

*Materials of Conferences***THE PROBLEM OF PERSONAL HELPLESSNESS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE IDEAS ABOUT THE FEATURES OF THE FAMILY FUNCTIONING AS A SYSTEM**

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This article is an attempt to theorize the problem of personal helplessness in the context of the family functioning as a system. There is a need to apply a system approach to the problem. Based on the theoretical analysis of the problem, there is an idea about personal helplessness as a complex of symptoms, the components of which create a single whole as a combination of the personal traits in combination with a pessimistic attributive style, depressiveness, anxiety, and certain behavioral characteristics. The necessity of understanding the family as a system with a certain structure and properties is characterized by the reproduction of the level of differentiation of personal helplessness and independence in subsequent generations is grounded.

In Russian psychology, primarily thanks to works of S. Rubinstein and B. Lomov, there is a conviction that human being is not something homogeneous. It has diversive, multi-level and multi-layer system. B. Lomov, in particular, noted that the social system that serves as the basis for the social qualities of the individual is a complex entity that includes a multitude of subsystems of different levels. "A particular person is a component of a variety of such subsystems. Thus, he simultaneously acts as a family member ... as a state citizen, as a participant in various social institutions and processes..." [3, p. 33–34].

Taking into account this situation, and also analyzing a number of studies on the problem of personal helplessness and about the features of family functioning in modern society, we turned to the problem of personal helplessness in the context of ideas about the features of the functioning of the family as a system.

To begin with the concept of personal helplessness was first formulated by D.A. Tsiring in 2010. This phenomenon is defined as "the quality of the subject, which includes the unity of specific personal characteristics which are formed in the process of interaction of the internal conditions with external ones, due to the low ability to transform reality, coupled with the complexity of setting goals and achieving and managing life events" [7, p. 187].

Personal helplessness, being a characteristic which determines the characteristics of the subject's vital activity in all areas (behavior, activity, relationships with others), is expressed in such qualities as "the passivity of the subject, his inability to cope with difficulties, obstacles, his excessive dependence on others" [7, p. 189]. By personal helplessness

is understood a complex of symptoms, where individual components form a single whole in the entire interconnection of their elements, representing "a combination of personal characteristics combined with a pessimistic attributive style, depressiveness, anxiety and certain behavioral characteristics" [7, p. 187].

As for the system, it is a set of elements which are in relations and connections with each other, which forms a certain integrity, unity [2].

At the heart of the system approach, as a direction of the methodology of scientific knowledge, is the consideration of the object as a system: an integral complex of interrelated elements (I.V. Blauberg, B.F. Lomov, V.N. Sadovsky, E.G. Yudin); a set of interacting objects (L. Bertalanffy); a set of essences and relations (A.D. Hall, R.E. Feigin, late L. Bertalanffy) [1].

From the point of view of the system approach, the family is viewed as a system with a certain structure and properties. The family system, as it is commonly known, functions under the influence of two laws: the law of homeostasis and the law of development. The law of homeostasis is the desire of the system to preserve a certain state, to stability. The law of development operates simultaneously with the law of homeostasis, and in its turn it says that any system tends to go through a complete life cycle.

It should also be noted that in the study of the family in the context of the system approach, a specific way of perceiving objective reality that differs from the concept of the determinism of the world is assumed, that is, the linear causal logic is replaced by a circular one, in which the main question is "Why?" [4]. Thus, the systemic thinking is necessary for understanding the family, for analyzing its life and functioning, for specific work with the family, which concentrates first of all on determining the goal of the behavior of people, in particular, family members, and not on its causes [5].

Proceeding from the above, it seems logical to conclude that if there is at least one member with personal helplessness in the family, the family as a system will react in a certain way to this situation. In the mid-70's. The scientific research institute of the family, created in 1967 by M.S. Palazzoli, conducted a series of studies based on an analysis of work done with families involved in schizophrenic interaction. Quoting D. Haley, the authors of "Paradox and Counterparadox" emphasize the fact that such families have a specific form of resistance, in which none of the family member wants to recognize the influence of other family members on their behavior, nor their own impact on their behavior. From this, scientists first put forward and then subsequently proved the hypothesis that a family including a patient with schizophrenia is a natural group, an internally regulated symmetry which all

members of the family are hiding together by joint efforts [5].

In this regard, it makes sense again to turn to the point of view of D.A. Tsiring, who studies the family as a system which is characterized by the reproduction of the level of differentiation in subsequent generations. The author emphasizes that "in families where parents have a high level of differentiation, children grow up more independent. In those families where parents are distinguished by a low level of differentiation, children often grow up helpless, since personal helplessness is one of the possible manifestations of the low differentiation of personality. The level of differentiation is produced by the entire system of interactions between parents and children ..." [7, p. 281].

It has already been said that the mechanism of the family system has a circular rather than a linear sequence, that is, theoretically it can be concluded that a helpless person, being a product of a family with a low level of differentiation of parents, will itself influence the family system that functions under the influence of the law of homeostasis. According to the system approach developed by Murray Bowen [6], personality and interpersonal relationships in the family are interdependent, that is, they create a constantly reproducing homeostatic cycle. In accordance with this law, personal helplessness is not only conditioned by certain psychological characteristics of the family, but in its turn it continues to exert its influence on the family and all its members.

Analysis of the available studies allows us to say that, the problem of the influence of personal helplessness on the family system at the moment remains practically unexplored. And if, based on the data received by the researchers, there are already conclusions about the influence of the family on the formation of personal helplessness, then any conclusions about the features of the functioning of the family, in which there are already members with

personal helplessness, can only be made theoretically based on the available data and require experimental confirmation.

The results of such studies, we believe, will allow, first, to carry out targeted preventive work with married couples in order to reduce the probability of children's inheritance of parents' behavior patterns with personal helplessness; secondly, they will help to understand the mechanisms and features of intra-family relations, where the partners have different levels of differentiation, and, therefore, will make it possible to clarify the goals, tasks, forms and methods of advisory and corrective work with families; and third, to develop better techniques of psychological impact on the family as a system.

As we see, even in the first approximation, the problem of personal helplessness acquires special significance when considering it in the context of ideas about the features of the functioning of the family as a system.

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