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PRINCIPLES AND METHODS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CORRECTION OF WOMEN PERSONALITY'S GENDER FUNCTIONING

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The work considers the issues of some problems of gender functioning psychological correction of modern young women, that were identified in the study: prevalence of immature sex-role types; masculinity/femininity symptom-complex ego-dystonia; femininity deficiency; gender-role behavior differentiation lack, rigidity and misery. The article proposes a psychological correction program that focuses on improving sex-role and personality maturity. The group form of work is realized in program, built on the person-centered therapy basis. In technical terms, the program is multi-modal. The results of program effectiveness evaluated by using the comparative analysis of preliminary tests and post-test results. The changes that occurred after the end of women participation in psychological correction are analyzed.

Key words: gender functioning, psychological correction.

Робота висвітлює питання психологічної корекції деяких проблем гендерного функціонування сучасних молодих жінок, що було визначено у дослідженнях: поширеність незрілих статеворольових типів; Его-дистонність складових симптомокомплексу маскулінності/фемінінності; дефіцитарність фемінінності; недиференційованість, ригідність та збіднення гендерно-рольової поведінки. У статті пропонується програма психологічної корекції, яка орієнтована на підвищення рівня особистісної і статорольової зрілості. У програмі реалізовано групову форму роботи, побудовану на засадах клієнт-центрованої психотерапії. У технічному плані програма є мультимодальною. Наведено результати оцінки ефективності програми із використанням порівняльного аналізу результатів попереднього тесту й пост-тесту. Проаналізовано зміни, які відбулися по завершенню участі жінок у психологічній корекції.

Ключові слова: гендерне функціонування, психологічна корекція.

Работа освещает вопросы психологической коррекции некоторых проблем гендерного функционирования современных молодых женщин, что было выявлено в исследованиях: распространенность незрелых полоролевых типов; Эго-дистонность составляющих симптомокомплекса маскулинности / феминности; дефицитарность феминности; недифференцированность, ригидность и обеднение гендерно-ролевого поведения. В статье предлагается программа психологической коррекции, которая ориентирована на повышение уровня личностной и полоролевой зрелости. В программе реализовано групповую форму работы, построенную на основе клиент-центрированной психотерапии. В техническом плане программа является мультимодальной. Приведены результаты оценки эффективности программы с применением сравнительного анализа результатов предварительного теста и пост-теста. Проанализированы изменения, которые произошли после завершения участия женщин в психологической коррекции.

Ключевые слова: гендерное функционирование, психологическая коррекция.

Actuality. Today in the Ukrainian society the phenomena, which reflect serious problems of women's gender identity organization: surrogacy mothering, child-free, sexuality separation from reproduction function, infantilism become widely spread. Traditional mechanisms and factors of gender identity formation lose their effect, and a new gender situation is connected with building individual patterns of gender functioning, which largely normalizes deviant forms of gender development.

Psychological analysis of the gender and sex-role identities phenomena's showed that sex-role individual properties are its basic structures and perform a central role in the processes of adaptation and self-regulation, as well as supporting psychological and psychosomatic health, interpersonal relations satisfaction, etc. [1]. Therefore, the potential of solving these problems of gender identity functioning is focused on sex-role structures that provide women personality's gender functioning.

Study of problem's scientific experience. In modern literature [2, 3, 4] there are many proposals concerning the programs and trainings content and structure for the work with gender sensitive context. Most of these programs are aimed at awareness-building, diagnostic or cognitive tasks: expanding self-presentation about gender identity, gender and sex-role skills development, tolerance formation towards people with alternative forms of gender identity, development of skills of interaction with the opposite sex and so on. However, to effectively address the challenges of correction, it is necessary to take into description the actual problems which determine the choice of target effects.

