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PROFESSIONAL BURNOUT OF PSYCHOLOGISTS DURING WARTIME: AN ECOPSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSION

У статті **розглянуто** особливості професійного вигорання психологів у кризових та воєнних умовах та **визначено** роль екопсихологічного підходу у профілактиці та подоланні цього явища. **Проаналізовано** сучасні дослідження, які свідчать, що інтенсивні професійні вимоги, постійний контакт із травмованими клієнтами та підвищена динаміка робочого середовища призводять до емоційного виснаження, деперсоналізації та зниження ефективності діяльності фахівців. Відповідно, **актуалізовано** завдання створення системних стратегій підтримки психоемоційного стану психологів. **Описано важливість** інтеграції екопсихологічного підходу, що передбачає розвиток усвідомленого самопіклування, оптимізацію внутрішніх ресурсів, формування навичок саморегуляції та визначення професійних і особистісних меж. **Впровадження** цих практик дозволяє створити безпечний психологічний простір, підвищити стійкість до хронічного стресу та зберегти професійну ефективність у тривалих кризових умовах. **Розроблено** екопсихологічну модель професійної стійкості, яка **розглядає** психолога як частину цілісної професійної екосистеми, де його психоемоційне благополуччя визначається взаємодією особистісних ресурсів, вимог професійного середовища та можливостей для відновлення. Важливими складовими **визначено** відчуття широкого життєдайного зв'язку, усвідомлення професійної ролі та інтеграцію досвіду у ширший контекст діяльності. Модель **спрямована** на превентивне формування умов, що підтримують психоемоційне здоров'я, стабілізують внутрішній стан і забезпечують довгострокову професійну стійкість психологів. **Запропоновані** концептуальні та практичні підходи можуть бути використані у системній організації професійної діяльності та профілактиці вигорання у фахівців, що працюють у кризових і воєнних умовах.

Ключові слова: професійне вигорання, психологи, кризові умови, екопсихологічний підхід, психоемоційна стійкість, усвідомлене самопіклування, відновлювальні практики, професійна ефективність, психологічна підтримка.

The article examines the features of professional burnout among psychologists in crisis and wartime conditions and identifies the role of the ecopsychological approach in preventing and overcoming this phenomenon. Analyzed are contemporary studies indicating that intensive professional demands, constant contact with traumatized clients, and the increased dynamics of the work environment lead to emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced professional effectiveness. Accordingly, the need to develop systemic strategies for supporting psychologists' psycho-emotional well-being has been highlighted. The importance of integrating the ecopsychological approach is described, which includes the development of conscious self-care, optimization of internal resources, cultivation of self-regulation skills, and the establishment of professional and personal boundaries. Implementation of these practices enables the creation of a safe psychological space, increases resilience to chronic stress, and preserves professional effectiveness under prolonged crisis conditions. An ecopsychological model of professional resilience has been developed, which considers the psychologist as part of a holistic professional ecosystem, where psycho-emotional well-being is determined by the interaction of personal resources, professional environmental demands, and available opportunities for recovery. Key components include a sense of broad, life-giving connection, awareness of professional role, and integration of experience into a broader context of activity. The model is aimed at the preventive formation of conditions that support psycho-

emotional health, stabilize internal states, and ensure long-term professional resilience of psychologists. The proposed conceptual and practical approaches can be applied in the systemic organization of professional activity and the prevention of burnout among specialists working in crisis and wartime conditions.

Keywords: professional burnout, psychologists, crisis conditions, ecopsychological approach, psycho-emotional resilience, conscious self-care, restorative practices, professional effectiveness, psychological support.

Statement of the problem. The modern conditions caused by the war and its socio-psychological consequences create a significant burden on psychologists who carry out professional activities in crisis circumstances. Intense professional requirements, regular contact with traumatized clients, and increased dynamism of the work environment affect the psychological functioning of specialists, contributing to the development of anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and symptoms of professional burnout. This determines the urgent need to study the aspects on which the condition of psychologists in wartime depends and to develop evidence-based strategies aimed at supporting their emotional and psychological well-being.

