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**STUDY OF STRATEGIES FOR COPING WITH STRESSFUL SITUATIONS
IN ADOLESCENTS IN A SITUATION OF UNCERTAINTY**

Метою статті є висвітлення стратегій подолання стресових ситуацій у юнацькому віці в умовах невизначеності, яка стає дедалі виразнішою у сучасному соціально-економічному середовищі. В основі дослідження лежить припущення, що юнацький вік є критичним періодом у формуванні життєво важливих умінь і навичок, зокрема й адаптаційних механізмів, необхідних для ефективної реакції на стрімкі зміни та інформаційний тиск. У публікації розглянуто поняття «копінг», що походить від англійського *to core* — «управляти, давати раду», та розкрито його сутність як комплексу когнітивних, емоційних і поведінкових стратегій, спрямованих на збереження або відновлення емоційної рівноваги. Акцент зроблено на класичні праці А. Лазаруса і С. Фолькман, котрі виокремили дві ключові фази в процесі подолання стресу — оцінку загрози (primary appraisal) і оцінку ресурсів (secondary appraisal). В українській психологічній традиції (Т.М. Титаренко, С.Д. Максименко, О.А. Кірнос, В.М. Бортник) наголошується на ролі соціально-економічних факторів та підтримки з боку родини й оточення у формуванні індивідуальних копінг-стратегій.

У статті акцентується, що юнацький вік посилено піддається впливу невизначеності, оскільки саме в цей час відбувається вибір професії, встановлення особистісних орієнтирів, розвиток соціальних навичок і самооцінки. Науковці вказують, що підвищений рівень тривоги часто провокує пасивні або емоційно-орієнтовані способи реагування, серед яких найпомітнішими є уникання та імпульсивні дії. Водночас дослідники наголошують на важливості конструктивних форм копінгу (асертивна поведінка, пошук соціальної підтримки, обережне планування), які поліпшують соціальну адаптацію і знижують ризик виникнення деструктивних наслідків. Поряд із тим, деякі автори (Е. Фрайденберг, С. Хобфол) розрізняють «просоціальні» і «деструктивні» стратегії, що дає змогу краще зрозуміти поведінкових копінгів в юнацькому. Виокремлюються й культурні та гендерні чинники: у колективістських суспільствах традиційно більше уваги приділяється взаємній підтримці, а в індивідуалістичних — самостійності та внутрішньому локусу контролю.

Окремим аспектом статті є аналіз застосування теорії збереження ресурсів (Conservation of Resources Theory) С. Хобфола, згідно з якою загроза втрати ресурсів (часу, фізичних сил, фінансів, соціальних контактів) може бути рушійним чинником виникнення стресу. Наголошено, що у юнацькому віці дефіцит зазначених ресурсів особливо гостро відбивається на coping-поведінці та може спонукати до агресивних проявів або уникання. Щоб підтвердити актуальність зазначених положень, у статті наведено результати емпіричного дослідження з використанням методики С. Хобфола «Стратегії подолання стресових ситуацій (SACS)». В ньому взяли участь 120 юнаків 17–18 років із Вінницької області. Отримані показники засвідчили, що найяскравіше проявляються імпульсивно-агресивні реакції та уникальна поведінка, у той час як асертивність і пошук соціальної підтримки були помірними або недостатньо сформованими в значної частини респондентів. Водночас виявлено, що приблизно третина юнаків все ж тяжіє до конструктивних патернів (асертивні дії, обережні кроки, соціальна відкритість), що вказує на потенціал для цілеспрямованого розвитку просоціальних навичок.