According to the results of our studies [5, 6, 7, 8] modern young women have a number of problems in the gender identity functioning:

- high prevalence of immature sex-role types is more common for adolescence personality development, which may indicate psychological infantilism and deformation of the gender socialization process;
- non-deepened sex-role characteristics into the personality structure, as evidenced by the ego-dystonia of various components of masculinity/femininity symptom-complex: sex-role self-concept, gender-role behavior, biogenic manifestations of masculinity/femininity. This divergence can create an internal conflict

between own notions of “female” and means of behavioral realization;

- psychosemantic content (archetypes denoting) of only masculine component of sex-role Self-concept of women that reflects the social attraction of masculinity in women. In turn, femininity is deficient; it functions as a lack of masculinity and has no its own positive content;

- nondifferentiation, rigidity and misery of the gender roles repertoire and psychosemantical space of female attractiveness ideas in women, who have immature sex-role types;

- interior heterogeneity of androgynous sex-role type, which combines both mature and immature personality structures and mechanisms of personality functioning.

The purpose of work is to develop psychological correction program, which is oriented at increasing personal and sex-role maturity, correction of feminine manifestations deficiency, expansion of repertoire and increase the flexibility of gender roles in modern women.

We have developed a program based on the following theoretical principles:

1. The masculinity/femininity symptom-complex is a complicated multi-level formation, containing sociogenic, behavioral and biogenic levels [1]. Sex-role personality characteristics may be the psychological correction influence aims, particularly the level of sex-role Self-concept and behavioral level of masculinity/femininity, as far as they have the potential to change due to the key role of the socio-cultural factors in their origin and regulation.

2. Psychological androgyny in modern gender psychology is viewed as the most mature and adapted version of gender identity. According to S. Bem [9] acceptance of traditional gender roles determines lesser flexibility and performance of gender identity functioning. Going beyond traditional gender identity the author sees in the combination of masculine and feminine qualities in their relative independence, as reflected in the concept of “psychological androgyny”. According to studies [9], androgynous individuals are distinguished by higher level of personal maturity, higher self-esteem and self-respect, developed achievement motivation, a high level of success in professional activity, inner sense of well-being and satisfaction with his/her own life. Therefore, the main vector of program is aimed at the progressive development of androgyny, increasing maturity of the individual and transformation of immature sex-role models and behavior patterns.

3. Formation and stabilization of gender identity is a product of gender socialization. In our study [5] social development factors were found which could be decisive in the formation of one or another sex-type organization. As far as one of the areas of correction work, a processing of relationships with parents was chosen in order to use “genetic” level of identity gender functioning.

4. Sex-role area includes conscious and unconscious aspects. Unconscious aspects of masculinity/femininity can be archetypal images with which the person identifies himself/herself. Therefore, as another line of activity, the work with women’s archetypal images was chosen. According to C.G. Jung, the characters from fairy tales and their stories are specific prototypes designed by deep layers of the psyche. Work with the archetypes allows dealing with the typical forms of life strategies and models of relations and discovering the meaning of life scenarios and those aspects of gender functioning which are “closed” defense mechanisms personality.

Group work was chosen as the main form of work; its advantage is the contact and communication between group members. The basis of the conditions creation for group correction work was human-centered approach proposed by C. Rogers [10]. Technically, the program is multimodal.

The main objective of correction program was in recognizing of nonadaptive gender-role behavior and nonadaptive cognitions, femininity assimilation and enhancement of personal and sex-role maturity level. The task for correction program: 1) work with nonadaptive gender-role models of behavior; 2) correction of nonadaptive cognitions in own sex-role Self-concept; 3) formation of a positive mean of feminine component of Self-concept and behavior; 4) realization of infantile experience in relationships with parents and its influence on behavior and relationships during adulthood; 5) strengthening of mature personality structures.

The program was designed for young women. It was attended by 30 women aged 18-20 years, who became participants of the program according to voluntary consent to participate. Women had their own interest and they turned to counseling or psychological help with problems in communicating with the opposite sex: loneliness, lack of understanding and men’s attention, dissatisfaction with their own status and partnership relations.

The total duration of the program is 30 hours. The group members met 2 times a week for 3 hours (in total 10 meetings). Plan of the meetings is approximated and may be corrected depending on the members and age of the group, its psychological climate and personal focus. Table 1 shows the contents of correction program in a condensed form.