One of the key aspects that prevents the occurrence of professional burnout and contributes to the improvement of the psycho-emotional state of psychologists is the consideration of the ecopsychological approach in professional activities. In this context, the application of the principles of ecopsychology involves the formation of skills of conscious self-care, optimization of internal resources, development of self-regulation, and definition of professional and personal boundaries. Important components also include systematic planning of restorative practices, organization of a safe psychological space for oneself, and development of strategies to counteract chronic stress. The implementation of such approaches helps to stabilize the emotional state of psychologists, increase their professional resilience, preserve mental health and maintain the effectiveness of professional activities in the conditions of prolonged psycho-emotional stress of the wartime period.

Despite the considerable attention to the problem of professional burnout, the ecopsychological determinants of this phenomenon in psychologists functioning in the context of military conflicts remain insufficiently studied. The scientific definition of the principles and methods of the ecopsychological approach that can influence the risk of professional burnout, as well as the development of empirically based strategies for psychological support of specialists are extremely relevant tasks of modern psychological science.

The relevance of integrating the ecopsychological approach into the professional activities of psychologists is due to its ability to provide holistic support for the psycho-emotional functioning of specialists. The ecopsychological approach allows to systematically organize restorative practices, create a safe psychological space and form adaptive strategies to counteract chronic stress.

The implementation of the principles of ecopsychology helps to stabilize the psycho-emotional state of psychologists, increase their professional stability, preserve mental health and maintain the effectiveness of professional activity in the conditions of prolonged psycho-emotional stress of the wartime period. Thus, the application of the ecopsychological approach is a key aspect of preventing professional burnout and ensuring the psycho-emotional well-being of psychologists.

The purpose of the article is to clarify the role of the ecopsychological approach in the prevention of professional burnout of psychologists working in crisis conditions of the wartime period and to substantiate scientific and practical recommendations for supporting their psychoemotional state.

Outline of the main material. Professional burnout is considered as a consequence of chronic stress and excessive emotional stress in professional activities, which leads to negative changes in the mental state of a specialist [2; 6; 10]. In the modern psychological literature, it is interpreted as an important problem of mental health of professionals working in conditions of increased psychological stress and responsibility for others (N. Freudenberger, S. Maslach, S. Jackson) [7; 9]. Psychologists who work individually with traumatized people and crisis groups are especially susceptible to this condition due to constant contact with emotionally charged information and a high level of responsibility for the psycho-emotional state of clients.

The problem of professional burnout attracts considerable attention from researchers in the fields of occupational psychology, social psychology, and psychotherapy. Scientists S. Maslach and S. Jackson proposed a three-dimensional model of burnout that includes emotional exhaustion, depersonalization (cynicism), and a decline in personal achievement. In the professional activity of psychologists, these components are manifested through the loss of empathic sensitivity, emotional detachment from clients, and reduced work efficiency. Studies of our time emphasize that psychologists in conditions of high social

and psychological stress, especially during military conflicts, are under constant professional and emotional pressure, which increases the risk of developing burnout (O. Yakymchuk) [12].

Today's society is characterized by high dynamism of social processes, information and emotional overload, as well as frequent crisis events, which directly affects the professional activities of psychologists [4; 5]. Constant contact with traumatized people, the need to make quick decisions and responsibility for the psychoemotional state of clients contribute to chronic stress and emotional exhaustion. In wartime conditions, these risks increase significantly, as the psychologist's activity combines professional assistance with their own experience of anxiety and uncertainty (Y. Pysarenko) [15].

Ukrainian researchers emphasize that psychologists' professional burnout is a multifactorial phenomenon that is formed under the influence of individual, professional, and socio-cultural factors. A high level of emotional stress, prolonged contact with traumatized clients, insufficient support in the workplace, and lack of restorative practices create conditions for emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced professional motivation (N. Muranova, O. Voliarska) [11].

Effective prevention of psychologists' professional burnout requires a comprehensive combination of personal and organizational measures. One of the effective approaches is the integration of the ecopsychological approach into professional activities, which involves the development of skills of conscious self-care, optimization of internal resources, formation of professional and personal boundaries, as well as systematic planning of restorative practices [16]. This strategy allows to create a safe psychological space, form adaptive mechanisms to counteract chronic stress, stabilize the psychoemotional state and increase the professional resilience of psychologists even in difficult conditions of modern society (O. Yakymchuk, S. Maslach, S. Jackson) [9; 19].

Thus, the use of the ecopsychological approach is a key tool for preventing and overcoming professional burnout and ensuring the psychoemotional well-being of psychologists, increasing the effectiveness of their activities in conditions of prolonged psychoemotional stress and socio-psychological instability [8].

