alone in the fresh air	3
Communication	Communication with relatives	3
	Take a walk, chat with friends	11
	I'm learning to communicate	2
Art	Draw	3
	Listen to music	4
	Watch movies/shoot videos	4
	Art	2
Activity	Do your favourite thing	3
	Read	4
	Overcome difficulties	1
	Set goals and achieve them	4
	Learn	1
	Help others	1
Self-control and self-regulation	Plan your day	1
	Do not pay attention to the negative	1
	To develop	1
	Control thoughts	1
Vacation	Relax	1
	Meditation	3
Attitude to yourself	Accept yourself	1
	Be alone	2
	The positive interpretation of events	1
Other	Sweets, delicacies	1
	Travelling	1
	Pets	1

The analysis of the obtained results shows that the respondents are aware of the high level of the resourcefulness of establishing and maintaining a social network (despite the low representation of this component in the subjective model of psychological well-being). Increased attention to the resources of this component occurs a set of factors, such as youth is determined by high social activity, inclusion into interpersonal relationships with peers; exacerbation of the epidemiological situation and the introduction of quarantine measures contacts, determine the reflection of the importance of those components that were previously perceived as natural and those that do not require special awareness. For the same reasons, this is due to the awareness of physical activity as a resource that for some time had limited possibilities of use, and therefore is perceived by the respondents as having high potential. Thus, the respondents pointed to the importance of being able to be in the fresh air and have physical activity as a manifestation of a sense of freedom and control of one's own body as a lack of external control.

In the youth opinions, the resources of actual activity and creative activity are those resources which reflect the principle of physical activation as one of the principal means of maintaining psychological well-being and improving the life quality. These resources must reflect the tendencies of reflection on self-development (setting and achieving goals, overcoming obstacles, etc.) as a vague aspect of youth personal growth.

Additional in the structure of resources of maintaining the life quality for youth are the means of self-regulation and self-control, which are a combination of the ability to control their emotional state with time management skills. A sense of control over one's own life is one of the components of young people's well-being.

The respondents describe from 1 to 7 resource activities, and for the majority of respondents it is optimal to consciously use 3-4 ways to improve quality of life. In the structure of the social network, according to representatives of interpersonal therapy (P.Fonagi), it is one of the leading factors in maintaining the mental health of a person and treating depressive disorders [4]. Reflection on the social network may be as one of the leading ways of maintaining an individual's psychological well-being. Analysis of the reflection of the network of social relations of young people made it possible to single out the circle of persons, communication with whom is a resource for youth, and those for whom the respondents themselves can become part of the social network of support (Table 3).

Table 3

#### Reflection of the social network as a resource of maintaining youth psychological well-being

Social network		Who can I be a source of support for (average)	Who supports me in psychological well-being (average)
Parents	Mother	13	15
	Dad	9	11
Relatives	Sister/brother	9	15
	Grandmother	1	3
	Other relatives		4
Friends	Friend	8	29
	Boy/girl	6	6
	Classmate		3

A meaningful analysis of the socio-psychological component of the reflection of psychological well-being indicates that the basis of the social network of young people consists of members of own family (including brothers and sisters), alongside a circle of personal communication. The wide representation of the "friends" group in the youth understanding reflects the general importance of friendly relations in youth. Both groups have a high level of emotional inclusion in relationships. Informal communication relations are significant for young people, where one can "get advice", "practice communication skills". Reflection on the positive background of relationships allows the respondents to consciously use them as a resource of maintaining psychological well-being (on average, the social network of youth contains from 3 to 9 components).

The circle of persons for whom the respondents can become part of a social network reflects the general network of social relations of young people with the dominance of parental reference, testifies to the orientation of the respondents towards family relationships as the main ones in supporting psychological well-being and as those that are available under quarantine conditions.

The analysis of personal resources of maintaining psychological well-being made it possible to describe the system of personal qualities, traits, abilities that young people use to improve the life quality (Table 4).

Table 4

#### Reflection of personal qualities as components of psychological well-being

Sphere of psychological well-being	Personality traits as resources of psychological well-being	Response rate (average)
Positive relationships with others	Courage	1
	Communication	2
	Confidence	3
	Listen to others	2
	Tolerance for the opinions of others	1
Autonomy	Independence	1
	Openness	1
	Perseverance or stubbornness	5
	Willpower	5
	Self-control	3
Life goals	Determination/decision making/rationality	4
Self-perception and personal development	Resistance to stress	5
	Calm relaxed, balanced	3

	Take things in stride	1
	Meditation	1
	Understand yourself	3
Competence	Structure thoughts	1
	Curiosity	1
	Creativity, improvisation	2
	Think positive/optimistic	5
Spirituality	Kindness, sincerity	6
	Respect for others and yourself	1
	Honesty	1
	Sensitivity	1
	Cunning	1

We revealed that the description of quality and ability correlates with the chief components of psychological well-being. C.Ryff and C.Keyes [5] explained how the respondents use them in the process of solving everyday challenges and educational tasks. The most represented in the youth perception are personal resources, which can conditionally be attributed to the components of positive relations with the environment, autonomy and competence. Although at the level of a conscious definition of "psychological well-being" the constructs that would explain competence and positive relationships with others were not included in the definitions of the studied at the level of personal components, they are system-creative. Thus, the constructs that described the component of "personal growth" at the level of qualities and abilities were not highlighted.

The results obtained allow describing specific trends in the reflection of the category of "psychological well-being" by youth and lead to the following **conclusions**:

The category of "psychological well-being" is rather abstract for the perception of young people. The content of the concept is partially represented in consciousness at the level of specific ways of maintaining psychological well-being. The declared character of the reflection of psychological well-being gets a real idea in the youth understanding at the level of definite methods of external activation and internal resources.

During social crises (in particular, due to the setting up the quarantine regime), reflexive mechanisms provide the possibility of selectively including specific methods of maintaining psychological well-being in the category of those that become forceful and young people most often used them as resources of maintaining the life quality. These resources are opportunities for physical, creative and intellectual activation, personality traits and abilities that support external activation.

The shrinking social support network reflects societal trends in coping with the COVID-19 pandemic. Relations with relatives and close friends are the basis for reflection on social connections as resources of psychological well-being.

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