Отримані результати дослідження полягають у тому, що невизначеність сучасного світу, посилена соціально-економічними трансформаціями, створює додаткове навантаження на психіку молодих людей. Для гармонійного розвитку особистості потрібні не лише внутрішні ресурси (зокрема самооцінка, емоційний інтелект, здатність до самоконтролю), а й відповідне сімейне, освітнє та суспільне середовище, в якому молодь матиме «маяки» для орієнтації. Автори статті

підкреслюють важливість вироблення активних, проблемно-орієнтованих стратегій подолання стресу, що дають змогу швидко адаптуватися до нестабільних умов. Окрім того, позитивний ефект має смисловий копінг, який спонукає юнаків до усвідомлення власної ідентичності й сенсу життєвих випробувань. З практичного погляду, результати дослідження дають змогу запропонувати психологам, педагогам і батькам конкретні рекомендації щодо розвитку в юнаків таких умінь, як конструктивна комунікація, ефективна регуляція емоцій і пошук ресурсів підтримки. Усе це сприяє формуванню більш зрілої, упевненої та гнучкої особистості, здатної творчо реагувати на виклики невизначеності. Зрештою, запропоновані висновки та методи можуть бути використані для профілактики дезадаптивної поведінки й підвищення стресостійкості молоді, а сама стаття містить теоретичне та емпіричне підґрунтя для подальших досліджень у галузі вікової та педагогічної психології.

Ключові слова: копінг, стрес, юнацький вік, невизначеність, адаптація, асертивність, імпульсивність, емоційний інтелект, ресурси

The purpose of the article is to highlight the strategies for coping with stressful situations in adolescence in the face of uncertainty, which is becoming more and more pronounced in the current socio-economic environment. The study is based on the assumption that adolescence is a critical period in the formation of vital skills, including adaptive mechanisms necessary for an effective response to rapid changes and information pressure. The publication examines the concept of "coping", which comes from the English to cope, and reveals its essence as a set of cognitive, emotional and behavioral strategies aimed at maintaining or restoring emotional balance. The emphasis is placed on the classic works of A. Lazarus and S. Folkman, who identified two key phases in the process of overcoming stress: primary appraisal and secondary appraisal. In the Ukrainian psychological tradition (T.M. Titarenko, S.D. Maksymenko, O.A. Kirnos, V.M. Bortnik), the role of socio-economic factors and support from family and environment in the formation of individual coping strategies is emphasized.

The article emphasizes that adolescence is particularly susceptible to uncertainty, as it is at this time that the choice of profession, the establishment of personal guidelines, and the development of social skills and self-esteem take place. The researchers point out that increased levels of anxiety often provoke passive or emotionally oriented responses, the most prominent of which are avoidance and impulsive actions. At the same time, researchers emphasize the importance of constructive forms of coping (assertive behavior, seeking social support, careful planning), which improve social adaptation and reduce the risk of destructive consequences. At the same time, some authors (E. Frydenberg, S. Hobfall) distinguish between "prosocial" and "destructive" strategies, which allows for a better understanding of behavioral coping in adolescence. Cultural and gender factors are also emphasized: in collectivist societies, more attention is traditionally paid to mutual support, and in individualistic societies, to independence and internal locus of control.

A separate aspect of the article is an analysis of the application of S. Hobfall's Conservation of Resources Theory, according to which the threat of losing resources (time, physical strength, finances, social contacts) can be a driving factor in the emergence of stress. It is emphasized that in adolescence, the deficit of these resources is particularly acute in coping behavior and can lead to aggressive manifestations or avoidance. To confirm the relevance of these provisions, the article presents the results of an empirical study using S. Hobfall's "Strategies for Coping with Stressful Situations (SACS)" methodology. It involved 120 young men aged 17-18 from Vinnytsia region. The results showed that impulsive-aggressive reactions and unique behavior are most pronounced, while assertiveness and the search for social support were moderate or insufficiently formed in a significant number of respondents. At the same time, it was found that about a third of young men still tend to have constructive patterns (assertive actions, cautious steps, social openness), which indicates the potential for targeted development of prosocial skills.

The results of the study show that the uncertainty of the modern world, exacerbated by socio-economic transformations, puts an additional strain on the psyche of young people. Harmonious personal development requires not only internal resources (including self-esteem, emotional intelligence, and self-control), but also an appropriate family, educational, and social environment in which young people will have "beacons" to guide them. The authors of the article emphasize the importance of developing active, problem-oriented coping strategies that allow for quick adaptation to unstable conditions. In addition, meaningful coping has a positive effect, encouraging young men to realize their own identity and the meaning of life's challenges. From a practical perspective, the results of the study allow us to offer psychologists, teachers, and parents specific recommendations for developing such skills as constructive communication, effective emotional regulation, and finding support resources. All of this contributes to the

formation of a more mature, confident and flexible personality capable of responding creatively to the challenges of uncertainty. Finally, the proposed conclusions and methods can be used to prevent maladaptive behavior and increase the stress resistance of young people, and the article itself provides a theoretical and empirical basis for further research in the field of age and educational psychology.