The implementation of these theoretical provisions requires their structuring in the form of a holistic conceptual model capable of reflecting the main aspects of ecopsychological support for specialists.

We developed and proposed a model of ecopsychological support for psychologists (Fig. 1), which is based on the principle of conscious self-care as a central regulatory mechanism of professional resilience. Conscious self-care is seen as an integrative ability of a psychologist to maintain their own physical, emotional, and cognitive well-being, to realize the limits of their own resources, and to engage in restorative practices in a timely manner. It is this component that reduces the destructive effects of stress and prevents the development of emotional exhaustion described in the classic model of professional burnout by C. Maslach and S. Jackson [9].



Fig. 1. Model of ecopsychological support for psychologists

An important component of the model is the optimization of internal resources, which includes the development of professional competence, increased self-reflection, the formation of emotional regulation skills, and awareness of one's own psychological needs. Optimization of resources helps reduce the risk of emotional exhaustion and supports a sense of professional effectiveness, which, according to research, is a key factor in resilience to burnout [18].

A special place in the model is occupied by the formation of professional and personal boundaries, which acts as a defense mechanism when working with emotionally charged material. A clear delineation of the professional role and personal space reduces the level of depersonalization and prevents emotional overload, which is typical for psychologists in crisis and military conditions [1; 3; 4].

Restorative practices within the ecopsychological model include both individual and contextual resources, including contact with the environment, body-oriented practices, meditation, and a conscious pause in professional activity. Studies show that such practices help restore psycho-emotional balance and increase the overall resilience of professionals [4].

One of the key components of the model is also stress management strategies, which include relaxation techniques, breathing exercises, cognitive stress management techniques, and adaptive coping skills. Their systematic application allows psychologists to function effectively under prolonged psychoemotional stress and maintain professional efficiency [2; 5].

Thus, the proposed ecopsychological model is considered as an integral system of prevention of professional burnout, which provides support for the mental health of psychologists and increases their professional stability in difficult socio-psychological conditions.

At the same time, the presentation of the structure and components of ecopsychological support for psychologists requires a deeper theoretical understanding of it in the context of understanding the nature of professional burnout. To do this, it is advisable to turn to the ecopsychological interpretation of the burnout phenomenon itself, which goes beyond the individual psychological approach and considers it as a result of systemic disorders in the interaction of a specialist with the professional environment.

Within the ecopsychological approach, the professional burnout of psychologists is conceptualized not as a purely individual dysfunction, but as a symptom of systemic disharmony, the result of a violation of the dynamic balance in the integral system “specialist-professional environment” (Fig. 2). This phenomenon occurs when there is a long-term and critical discrepancy between the three key components:

- 1) internal psychological and physiological resources of the individual (energy potential, personal values and boundaries);
- 2) objective requirements and stressors of the professional environment (chronic emotional stress, excessive administrative responsibilities, ethical tension);
- 3) available opportunities for recovery and compensation (lack of time, quality social support, autonomy and a sense of control over the work process).

Accordingly, effective prevention and overcoming of psychologists' professional burnout requires a transition from fragmented measures to a comprehensive, systematic approach that simultaneously integrates individual self-preservation strategies and organizational mechanisms for the formation of a sustainable, resourceful professional ecosystem. The fundamental difference and added value of the integrative ecopsychological model of professional resilience of a specialist in comparison with traditional tools is manifested in several key aspects.

First, it is a shift in focus from an individual-centered to a systemic and contextual perspective. Most classical prevention methods (e.g., stress management training, cognitive behavioral therapy techniques, mindfulness) are focused primarily on the individual, aiming to increase his or her adaptive capacity and regulatory skills in a stressful, often unchanging environment. The ecopsychological model, on the other hand, considers a specialist as an integral and interdependent part of his or her professional ecosystem. It aims not only to “harden” the psychologist, but also to provide him or her with tools for diagnosing and transforming the dysfunctional elements of this ecosystem: organizational culture that ignores the boundaries between work and leisure; unfair workload distribution; and destructive communication. In this way, the responsibility for mental well-being is redistributed, becoming a shared responsibility of the employee and the institution.

