

STRESS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PROTECTION

I.M. Khakimova

Major

Chief psychologist of the IPK of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Annotation: This article discusses a topic that is relevant today - the concepts of stress and psychological defense mechanisms. To help people in a state of anxiety, fear, anxiety. This is exactly the kind of help that can be provided by psychological protection as a special form of coping behavior. The author pays attention to such issues as: the structure of psychological defense, its main mechanisms and functions, the relationship between psychological defense and personality, the formation of psychological defense, the role and place of psychological defense in professional activity.

Keywords: Stress, psychological defense, defense mechanisms, stressors, conscious stereotypes, archetypal defenses, unconscious defenses

The concept of stress as tension in the body was introduced by G. Selye. With the help of a general reaction, the body tries to adapt to changed external or internal conditions. The stress reaction occurs in several stages and can result in complete adaptation, illness, and even death.

The stress response is caused by a variety of external and internal environmental factors, and all organs and systems of the body take part in overcoming stress. Stress is accompanied by pronounced mental tension, so a person consciously, with the help of coping mechanisms, or unconsciously, with the help of psychological defensive reactions, tries to cope with a stressful situation. Knowledge of coping strategies allows a person to overcome stressful situations relatively painlessly. If a person tries to behave as usual in a stressful situation, does not react in socially acceptable ways to negative emotions due to stress, then psychosomatic reactions and psychosomatic diseases may develop (“psyche” - soul, “soma” - body), mental problems will manifest themselves in bodily disorders and diseases. In this article we will look at overcoming stress through psychological protection.

Is psychological defense a distortion of reality or the preservation of one’s “I”?

This is a system of mechanisms that protect us from negative experiences, mental pain, anxiety and many other negative factors that threaten the integrity of the individual. If it were not for psychological defenses, we would constantly be under severe stress, cry or scream for any reason, throw ourselves at others, commit impulsive acts, etc. - in a word, they would see life in black. For the first time, the Austrian psychologist, psychiatrist and founder of psychoanalysis, S. Freud, began to study psychological defenses. He interpreted the work of the defense system as a way of resolving the confrontation between unconscious drives and social norms (demands, prohibitions, etc.).

There are three lines of psychological defense:

- conscious stereotypes (help us exist in society);
- archetypal defenses (protect society, group, collective through the individual);
- unconscious defenses (protect our psyche from wear and tear).

Perceived stereotypes

These stereotypes are formed in our minds from early childhood, when we internalize social norms and rules. At first, these are the norms of your family: wash your hands before eating; eat with a spoon or fork, not with your hands; Draw in an album, not on the refrigerator. After some time, the child learns the norms of other communities: how to behave in kindergarten, at school, on the street, at a party, etc. All this allows us to avoid ostracism, and as a result the society in which we exist accepts us.

Archetypal protections

This is a series of behavioral models that help to overcome difficulties and not get confused in extreme situations that arise in the life of a group, community, colleagues, friends, loved ones, etc. It is believed that these protections have been formed over thousands of years, and since the person has remained an element of the community, the protections continue to function. You can observe subconscious behavior patterns in yourself. For example, your friend quarreled with his parents, and you automatically begin to help him - listen, console, give advice. Many are willing to make self-sacrifice for the well-being of others. And it's all about the subconscious, which dictates to us a program for protecting a small or large society.

Unconscious defenses

Everyone hears what they want to hear .

The essence of unconscious defense is that our psyche, without distortion, perceives only information that cannot traumatize it. If any fact, event, actions or words of a person threaten our peace of mind, cause anxiety or tension, unconscious defense immediately turns on. As a result, we do not perceive incoming information at all or perceive it in a distorted form. For example, some mothers defend their children: "He's not a bully, he just had a difficult childhood." Or the offender's relatives: "He's not a criminal, he's just temperamental." This is how the denial mechanism works: "You all don't understand me." As a result, a person artificially restores his mental balance, protects himself from fears, and reduces internal tension. Unfortunately, this trick of consciousness helps only for a while. An alcoholic remains an alcoholic, and a criminal remains a criminal. After some time, mental balance needs to be restored.

The benefits and harms of unconscious defenses

Benefit.

- **help preserve the integrity of the individual and protect it from disintegration, especially when there are conflicting desires. It is known that there are many different "I"s in a person (one "I" wants one thing, another – another, a third – a third). Psychological defenses are needed to bring all these "I" together and allow them to "agree";**

- help to resist diseases, believe in one's strength, reassure that everything will be fine, everything will be restored;
- prevent disorganization of mental activity and behavior. For example, in a moment of sudden stress, disbelief in everything that is happening saves consciousness from destruction;
- protect against negative qualities that a person does not possess, but mistakenly admits to himself. For example, it seems to a person that he is overly demanding of others, although in reality he is not. For the purpose of protection, he may begin to convince himself that overly demanding people are more successful in business, have excellent insight and are demanding of themselves. Thus, defenses save a person from mythical shortcomings and reduce self-blame;
- restore self-esteem, help to accept a painful situation without lowering self-esteem: "Well, so be it. I'm still better than them," "These people are unworthy of me," etc.;
- help maintain social approval. For example, a person did something wrong and, knowing this, turns the situation around: "It's not me who is to blame, but other people/fate/circumstances", "I'm not like that - life is like that";

- preserve relationships between people. For example, an employee does not like that his colleague gossips all the time and tries to involve him in conversation. He prefers not to bring the situation to a conflict and, instead of expressing everything, pretends to be uncommunicative.
 - Harm to the psyche and body.
 - do not change the order of things, but only relieve anxiety and inconvenience for a while;
 - They distort reality and do not allow us to evaluate it normally. This is especially true when evaluating loved ones. For example, they say that “love is blind.” If a loved one suddenly commits a terrible act, we refuse to believe it, blame ourselves for not immediately understanding what kind of person he is, or rush to defend the offender;
 - crowd out facts and events from consciousness. This temporarily calms, but the fear remains driven into the subconscious and from there affects the person for a long time;
 - people are confused. For example, instead of admitting to themselves a hostile attitude towards their child, understanding the causes of this problem and working through it, a parent hides behind overprotection and intrusiveness towards their child, which further complicates the relationship.
- “If none of this helps, and emotions take over, you should enlist the help of a specialist. A psychologist will be able to establish the reasons for such a reaction, and will also help you choose options for coping with nervous breakdowns that arise.

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