

**Larysa Danylchuk,**

State Institution “Luhansk Taras Shevchenko

National University”, Poltava (Ukraine),

Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Professor

[larkaterdan@gmail.com](mailto:larkaterdan@gmail.com)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7156-5071>

## **TO THE PROBLEM OF HEALTH PRESERVATION AND SELF-PRESERVING BEHAVIOUR OF THE INDIVIDUAL: A HEALTH-PRESERVING APPROACH**

*У статті автором розглянуто проблему здоров'язбереження, самозбережувальної поведінки особистості. Мета та наукова новизна окреслюють теоретичне обґрунтування взаємозв'язку між здоров'язбереженням та самозбережувальною поведінкою особистості крізь призму концепту «здоров'я» та здоров'язбережувального підходу. Аргументовано, що здоров'язбережувальний підхід виступає науково обґрунтованою методологічною основою для вивчення та розвитку самозбережувальної активності особистості, оскільки інтегрує знання медицини, психології, педагогіки, соціальної роботи та рекреаційної науки. На основі міждисциплінарного аналізу уточнено сутнісні характеристики поняття «здоров'я», розкрито його багатовимірну природу та окреслено значення здоров'язбереження як стратегічної умови фізичного, психічного і соціального благополуччя людини. Доведено, що самозбережувальна поведінка є ключовим механізмом реалізації здоров'язбереження, оскільки спрямована на підтримку життєвого ресурсу, профілактику ризиків, забезпечення адаптації, стресостійкості та особистісної резильєнтності. У статті розкрито структуру самозбережувальної поведінки, яку представлено на п'яти взаємопов'язаних рівнях: фізичному, когнітивному, емоційному, ціннісно-мотиваційному та соціально-поведінковому. Показано, що кожен рівень виконує специфічні функції у збереженні життєвого балансу, а їх інтеграція визначає загальну ефективність адаптивної поведінки людини. Особливу увагу приділено значенню здоров'язбереження в умовах війни та соціальної нестабільності, де самозбережувальна поведінка стає критичною умовою підтримки психофізичного функціонування, протидії травматичному стресу та забезпечення життєстійкості. Обґрунтовано перспективи подальших досліджень у напрямі діагностики самозбережувальної готовності, розроблення превентивних програм та оцінювання впливу соціальних факторів на формування стилю життя.*

**Ключові слова:** здоров'я, здоров'язбереження, здоров'язбережувальний підхід, особистість, самозбережувальна поведінка.

*The article examines the problem of health preservation and self-preserving behaviour of the individual. The purpose and scientific novelty outline the theoretical justification of the relationship between health preservation and self-preserving behaviour of the individual through the prism of the concept of “health” and the health-preserving approach. It is argued that the health-preserving approach serves as a scientifically grounded methodological basis for studying and developing individual self-preserving activity, as it integrates knowledge from medicine, psychology, pedagogy, social work, and recreation science. Based on an interdisciplinary analysis, the essential characteristics of the concept of “health” have been clarified, its multidimensional nature has been revealed, and the significance of health preservation as a strategic condition for physical, mental, and social well-being has been identified. It has been proven that self-preserving behaviour is a key mechanism for the implementation of health preservation, since it aims to maintain life resources, prevent risks, ensure adaptation, stress resistance, and personal resilience. The article reveals the structure of self-preserving behaviour, which is presented on five interconnected levels: physical, cognitive, emotional, value-motivational, and social-behavioural. It is demonstrated that each level performs specific functions in maintaining life balance, and their integration determines the overall*

*effectiveness of human adaptive behaviour. Special attention is paid to the importance of health preservation in conditions of war and social instability, where self-preserving behaviour becomes a critical factor in maintaining psychophysical functioning, counteracting traumatic stress, and ensuring resilience. The prospects for further research have been substantiated in the direction of diagnosing self-preserving readiness, developing preventive programmes, and assessing the impact of social factors on the formation of lifestyle.*