Key words: coping, stress, adolescence, uncertainty, adaptation, assertiveness, impulsivity, emotional intelligence, resources

Statement of the problem. The relevance of the topic of researching strategies for overcoming stressful situations in adolescents in a situation of uncertainty is due to the current challenges facing young people. During adolescence, there is an intensive development of personality, the formation of life values and behavioral strategies that affect the future life. The modern world is characterized by an increased level of uncertainty, socio-economic changes, and information overload, which are significant stressors. Adolescence is a critical period when young people are most vulnerable to the effects of stress due to the underdevelopment of adaptive mechanisms. Researching effective strategies for coping with stress contributes to the development of psychological resilience, which is an important condition for successful socialization and self-realization. The uncertainty that accompanies the choice of profession, building personal relationships and making important decisions requires special attention to adaptation mechanisms. The study of coping strategies will allow us to create recommendations for psychologists, teachers, and parents that will contribute to the harmonious development of young people. The study also opens up prospects for further analysis of the influence of various socio-cultural and individual factors on the adaptation strategies of young people. This allows us to make a significant contribution to psychological science and practice.

The purpose of our article is to study the strategies of coping with stressful situations in adolescents in a situation of uncertainty.

Presentation of the main material. The term "coping" comes from the English to cope - "to manage, to cope". In psychology, it is defined as a set of cognitive, emotional and behavioral strategies by which a person tries to master the demands of the environment and internal conflicts that exceed his or her available resources [1]. The founders of the concept of coping, R. Lazarus and S. Folkman, pointed out that the process of overcoming stress includes two key phases: primary appraisal - determining how stressful or dangerous the situation is, and secondary appraisal - analyzing the available opportunities and ways to overcome difficulties [2]. Effective coping helps an individual maintain or restore emotional balance and maintain a positive self-esteem.

In Ukrainian psychology, T. M. Titarenko considers "life strategies of the individual" in conditions of social instability, where a significant place is given to situations of uncertainty [3]. In her research, the author analyzes how young people form ways to overcome difficult circumstances and how these ways are influenced by socioeconomic factors and family support.

The works of S. D. Maksymenko (2020) and co-authors examine the choice of coping strategies by Ukrainian youth in the face of change and stress factors, in particular those related to instability and uncertainty in society [4]. The researchers draw attention to personal factors (locus of control, self-esteem) that determine the tendency to choose constructive or unique ways of responding. Other authors, in particular, O. A. Kirnos and V. M. Bortnik, in their studies on family and educational factors in the formation of coping, address the issue of uncertainty as one of the key stressors for young men [5]. Their research emphasizes the importance of support and clear "beacons" (expectations, goals, rules) from parents and teachers, which reduces maladjustment in the face of uncertainty.

Classic studies by Lazarus and Folkman laid the foundation for understanding coping behavior in situations of stress and uncertainty [2]. Although their first works were not aimed exclusively at a youth audience, their model of situation and resource assessment is directly applicable to youth research.

In more recent work, Folkman and colleagues propose the concept of meaning-focused coping, which is important in situations of prolonged or uncertain threat [6]. This approach is especially relevant for young men who are searching for meaning and identity.

Compas and colleagues have studied how adolescents and young men cope with uncertain life circumstances (e.g., chronic illness, family crises, or social disorganization) [7]. They have found that problem-oriented coping and developed self-regulation skills increase resilience to prolonged states of uncertainty.

In a number of articles, the authors (Zimmer-Gembeck & Skinner) examine the development of coping strategies in ontogeny and address young men who are faced with unpredictable changes (parental

divorce, school change, problems in their personal lives, etc.) [8]. According to their findings, the key role in constructive coping is played by the ability to reflect and realize one's own reactions to stressful events.

E. Frydenberg's research focuses on how young people choose strategies to overcome various problems, including those that arise in the context of an uncertain future (career search, changing social standards) [9]. The author emphasizes the importance of social support, especially from peers and mentors.