Table 1

The psychological correction program content

The main purpose of the meeting	Exercises	Methods
1. Getting acquainted, diagnosis of problem areas	“It’s me”, exercises for trust establishment	Art therapy, gestalt therapy

2. Diagnosis of nonadaptive models of gender behavior	“Drawing the body” (L. Renar), “Fairy-tale analysis”	Art therapy, analytical therapy
3. Work with Self-image and own body	Drawing “My body” (modified. “Drawing of a human”), discussion “What is female attractiveness” technique “Sculpture”	Art therapy, gestalt therapy
4. Relationship analysis of in parents family	“Early memories analysis” (A. Adler), family sculpture	Analytical, gestalt therapy
5. Impact analysis of the relationships with mother and father	“Parents traits analysis”, directed imagination technique “Life line”	Analytical therapy
6. Life script analysis	Discussion of the life script problem, sexual scenario diagnosis, “Autobiography.”	Analytical therapy, psychodrama
7. Partnership relations analysis	Drawing “Man and Woman”, “Emotional release” technique	Art therapy
8. Working of sex-role problems	“Visualization and harmonization of male and female elements” (A. Kocharian), “Inner woman”, “Inner man”	Art therapy, analytical therapy, NLP, psychodrama
9. Understanding personal resources	Anchors technique, “I am an ideal woman”	NLP, psychodrama, discussion
10. Summing up	Reframing and goals statement, directed imagination technique “Wings”	NLP, discussion

Further, we will discuss in details specific exercises and techniques that focus on the key aspects of gender issues in the field:

- Exercise “It’s me”. It is supposed to work with female characters. Participants of the program chose fairy tale female character or image of the famous movie characters, famous women of the world history, etc. The task is to present herself on behalf of the character, it can be a short story about herself or own history. Other participants may ask questions or ask for explanations on certain aspects of the story.

- Exercise “Drawing the body.” Materials: white paper (A4), a writing pencil, two crayons: red and blue, and an eraser. Group members are asked to draw with a help of a writing pencil the outlines of their own body on the paper. And then, make it colorful using the two colors. Analysis of the figures is done by determining the ratio of the percentage of colored parts with blue and red colors and content analysis, which body parts were colored. According to L. Renar [11, 12] blue is unconsciously associated with masculine manifestations, and red – with feminine. Analysis and discussion of images of the participants is conducted during the training.

- Technique “Fairy-tale analysis”. The technique begins with the fact that women are asked to recollect a favorite fairy tale from childhood or a favorite fairy-tale character. During the reproduction of the tale, the coach specifies which of the characters is the most important, which feelings he/she provokes and asks to indicate why the girl feels her resemblance to this character. As in fairy-tales psychic reality is reflected, the characters of fairy tales embody different aspects of female identity, their archetypal images. Work with fairy tales has a powerful diagnostic capability that enables a deeper understanding of the identity of the woman and a formed life script. An important aspect of technology is the analysis and processing of internal taboos and mindsets about their female role.

- Exercise “Parents traits analysis.” The participant is offered to write down on the sheet of paper the traits which are typical for her parents (separately for mother and father). Then, without looking at the first sheet, she writes the personality traits typical for her on the second one. On the third sheet, she lists the traits which are typical for her friends, girls and boys. On the fourth sheet, the woman lists traits, which she considers good and bad. The analysis is conducted by comparing various lists of traits, determining similarities and differences, relating own qualities, those which are preferred and parental qualities. A separate vector of analysis contains the qualities which the woman distinguishes in her partner (boyfriend) and the origin of these qualities.

- Directed imagination technique “Life line” [11, 12]. The participants are invited to recall their own mother when she was young and preparing for the birth of a child (that is the woman). Then, she imagines her mother as a teenager, a child and a baby. After that, she goes to the life line of her grandmother (mother of her mother) and also imagines her grandmother younger and gradually goes to the state of the baby. Thus, she travels the life lines of all women of her family and meets the first woman of her family. She can get a piece of advice, support, and love from her and from of all women of own family. Then, the participants are invited to return to their own lives. After that, the analysis of the difficulties that arose while passing the life lines, the content of the messages that she has received from women in her family is conducted. Similarly, the girl passes the life line of men of her family.

- Exercise “Autobiography.” The woman are invited to imagine themselves in old age and write a letter to their granddaughters or write memoirs about their lives, which will present autobiographical events and building of a family life. This exercise focuses on the formation of meaningful aspects of life scenario.