**Keywords:** *health, health preservation, health-preserving approach, individual, self-preserving behaviour.*

**Problem statement.** In contemporary academic discourse, there is a growing interest in concepts that reflect the human capacity to preserve, maintain, and reproduce one's life potential under conditions of social instability, prolonged stress, war, economic risks, informational turbulence, and ecological uncertainty. Changes in lifestyle, the increasing number of psycho-emotional disorders, risks of deviant behavioural forms, professional burnout, social alienation, as well as rising levels of anxiety and trauma within the population, indicate the need to study mechanisms of self-preservation, psychological resilience, and adaptability. In this context, the issues of health preservation and self-preserving behaviour acquire particular significance, as they reflect internal mechanisms of adaptation, regulation, self-protection, and resilience necessary for maintaining the integrity of health and personal viability.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** A significant contribution to the understanding of health preservation has been made by Yu. Boichuk, I. Kotsan, L. Kuchynska, L. Rybalko, N. Sydorchuk, T. Khrystova and others, as well as representatives of positive psychology such as C. Rogers, C. Ryff, M. Seligman and others. The concept of "self-preserving behaviour" has been presented in the works of L. Alfimov, N. Volynets, L. Oliynyk, O. Martsyniak-Dorosh, O. Medianova, V. Pankovets, Ye. Potapchuk, N. Pyliavets, R. Sirko, Yu. Shevelev and others.

However, despite a considerable number of scientific works, the concept of "self-preserving behaviour" remains insufficiently systematised, as does its role in the strategic health preservation of an individual.

**The aim of the article** is to theoretically substantiate the relationship between health preservation and self-preserving behaviour of the individual from the standpoint of the concept of "health" and the health-preserving approach.

**Presentation of the main research material.** The methodology of the health-preserving approach is based on evidence-based scientific knowledge and on interdisciplinary integration of medicine, psychology, pedagogy, social work, physiology, recreation studies, valeology, and preventive education. It serves as an effective and essential mechanism for strengthening public health by creating favourable conditions for active, healthy, and high-quality living. Methodologically, it integrates biopsychosocial and humanistic paradigms, viewing health as a multidimensional phenomenon. Within this approach, the focus extends beyond treatment or disease prevention to the development of an individual's ability for self-regulation, self-preservation, and responsible attitudes towards personal health.

Under wartime conditions, the health-preserving approach becomes critically important and is manifested through internal psychological mechanisms, behavioural strategies, and value-motivational orientations. It supports adaptive psychological mechanisms; contributes to traumatic stress prevention; restores physical and mental resources; strengthens individual and collective resilience; and enhances the ability to withstand uncertainty and danger.

Modern understanding of health is based on an interdisciplinary paradigm that defines health as a dynamic system of balance among physical, psychological, social, cognitive, and spiritual components. In general, health is understood as the process of maintaining and developing biological, physiological, and psychological capacities of an individual, ensuring optimal working ability and social functioning, and enabling the longest possible period of active life [4; 9]. It represents a harmonious combination of structural and functional characteristics of the organism adequate to the environment, ensuring optimal vital functioning and full human activity [8].

According to L. Kuchynska, the significance of health is not limited to an individual's attitude toward personal health. Its role is viewed from the standpoint of universal laws that determine the life

of future generations. Within the framework of the outlined problem, such an approach to understanding health provides a person with the opportunity to live and work in harmony with the social and natural environment, with oneself, and to strive for self-improvement and the improvement of one's immediate surroundings, as well as to preserve and multiply life resources [5, p. 29].

Similar views are reflected in the works of T. Khrystova, V. Piurko, and S. Kazakova, who emphasise that the health of a nation indicates the level of quality of life, which is determined by numerous parameters: material, social, psycho-emotional, and by the development of physical culture and sport [2, p. 109]. However, the issue of legal definition and the status of health in the legal domain emerges as a point of concern.

Article 49 of the Constitution of Ukraine guarantees every citizen the right to health protection, medical care, and health insurance. The Law of Ukraine "Fundamentals of the Legislation of Ukraine on Health Care" states: "Every person has the natural, inalienable, and inviolable right to health protection. Society and the state are responsible before present and future generations for the level of health and preservation of the gene pool of the people of Ukraine, ensuring the priority of health care in state activities, improvement of working, educational, living, and recreational conditions of the population, solving environmental problems, improving medical care, and promoting a healthy lifestyle" [3]. In this context, the issue extends beyond the right to health and concerns the preservation of health.

Let us consider the concept of "preservation", which is frequently used in correlation with the concept of "health" in Ukrainian academic discourse. However, its semantic content in relation to the concept of health is seldom clarified in psychological sources.