Some authors (e.g., E. Frydenberg, S. Hobfall) distinguish strategies by the degree of their "prosociality". Assertive behavior, search for social support, and cautious actions are considered constructive, while aggressive, antisocial, and unique behaviors are considered potentially destructive, which can worsen a person's condition or lead to new conflicts [9; 10].

A situation of uncertainty in psychology is a special condition or circumstances in which a person lacks clear information and clear criteria for making decisions and predicting future events. In such a situation, they lose their sense of control because they cannot assess the possible risks and results of their actions. This often leads to increased anxiety or even fear, as unknown factors become exaggerated. Subjective interpretations based on previous experience and available resources play an important role. As a result of uncertainty, human behavior can range from postponing decisions and freezing activity to searching for new approaches and creative solutions. Sometimes the lack of clarity leads to increased impulsivity or even aggressive reactions. At the same time, a certain level of uncertainty can stimulate the development of mental flexibility, increase stress resistance, and form adaptive ways of responding to difficult circumstances [5].

The choice of coping strategies depends on a number of interrelated factors, among which personal characteristics play a primary role. For example, people with an internal locus of control usually believe in their own influence on circumstances and choose active, problem-oriented strategies in the face of stress [2]. At the same time, people who tend to believe that external forces are determinative are more likely to resort to avoidance or passive response. Self-esteem is also important: people with high self-confidence tend to seek help and use assertive methods, while low self-esteem correlates with the risk of destructive or unique forms of response [10]. Researchers also emphasize the importance of emotional intelligence, as the ability to recognize and manage one's own emotions contributes to constructive coping [6]. The social environment is no less important. In families with a democratic parenting style, children learn the skills to discuss problems openly and find support from adults, which helps them develop pro-social, cooperative strategies [7]. Instead, an authoritarian or indifferent parenting style often leads to aggressive or unique behavior. In adolescence and young adulthood, the influence of peers becomes significant: if trust and tolerance prevail in the environment, a person is more likely to seek help, while an atmosphere of rivalry or distrust fuels impulsivity and conflict. Socio-economic conditions are also important, as instability or lack of resources increase anxiety and can "push" the choice of passive or aggressive responses.

The specifics of the stressful situation are also important: when a person feels in control of events, he or she tries to change the problem or actively seek a way out, but when the situation looks unpredictable, emotional forms of coping dominate [2]. Chronic or repetitive stressors provoke a gradual depletion of resources, which can lead to maladaptive patterns ranging from procrastination to aggressive behavior. In addition, intense negative emotions (intense fear, panic) can suppress rational analysis and "turn on" avoidance or impulsivity [11]. Cultural and gender characteristics also have an impact. In collectivist societies, people are more likely to seek support from family and community, while individualistic cultures encourage independent decisions and self-assertion [12]. In terms of gender, according to classical ideas, in Western culture, men usually demonstrate a more aggressive and avoidant behavior pattern, while women are more likely to seek emotional interaction. However, in modern society, these differences are not so stark, as gender-neutral values are becoming more widespread.

Ultimately, the choice of coping depends on age and life experience. In childhood and adolescence, coping strategies are often modeled by parents and peers; young men who have not yet developed a stable identity often combine impulsivity with avoidance. In adulthood, a wider range of skills is accumulated, and a change in priorities (family, professional growth) correlates with a shift to more thoughtful, adaptive forms of coping. In old age, if a person experiences limited resources, the importance of meaningful coping - rethinking life values and accepting inevitable changes - increases.

The choice of coping behavior is determined by a complex of factors, including personal qualities, family and social environment, characteristics of the stressful situation, as well as cultural, gender and age characteristics. Taking these aspects into account allows psychologists, educators, and social workers to more accurately assess the potential risks of destructive reactions and develop effective assistance and

correction programs aimed at strengthening adaptive strategies and rationalizing the use of available human resources.