Secondly, the model suggests a shift from reactive correction of consequences to proactive formation of the resource environment. Traditional tools are often implemented in a real, existing crisis situation, when the symptoms of emotional exhaustion or cynicism are already evident and causing harm. The ecopsychological approach is preventive and involves the systematic construction and support of the so-called “restorative niche” of a specialist in advance, without waiting for problems to arise. This implies the integration of not only productive but also regenerative practices into the professional routine: designing mandatory “windows” for micro-restoration during the working day; creating physical spaces of psychological safety and relaxation in the office; institutionalizing supervision, mentoring, and self-help groups; cultivating a restorative connection with the natural environment (“green exercise,” eco-therapeutic breaks). Preventing burnout is no longer an additional task, but an organic component of organizational design.

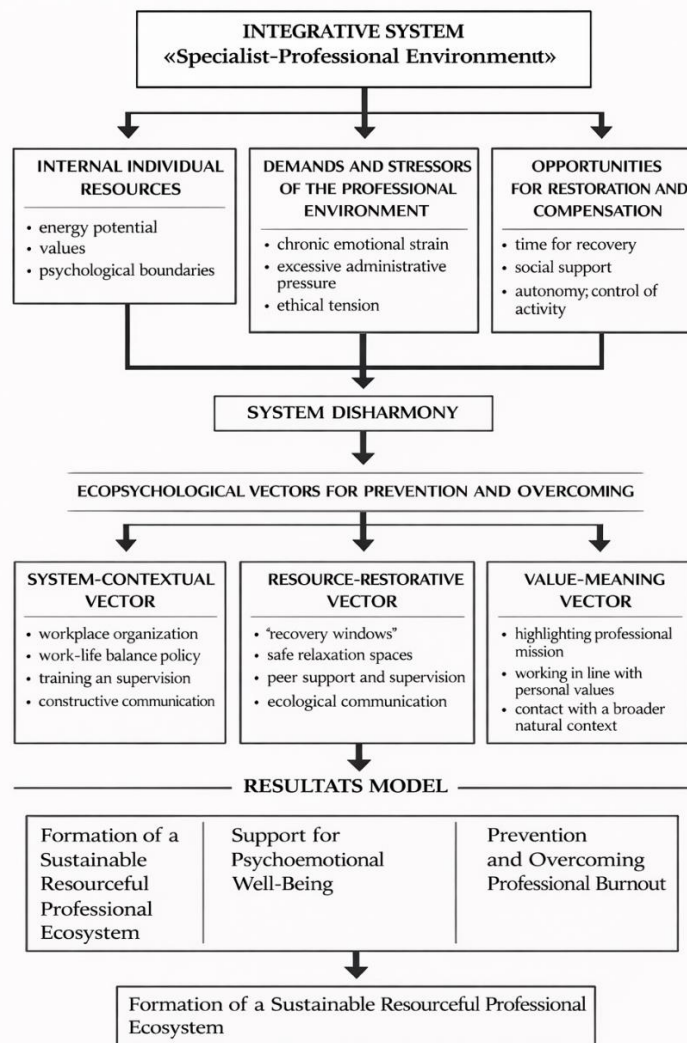


Fig. 2. Integrative ecopsychological model of specialist's professional resilience

Third, the model is distinguished by its rejection of one-size-fits-all solutions in favor of context-sensitive and differentiated interventions. While many existing methods are general, ecopsychology emphasizes the uniqueness of each professional context. Preventive strategies for a psychologist working with post-traumatic disorders in a combat zone will be significantly different from interventions for a specialist in the corporate sector or the education system, as their professional ecosystems have different specific stressors, available resources, and potential for change. This requires a thorough diagnosis of the specific system before designing an intervention, which increases its relevance and effectiveness.

Finally, a fourth key distinguishing aspect is the focus on restoring fundamental psychological foundations of meaningfulness and connection rather than symptom management. Traditional methods often work with superficial manifestations: they reduce psychophysiological stress and optimize time management. The ecopsychological approach goes deeper, seeking to restore two vital sources of resilience:

- a sense of meaningfulness;
- a sense of broad, life-giving connection.

The sense of meaningfulness is one of the fundamental psychological resources that ensures professional resilience of a specialist in the face of prolonged psycho-emotional stress, chronic stress, and crisis events. Within the framework of the ecopsychological approach, meaningfulness is viewed not as a stable personal characteristic, but as a dynamic process of constant harmonization of professional activity with the system of individual values, life meanings and existential purpose. It is this process that allows a

specialist to maintain internal integrity even in the face of objective constraints, uncertainty and external instability.