- "Emotional release" technique. Participants of the group imagine their partner, towards whom they have an affection or love. They actualize negative experience of these relationships and transform it into a positive by using the metaphor of a "lesson." After that, according to the formula of Gestalt therapy, in her own imagination, she frees herself and her partner from promises granted each other and gives him freedom, according to the principle "I am myself and you are yourself; I have my own pass, and you – yours. Then, the analysis of feelings and completeness of release or opening of space for changes in the relationship is done.

- Directed imagination technique "Visualization and harmonization of male and female elements" [1]. The technique is a free picture of how she feels "female" and "male" in her own personality. Group discussion of the picture is done.

- Directed imagination technique "Inner woman". The woman is offered to imagine that a little girl (up to 5 years) comes to her in whom she recognizes herself. She takes her in her arms and tells her what she will be in the future. The two images, an adult and a little one, unite and exchange with one another what each one lacked. Then, the analysis of images and the received "gifts" is done.

- Directed imagination technique "Inner man". The woman is offered to imagine that she walks the forest and meets a man. The one needs to imagine in detail what does he look like, what does he do, when he meets her, how old is he and so on. Then, the analysis of man image is done. For this, the archetypal approach may be used.

- Directed imagination technique "Wings." The participants are invited to imagine that they are standing on the edge of the mountains or over the precipice. It is needed to feel that wings grow behind their back and they start flying. The technique is a resourceful and allows creating an image of freedom and confidence, developing spontaneity and reinforcing the positive experience of the program.

The proposed psychological correction program includes multimodal techniques and allows studying the gender identity problems at different levels: emotional, corporal, rational behavioral, and at the level of unconscious attitudes and images.

An integral part of the development and implementation of any psychological correction program is an evaluation and proof of its effectiveness. We used the results of psychological diagnosis before and after the program was conducted among women who participated in it (30 people). We used the methods which allowed evaluating changes in the target, at which the psychological treatment program was focused: method of Self-concept studies (M. Kuhn, T. McPartland), self-esteem scale (G. Manaster, R. Corsini), structural sex-role scale (A.S. Kocharian, E.V. Frolova). Mathematical processing was conducted with the usage of G-criterion for related samples.

The results revealed changes in Self-concept of women participating in the program in the sphere of "Social Self" ($G=9$; $p<0.05$), "Physical Self" ($G=6$; $p<0.01$), "Perspective Self" ($G=8$; $p<0.01$) and "Reflexive Self" ($G=9$; $p<0.05$). The main vector of changes concerns the sex-role and family identity aspects, increase of positivity in the perception of the image of her body, appearance of perspectives concerning family self-realization as woman and increase of personal maturity level. In the structure of self-esteem, significant changes in the levels of actual and future self-esteem are observed ($G=9$; $p<0.05$ i $G=8$; $p<0.01$). It is noted that changes in the type of sex-role personality organization do not reach a significant level: a transformation of immature types into androgynous ones among 4 participants of the program was observed; thus, the proposed amount is not sufficient to correct such a stable identity structure as the sex-role. But, in general, the results allow making a conclusion about the program's effectiveness in dealing with gender-functioning problems of individual.

Conclusions:

1. Based on results of research work, a corrective program was developed; its goal was the realization of non-adaptive gender-role behavior and non-adaptive cognitions, assimilation of femininity and enrichment of personal and sex-role maturity. A form of group work, based on the client-centered psychotherapy and group meetings offered by C. Rogers is implemented in the program. Technically, the program is multimodal, based on the principles and methods of multimodal therapy. The main methods of psychological correction force were the methods of art therapy, psychodrama, gestalt therapy, group discussions within client-centered approach, NLP techniques, and elements of psychoanalysis. The aims of correction influence were: sex-role Self-concept of personality and gender-role behavior.

2. The evaluation of effectiveness of correction program was conducted with the G-criterion for related samples usage for the purpose of data comparison before and after the program. Comparative analysis of the results of the previous test and post-test as well as content analysis of lingual reports of program participants led to the conclusion that the program contributed to changes in sex-role self-concept, actual and potential self-esteem of the individual, raising the personal maturity level.

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