In our study, we used S. Hobfall's methodology based on the Conservation of Resources Theory. According to this theory, a person experiences stress mainly when the resources he or she has (time, physical strength, money, social support, etc.) are at risk of being lost or are already being lost. In this case, they use various mechanisms to protect or restore these resources. One of the advantages of this methodology is that it considers stress not as a purely psychological phenomenon, but as a complex process of interaction between the individual and objective and subjective resources. This allows us to explain a wide range of reactions to stress, from open aggression or avoidance to seeking social support or assertive actions. Our study involved 120 young men living in Vinnytsia region aged 17 to 18 (Fig. 1). Unlike many other questionnaires, the Hobfall methodology covers nine different types of responses (assertiveness, seeking support, avoidance, aggressive actions, etc.) that reflect both constructive and destructive ways of solving problems.
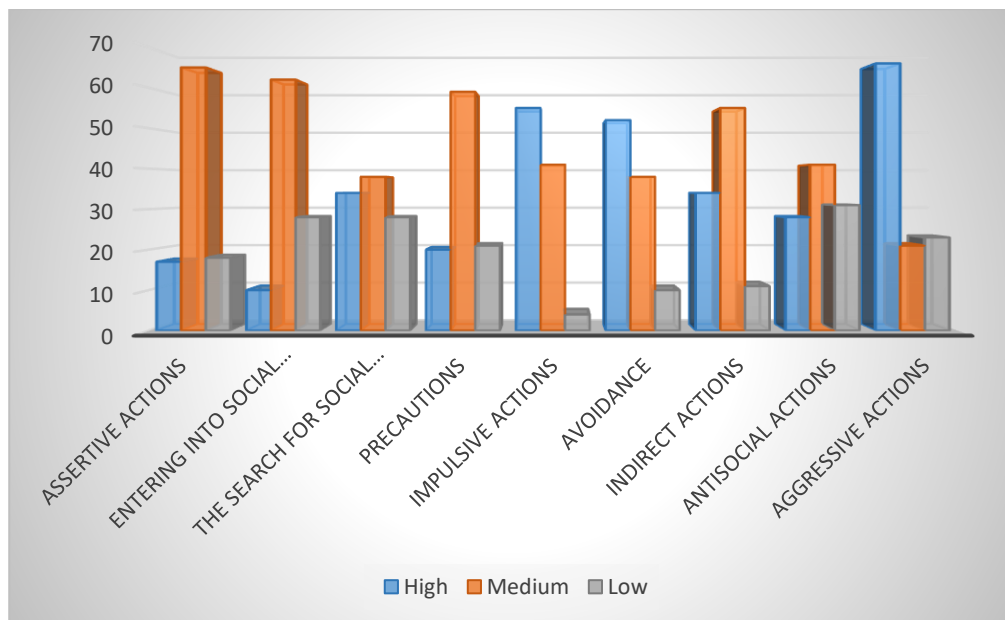
Figure 1. Distribution of the study results according to the Strategies for Coping with Stressful Situations (SACS) questionnaire by Stephen Hobfall in young men

The data presented here demonstrates the distribution of young men by nine coping strategies that were assessed by Hobfall's methodology, taking into account three levels of severity: high, medium and low.

As for assertive actions, 17% of young men have a high level of ability to defend their rights and interests without aggression: they calmly and reasonably express disagreement. The majority (65%) demonstrate an average level of assertiveness, they can generally "put themselves forward" in a discussion, but do not always do so consistently. Instead, 18% of respondents avoid outright confrontation, which sometimes prevents them from defending their own boundaries. Overall, the average level prevails, but about a fifth of young people need to further develop their confidence in communication**.**

Entering into social contact is characterized by the fact that only 10% of respondents are very active in seeking new acquaintances and are not afraid to enter an unknown social environment. The majority (62%) show moderate openness to communication, although in unfamiliar or stressful situations their activity may decrease. Almost a third (28%) tend to keep to themselves and not expand their social circle, which may be due to social restraint or distrust. Thus, the majority of young men do not have significant barriers to contact, but a significant number (28%) still lack social confidence.

The search for social support was high among 34% of participants, who willingly seek advice and help from their families and teachers. Another 38% usually rely on their own strength, but do not rule out the possibility of getting help in case of difficulties. The rest (28%) avoid asking for support, most likely

due to distrust, a desire to appear independent, or a lack of communication skills. Overall, the demand for support is fairly evenly distributed, but one in three people risk isolation in critical circumstances.