In crisis situations, such as military events, social disasters, or institutional instability, a psychologist's professional activity is often accompanied by feelings of powerlessness, loss of control, and doubts about their own effectiveness. In the absence of meaningful support, these experiences can lead to emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and gradual devaluation of professional identity. Instead, the presence of a conscious connection between the work performed and personally significant values creates an internal buffer that reduces the destructive impact of stressors and supports the ability to psychological self-regulation.

Preserving or rediscovering the deeper meaning of professional activity involves reflective reflection on the question of "why" this activity is carried out in a particular context. It is not only about socially approved motives of helping or professional duty, but also about integrating personal values such as humanism, responsibility, service, autonomy, or development into daily practice. In this case, even limited work results or the inability to achieve ideal professional standards do not lead to a loss of intrinsic motivation.

The ecopsychological model emphasizes that meaningfulness is formed in the interaction of a professional with the broader context of his or her life, including the social, cultural, and natural environment. Realizing oneself as a part of a larger system - a professional community, society, or even a broader ecological reality - allows us to expand the scope of individual experience and reduce the focus on our own exhaustion. This "ecological" shift in perspective contributes to the formation of a strong sense of the significance of professional contributions, even in situations where the immediate result of activities is not immediately visible.

An important mechanism for maintaining meaningfulness is the integration of professional identity with personal purpose. When the professional role does not conflict with basic life values but is perceived as a form of their realization, the risk of internal fragmentation and emotional alienation from one's own activities is reduced. This is especially important for psychologists, whose work involves constant contact with human suffering and morally challenging situations that require deep internal coherence.

In addition, a sense of meaningfulness plays a key role in restoring professional motivation after a crisis or traumatic event. The process of re-examining experience, including losses and limitations, allows one to integrate negative events into one's life story not as destructive, but as having the potential for growth and transformation. In this sense, meaningfulness is not only a protective but also a restorative factor of professional resilience.

Thus, maintaining a sense of meaningfulness in the ecopsychological model is seen as a strategic direction for the prevention of professional burnout. It helps to maintain the internal connection between professional activity, personal values, and the existential purpose of a specialist, ensuring psychological integrity, resilience, and the ability to function professionally for a long time even in crisis conditions.

The sense of a broad, life-giving connection is a multidimensional psychological phenomenon that goes far beyond traditional social interaction and professional tasks. It includes not only the support of colleagues and the professional environment, which is manifested in mutual understanding, empathy and the formation of emotional resources, but also a broader ecopsychological level of inclusion in professional activities. This level implies awareness of oneself as part of a holistic professional and non-professional context, which contributes to broadening perspective, integrating experience, and reducing narrow focus on routine tasks. The ecopsychological dimension of professional activity is manifested in the ability of a specialist to realize the relationships between their own emotional, cognitive and behavioral reactions, professional processes and the socio-cultural context in which they function. This allows you to build sustainable internal resources, maintain psycho-emotional balance, and maintain the integrity of the personality even under conditions of high professional stress. Awareness of oneself as part of a broader, extra-professional reality allows one to integrate one's own experience into a larger context, increasing the ability to self-reflect and adapt, which acts as a powerful buffer against professional deformation and emotional burnout. Thus, the integration of social support, conscious ecopsychological inclusion in professional activities, and expanded self-perception as part of a larger whole is a key factor in preventing professional burnout and supporting the holistic psychoemotional functioning of psychologists.

Thus, the ecopsychological model does not deny the value of existing approaches to preventing and overcoming professional burnout, but serves as an integrative meta-framework for them, allowing them to combine multilevel interventions into a single holistic system. It does not oppose individual psychological techniques to organizational or environmental factors, but considers them as complementary elements of a complex professional ecosystem within which the psycho-emotional state of a specialist is formed.

The key feature of this model is a change in the logic of responding to professional burnout - from fragmentary elimination of symptoms to strategic design of conditions that support professional resilience. In this approach, burnout is not seen as an individual weakness or a lack of self-regulation skills, but as an indicator of an imbalance between the individual's resources, the requirements of the professional environment, and the available opportunities for recovery and compensation.