Scientific inquiry has shown that, at present, the Ukrainian interpretation of the concept "preservation" is presented in the Great Explanatory Dictionary of the Modern Ukrainian Language, edited by V. Busel, as: "Preservation 1. The action and state according to the meaning of 'to preserve' and 'to be preserved'" [1, p. 346]. As we see, the linguistic interpretation of the concept is rather narrow. However, referring to the term "to preserve" in the same source provides a more extensive semantic structure and therefore offers an understanding relevant to the topic of this research: "To preserve. 1. To keep intact by protecting, to prevent disappearance or loss... 2. To maintain something in certain conditions by protecting it from damage or destruction // To keep something in good condition, trying to leave it unchanged // To protect from danger, to rescue someone or something // To safeguard against anything harmful // To continue to remain in a certain state, not to lose signs, properties, qualities... 3. To treat something carefully, not to waste anything // To save something for someone; to set aside..." [1, p. 346]. These semantic constructs essentially define the core meaning of "preservation" in relation to "health", thus serving as an initial basis for further scientific analysis of the concept of "health preservation".

It is worth noting that in the modern world, the issue of health preservation is becoming increasingly important in the context of full and productive human functioning, and it is the subject of academic inquiry across various scientific fields both in Ukraine and globally.

The concept of "health preservation" emerged in response to the need for a personalised approach to health and disease prevention in contemporary society. It reflects a shift from the paradigm of "treating illness" to "maintaining optimal health", taking into account the complex influence of various factors on human vitality and longevity. As a concept, "health preservation" encompasses a wide range of strategies and interventions aimed at maintaining health and improving quality of life.

The conducted analysis has shown that although the concept of "health preservation" appears in a number of academic works, its authors often equate or replace it with other linguistic constructs such as: healthy lifestyle, health-preserving technologies, health-preserving competence, health-preserving education, individual health, health protection, medical care, rehabilitation, etc., which, in our view, is not entirely appropriate. Most of these constructs, despite having a certain semantic relatedness, are adjacent components of the issue of health preservation or belong to the same semantic field, but cannot be equated with the concept of "health preservation". Under these circumstances, to ensure scientific validity and clarity of our research, it is necessary to present an authorial interpretation of the concept "health preservation" in accordance with the methodological principles of the health-preserving approach.

*Health preservation is an integrated system of scientifically grounded approaches, technologies, strategies, and purposeful actions aimed at sustaining, strengthening, and developing*

*the physical, mental, social, and spiritual potential of a person. This system involves the formation of a healthy lifestyle, the development of effective self-regulation, the establishment of self-preserving behaviour, disease prevention, reduction of risk-forming factors, support of adaptive bodily capacities, and the achievement of an optimal level of functioning that ensures high quality of life, resilience, and social inclusion of the individual.*

A special place in this field belongs to the terminological conceptualisation of the notions of self-preserving behaviour and resilience. Let us consider their semantic content and essential characteristics.

In academic discourse, self-preserving behaviour is regarded as a system of conscious actions and strategies aimed at maintaining life potential. According to Ye. Potapchuk and N. Pyliavets, self-preserving behaviour is a complex integrative system of activity-role and personal qualities of an individual, which ensures the individual's capacity for self-protection and resilience under extreme and specific conditions of activity, as well as care for one's own health and psychological well-being in everyday life [7, p. 222]. L. Oliynyk, O. Martsyniak-Dorosh, O. Medianova, and V. Pankovets define it as a comprehensive system that determines an individual's strategies and actions directed at preserving one's integrity, safety, and adaptation in various life circumstances. Self-preserving behaviour, as a psychological phenomenon, is a complex and multidimensional formation that integrates various mental processes, personal qualities, and social influences. It develops at the intersection of biological instincts of self-preservation and conscious personal behavioural strategies implemented in response to real or potential threats [6, p. 1482].

It should be noted that from the standpoint of the health-preserving approach, self-preserving behaviour encompasses a wide range of psychophysical and social actions aimed at risk prevention; threat reduction; preservation of vital resources; development of resilience; support of stable adaptive strategies; regulation of behavioural habits; and formation of a safe social environment.

Under current conditions of warfare, social transformation, global uncertainty, and increasing individual-environmental risks, an individual's self-preserving behaviour appears as a complex polystructural system and a multilayered formation. Its mechanisms unfold through a system of interconnected levels: physical, cognitive, emotional, value-motivational, and social-behavioural. Each of these levels performs a distinct function within the general architectonics of behaviour, ensuring its integrity and life effectiveness.

