

PROTECTION MECHANISMS AND COPING STRATEGY: OPPORTUNITIES AND LIMITS

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ABSTRACT

This article compares the defense mechanism and coping strategy methods as ways of self-management and coping with difficult situations, and discusses the advantages and some disadvantages of using it. The study of the role of conscious and unconscious factors in maintaining the psychological health of a person, the prevention of nervous disorders in the individual, their formation and spread is of great importance. If the new requirements are too much for the individual, then the coping process can take the form of protection.

KEYWORDS: *Defense Mechanism, Coping, Strategy, Psychological Health, Stress, Behavior, Personality, Variable, Resource, Activity.*

INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of modern life require people to develop the speed of receiving and processing various information as well as the ability to adapt quickly to changing conditions. However, the growing stress of life does not always leave a person enough time and resources to develop or learn new behavioral patterns. The growing distress in this regard is not only the result of objective factors of life (among them macro factors - economic and political) but also the subjective experiences of man in different situations. [1]

The study of the role of conscious and unconscious factors in maintaining the psychological health of a person, the prevention of nervous disorders in the individual, their formation and spread is of great importance. Knowledge of the structure and content of the defense coping mechanism is necessary not only in the diagnostic process, but also in the process of counseling and therapy. A qualified psychologist will be able to understand the nature of the client's complaints and clearly understand what problem the client is facing and select the right psychological impact and refer the client to the appropriate professionals in a timely manner.

"Protection mechanism" and "coping strategy" are the main ways to adapt to difficult, stressful situations, because with their help a person can successfully cope with stressful situations. [2]

The concept of psychological protection is of course is studied works of A. Freud, K. Yung, A. Adler, S. Hall lateran R.M. Granovskaya, and F.V. Bassin. The problem of coping strategy is considered in the work of researchers such as R. Lazarus, S. Folkman, G.S. Korytova, and T.L. Kryukova. It is the purposeful human behavior that enables a person to overcome life's challenges by implementing a strategy of conscious action, which is the most important component of resilience potential. The coping strategies used by an individual are determined by

his or her personal characteristics, and the choice of very stable, but specific behavioral strategies is determined not only by the characteristics of the individual but also by the characteristics of the situation.

The relevance of the strategies implemented to the specifics of the current situation determines the effectiveness of efforts to overcome the situation. Coping strategies are seen as constantly evolving cognitive and behavioral attempts to overcome specific external or internal demands that are assessed as excessive or redundant in human resources. Psychological defense mechanisms are aimed at alleviating mental distress and are carried out within the framework of the unconscious activity of the psyche. [3]

Behavioral coping techniques and strategies are considered as separate elements of conscious behavior, through which a person overcomes life's challenges. Simply put, coping strategy is a form of behavior that reflects a person's willingness to solve life's problems, actions that are designed to adapt to situations, and the ability to use specific tools to deal with this stress. First, the main difference between protection mechanisms and coping-strategy efforts is the unconscious addition of the former and the conscious, purposeful use of the latter. [4]

Second, the coping strategy is flexible, targeted, and reality-oriented, while the defense mechanism can be immutable, compulsive, and distort realistic.

Third, the coping strategy is aimed at actively changing the situation and overcoming the processes of meeting important needs, while the protective processes are aimed at mitigating mental discomfort. The defense mechanism can be immutable, compulsive, and distort realistic. R. Lazarus and S. Folkman highlight the eight main actions of the coping strategy. [5]

1. Conflict is a conflict between a person and the current situation. An aggressive response to certain life situations, a person accepts with hostility and responds appropriately to his hostility.
2. Self-control is the suppression of emotions to move to rational action.
3. Seek support - the desire to ask for help from relatives, like-minded people to get rid of loneliness.
4. Escape - Escape from the problem, the responsibility for the actions passes to other people.
5. Planning - making a clear plan to get out of a situation.
6. Positive reassessment is the desire to see the positives in any situation.
7. Acceptance of responsibility - solving the problem remotely and avoiding the problem.

Coping strategy focuses on better adapting a person to environmental requirements, weakening or mitigating the impact, avoiding or adapting to it. It is also possible to overcome the effects of stress on the individual by choosing a coping strategy to maintain physical and mental health.

The effectiveness of the coping strategy is affected by several parameters: the degree of threat to the individual, the availability of the necessary resources and their success. There are three groups of coping strategies:

- Active problem-solving strategies using their own resources;
- Social assistance strategy;

- Avoidance and misbehavior strategy, where the person avoids solving the problem using auto-aggression, psychoactive drugs, alcohol.

According to R. Lazarus and S. Folkman, a person does not just resort to the same type of coping strategy, each person uses a combination of emotional, cognitive and behaviorally focused on coping methods and techniques to cope with stress. Thus, the coping process is a complex response to stress. [6]

The main defense mechanisms identified by Z. Freud:

1. Squeezing is the suppression of unconscious actions and experiences that pose a threat to self-awareness and move them to the unconscious realm. In this case, a person is forced to expend a large amount of mental energy, but suppressed desires are manifested in real life from time to time through expressions, dreams, and so on.
2. Projection is the transfer or attachment of one's unacceptable experiences to others.
3. Replacement is the transfer of inclined energy to a safer object.
4. Rationalization is self-justification, in which a person seeks to rationally explain his actions under the influence of instinctive actions.
5. Reactive formation is a more complex defense mechanism involving two stages. In the first stage, the unpleasant experience is suppressed, and in the second, an inverse feeling is formed in its place.
6. Regression is a return to childhood, the first forms of behavior. As a rule, immature, infantile individuals resort to these types of defense mechanisms. However, in cases of mental overload, normal adults can benefit from this protection.
7. Sublimation is a protective mechanism that helps to release social energy and protects a person from serious neuroses associated with not having sex.

According to Z. Freud, defense mechanisms are an unconscious reaction that works under stress or under threat. However, the more effective this or that mechanism is, the more energy it requires and distorts the real reality. [7]

Coping behavior and the defense mechanism are based on the same processes, but differ in different directions. Coping processes result from stressor perception. In the case of new demands on the person, if the previously existing answer turns out to be incorrect, the process of overcoming begins. If the new requirements are too much for the individual, then the coping process can take the form of protection. Protective mechanisms allow for the elimination of trauma by distorting the truth. Coping strategy is more plastic than psychological protection, but requires a person to expend more energy, contribute more cognitive, emotional, and behavioral. [8]

Thus, we can conclude that the coping strategy helps to overcome the problem situation more effectively than the protection mechanisms. The negative effects of facing difficult life situations can be mitigated using a coping strategy. Therefore, coping strategy is an important predictor of psychological well-being, health, and activity success. [9] However, most of the positive outcomes are related to the problem-based and emotionally oriented coping strategies, as well as

the generalized division by proximity (activity) and avoidance criteria. [10] Exploring the diversity of coping strategies and the flexibility of their application is one of the promising areas.

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