The ecopsychological model emphasizes that the psycho-emotional well-being of a specialist is formed in the space of constant interaction with the professional context, which can both strengthen and deplete his or her resources. That is why effective prevention of burnout involves not only the development of individual coping strategies, but also the targeted transformation of organizational culture, work regimes, communication practices, and support systems in the professional environment.

Within the framework of the proposed model, the fight against burnout is no longer seen as a set of personal survival skills in the face of chronic stress. Instead, it takes on the features of a long-term strategy for the formation of healthy, sustainable and regenerative professional ecosystems that can not only reduce the risks of exhaustion but also actively restore the psycho-emotional resources of professionals in the course of their daily activities.

An important methodological advantage of the ecopsychological model is its preventive nature. In this case, support for psycho-emotional resources is not limited to responding to crises or acute manifestations of exhaustion, but is integrated into the structure of professional activity as a permanent, systemic process. This reduces the likelihood of chronic stress accumulation and timely compensates for imbalances between stress and recovery.

In this logic, psycho-emotional support for a specialist ceases to be a forced or situational measure used in the context of an already formed burnout. It is transformed into an internal, organic characteristic of professional culture and organizational ethics, where care for psychological resources is recognized as a necessary condition for high-quality, ethical and long-term professional activity.

Thus, the ecopsychological model expands on traditional notions of preventing professional burnout by offering a holistic view of the relationship between the personality of a specialist and his or her professional environment. It creates the basis for the transition from individualized responsibility for mental well-being to shared, systemic responsibility, which includes both the specialist and the organizational and social conditions of his or her professional functioning.

Conclusions. The analysis of the current working conditions of psychologists in crisis and military realities shows that specialists experience significant psychoemotional stress, which increases the likelihood of developing professional burnout. The constant demands of professional activity, regular contact with people experiencing trauma, and rapid changes in working conditions pose a risk of emotional exhaustion, decreased motivation, and reduced efficiency in the performance of professional duties, which emphasizes the need for systemic measures to support mental health.

An important mechanism for preventing burnout is the introduction of an ecopsychological approach into the professional practice of psychologists, which involves the development of conscious self-care, support for internal resources, the formation of self-regulation skills, and a clear definition of professional and personal boundaries. This approach ensures the creation of a safe psychological environment, helps to effectively cope with chronic stress and contributes to the professional resilience of psychologists in prolonged crisis conditions.

The proposed ecopsychological model emphasizes the importance of considering a psychologist as part of a holistic professional ecosystem, where his or her psychoemotional state is formed through the interaction of personal resources, the requirements of the working environment, and opportunities for recovery. Such a systematic approach allows us to move from eliminating burnout symptoms to purposefully creating conditions that support internal integrity, professional resilience, and self-regulation.

A sense of deep, life-giving connection and awareness of one's professional role in the broader context of functioning are effective defenses against professional deformation. The combination of social support, ecopsychological approach, and reflective reflection on one's own experience helps to stabilize the psychoemotional state, maintain motivation, and high performance, which makes the ecopsychological strategy a key factor in preventing burnout and building long-term professional resilience of psychologists.

Prospects for further research. Further research can be aimed at empirically testing the effectiveness of ecopsychological strategies in preventing professional burnout of psychologists working in crisis and military conditions. It is advisable to develop quantitative and qualitative methods for assessing the impact of integrated practices of conscious self-care, the formation of professional boundaries and the optimization of internal resources on the psychoemotional state of specialists. This will allow us to establish

specific relationships between the components of the ecopsychological model and the level of professional resilience, as well as to identify the most effective interventions for different professional contexts.

A separate area is the study of the specifics of the professional ecosystem of psychologists in different socio-psychological conditions, including the duration and intensity of crisis events. Studying the interaction between a specialist's internal resources, the requirements of the professional environment, and available restorative practices will expand the understanding of the dynamics of professional burnout and mechanisms for its prevention. In addition, it is important to analyze the impact of social support, supervision, and self-help groups on the integration of the ecopsychological approach into daily professional practice.

An interdisciplinary approach to the study of professional resilience that combines psychological, sociological, and organizational factors is also promising. This will make it possible to develop comprehensive models of burnout prevention adapted to the specific conditions of psychologists' work in crisis and military situations. In addition, further research could focus on long-term monitoring of the impact of ecopsychological interventions on psychoemotional well-being, professional performance, and preservation of the integrity of the individual, which would open up new opportunities for evidence-based support for psychologists in crisis.

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