Cautious actions are characteristic of 20% of young men who analyze risks quite thoroughly, but sometimes can take too long to make a decision. The average, more balanced position is held by 59% of respondents who combine prudence with moderate spontaneity. At the same time, 21% are careless about consequences and can act impulsively. Thus, a constructive "golden mean" prevails, but there are some young men who should pay attention to either excessive caution or underestimation of potential risks.

Impulsive actions are one of the most noticeable behavioral traits, as 55% of respondents are prone to emotional outbursts without deeply predicting the consequences. Another 41% can refrain from impulsiveness, but severe stress or conflict can throw them off balance. Only 4% always act in a balanced manner and hardly ever give in to sudden emotions. Since high impulsivity is generally typical for young men, it is worth strengthening their self-control skills.

Avoidance of the problem is demonstrated by 52% of the participants: they would rather postpone or ignore difficult situations than try to solve them. One-third of the group (38%) chooses this behavior only in certain cases, and 10% do not actually resort to avoidance and try to act without delay. However, the prevalence (more than half) of passive "retreat" from difficulties can lead to the accumulation of unfinished or conflicting issues, so it is necessary to develop skills of constructive conflict resolution.

Indirect actions (change of activity, sublimation, distraction) are highly effective for 34% of respondents, 45% use them from time to time, and 21% hardly use such methods. For the majority (79%), such "workaround" coping plays a significant role, which often helps to reduce tension. At the same time, it is important not to limit oneself to these strategies in order to avoid a complete "retreat" from real problems.

Antisocial actions are quite pronounced in 28% of participants, who may conflict with others, ignore rules, or resort to provocations. Four out of ten (41%) sometimes indulge in defiant behavior without making it dominant. Another 31% adhere to generally accepted norms and do not show negative actions. However, the presence of almost a third of young men with a high level of antisocial behavior indicates the need for additional preventive and corrective work.

Aggressive actions stand out the most unfavorably among the other scales: as many as 66% of respondents often react to stress or disagreement with physical or verbal aggression. About 21% are mostly restrained, but can "snap" at critical moments, and 23% rarely resort to aggression. The dominance of the aggressive model indicates an urgent need to develop constructive forms of self-assertion, including training in emotional regulation and positive communication skills.

Thus, the results reflect a combination of strategies that are quite typical for young people: the predominance of impulsive-aggressive reactions and a tendency to avoid along with a relatively moderate development of assertiveness and social interaction. To improve adaptation, it is advisable to pay special attention to strengthening self-control, forming skills for constructive conflict resolution, and expanding positive communication methods.

Conclusion. The study of stress coping strategies in adolescence demonstrates the importance of this topic for understanding the adaptation of young people in modern society. Analysis of scientific sources shows that during adolescence, life values and behavioral patterns are intensively formed, which affect the ability to effectively respond to high uncertainty and frequent changes in the social environment. Insufficient development of adaptation mechanisms often complicates the perception of stressful challenges, so the study of coping strategies is of particular importance. At the same time, family, peer support, and the presence of clear developmental "beacons" have a special influence, which reduce the risk of maladjustment and encourage constructive forms of response. Effective stress management in young people contributes to the development of psychological resilience and successful socialization, while a high level of uncertainty can serve as an impetus for strengthening mental flexibility and creative approaches.

The results obtained confirm the significance of the theory of resource conservation for understanding coping strategies in young men who are in a situation of loss or threat of vital resources. The visual distribution of indicators by the studied method indicates the predominance of a number of destructive coping behavioral patterns (aggressiveness, impulsivity, avoidance), which indicates insufficient self-regulation and the need for special preventive work. At the same time, the presence of a significant group of young men with an average or high level of assertiveness and a tendency to seek social support demonstrates a readiness for constructive interaction and problem solving. An important task is to develop skills that help preserve and restore resources: from the ability to openly talk about difficulties to constructive conflict resolution. Teaching self-control techniques, stimulating social contact, and correcting

aggressive-antisocial manifestations should become priority areas of psychological assistance. Such an approach will make it possible to mitigate situations of resource shortage and support the adaptation of young people in the face of modern challenges.

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