*The physical level* is regarded as the foundational component of the self-preservation system/behaviour, encompassing biological and somatic mechanisms of sustaining life, neurophysiological regulation, reserves of life energy, and behavioural practices aimed at maintaining health. This level includes adherence to nutrition, sleep, and hydration regimes; physical and recreational activity; physical safety (avoidance of injury, safe behaviour in risky conditions); preventive medical activity (check-ups, treatment, care for somatic condition); and maintenance of physiological balance through a healthy lifestyle.

This level forms the foundation of individual resource capacity, ensuring adaptive ability to stress, restoration of bodily functions, regulation of physical well-being, and somatic balance. Disruptions at the physical level generally lead to a decline in the overall capacity for self-preservation.

*The cognitive level* of self-preserving behaviour encompasses a system of representations, knowledge, judgments, and thinking strategies that determine awareness of life risks, the ability to analyse danger-related causes, anticipate the consequences of destructive behaviour, and make informed decisions in favour of health preservation. Its key characteristics include knowledge of risk factors, health and its maintenance; critical thinking in the sphere of danger prevention; cognitive control of behaviour; reflection on one's actions and states; and forecasting life outcomes of chosen strategies.

The cognitive component ensures rational analysis of life situations, contributes to the formation of adaptive behavioural models, integrates information about threats, and transforms it into deliberate decisions oriented toward life preservation.

*The emotional level* includes affective responses, feelings, emotional regulation, and stress resilience that determine an individual's ability to experience, control, and transform emotions into constructive actions. It is associated with emotional stability; tolerance to stress; development of empathy and emotional literacy; management of fear and anxiety; and the capacity for emotional self-regulation.

Emotional regulation influences behavioural strategy choices in critical circumstances, contributes to reducing impulsivity and risky actions, supports inner balance, and ensures psychological and physiological harmony.

*The value-motivational level* of self-preserving behaviour is the core of the meaning structure of self-preservation and ensures the individual's internal readiness to care for one's own life. It is connected with personal beliefs, life goals, motivation for self-development, and responsibility for one's own condition. Its content includes: positive attitudes towards life and health as values; meaningful orientation toward self-preservation; motivation for safety, self-protection, and development; internal norms and beliefs regarding healthy behaviour; and a sense of personal responsibility for decisions and actions.

The value-motivational level ensures the stability of self-preserving behaviour, develops readiness for self-control, enhances life activity and internal discipline. Its weakening leads to indifference, irresponsibility, passivity, and risk-prone behaviour.

*The social-behavioural level* reflects the real actions and interactions of an individual with the social environment, aimed at preventing threats and enhancing personal and group safety. It includes social skills of safe interaction; the ability to communicate needs, risks, and boundaries; behavioural patterns of a healthy lifestyle; social responsibility, assistance to others, cooperation; and engagement in communities that support healthy practices.

The social-behavioural level is the external manifestation of self-preservation: internal values, cognitive models, and emotional competence are realised precisely through social actions. Through this level, a culture of mutual support, risk prevention, collective safety, and a healthy social environment is formed.

It is important to emphasise that all levels of self-preserving behaviour form a single integrated system. The physical level provides the bodily foundation of life; the cognitive level regulates informational analysis of risks; the emotional level governs internal states; the value-motivational level shapes meaning and purpose; and the social-behavioural level translates them into external actions.

A disruption at any level may destabilise the overall system and reduce the individual's capacity to preserve life. Conversely, their coordinated interaction determines resilience, adaptability, life creativity, a responsible attitude toward one's own health, and successful interaction with the social environment.

Overall, self-preserving behaviour is the result not only of rational decision-making, but also of automated patterns formed under the influence of social experience, upbringing, educational environments, cultural norms, working conditions, and family traditions. It is not only an indicator of health status but also a condition for its maintenance. A person who possesses skills of self-regulation, stress management, life hygiene, and prevention of risky situations demonstrates a higher level of adaptive functioning and social well-being.

**Conclusions.** The theoretical justification of the relationship between health preservation and self-preserving behaviour of the individual demonstrates that these phenomena constitute integrated components of the concept of "health" and are implemented within the framework of the health-preserving approach as a unified system that ensures human life stability and quality of life. Thus, health preservation and self-preserving behaviour form a single adaptive mechanism that ensures the stability of physical and mental states, social functioning, and enhancement of personal resilience and stress tolerance.

**Prospects for further research** in the context of theoretical justification of the relationship between health preservation and self-preserving behaviour open wide opportunities for expanding scientific knowledge, empirically validating concepts, and improving practical approaches to public health support.

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