



Prokofyeva N. V.

Moral and Ethical Reflection as a Factor of Harmonious Personal Development

The article deals with the study of the phenomenon of moral and ethical reflection as the integrated characteristic of personality reflecting the value and sense guidelines which influence features of personal development. The author argues the urgency of this problem in the context of deficiencies of a modern social structure and the necessity of the increase of the modern adult's active, responsible, autonomous position in choosing the internal value and sense content and self-realization questions. In the empirical part of the article they discuss results of the final stage of dissertation research and outline prospects of the development of further scientific work.

Key words: *personal development, moral and ethical reflection, responsibility, autonomy, consciousness, self-realization.*

In modern science the problem of harmonious personal development finds a special urgency taking a central place in theoretical and experimental studies of post-nonclassical psychology which is based on concepts of A. Adler, V. Frankl, L. I. Antsyferova, E. I. Golovakha, A. A. Kronik, etc. (spatio-temporal characteristics of life); Ch. Buhler and K. A. Abulkhanova (dynamic aspects of the person's life); B. S. Bratus, A. A. Derkach, N. V. Kozlov, E. I. Stepanov, etc. (acmeological approach); A. Maslow, V. Frankl, D. A. Leontyev, etc. (sense of life orientations of personality); V. I. Slobodchikov, A. G. Asmolov, V. P. Zinchenko, V. I. Kabrin, etc. (the anthro-oriented approach); V. E. Klochko, E. V. Galazhinsky (the theory of psychological systems).

Personal development is as long as the person's life and it can be presented as the process of mosaicing which reflects the individual model of the world, both internal, and external. The harmony of epy personal development is determined by a number of psychological factors to which, undoubtedly, they attribute value and sense filling of the person, that we name spirituality or a moral and ethical level of development. Growing up, the person finds internal value and sense coordinates and, proceeding from them, makes certain choices and acts which form him/her as personality and define his/her course of life. The problem is - how much really he/she reflexes the system of values and sensibly constructs his/her life.



Realities of our "complicated" time, time of high speeds and technologies dictate the necessity of the transfer moral and ethical categories from the area of ideal into a real field of consciousness of each person [3]. This circumstance will help the person to live an eventful, conscious life and to be responsible for own choices and preferences, gradually developing morally and ethically and truly comprehending own sense of life. "At a stage of mastering of ethical standards through the system of personal values a person, using all mechanisms of sense generation, comes to "supposing" of meanings when the sense of the comprehended content reveals itself through a special existential act in which the subject by his/her conscious and responsible decision establishes the importance of something in own life" [1, p. 49].

Representatives of philosophical and psychological science attribute external manifestations of spirituality to the person's ability to creative, public work, empathy (the person's supreme spiritual values which help him/her to be in constructive dialogue with the environment), ability to self-reflection (that makes it possible to realize and purposefully reach embodiment of own senses and values). These aspects lead the person to harmony, happiness, to the highest self: "individuation" (K. Jung), "social usefulness" (A. Adler), "ego-identity" formation (E. Erikson), "self-actualization" (A. Maslow), "realization of internal essence" (Ch. Buhler), "maturity and self-development" (G. Allport), "sense implementation" (V. Frankl).

It must be admitted that psychologists' understanding the importance and necessity of the process of moral and ethical formation for the general context of harmonious personal development still is not enough for answering the question concerning the reasons that lead the modern person to volitional impotence (inability to form life space from the point of view of personal values and priorities), total dissatisfaction, uncertainty in the future, and, the most terrible, loss of the sense of being.

Instability of a social situation, ideological and existential vacuum, double standards, inability of the state to offer the citizens the system of the moral and ethical values adequate to modern social structure and the person's needs, weakening of the role of the state and society in formation and education of spiritual and moral and ethical bases have led to the person's disorientation, increase of depressive moods and moral and ethical degradation. At the same time "qualitative transformations of society, its ideals, norms and values inevitably lead to basic rearrangement of its components" [6]. And certainly, such system does not motivate the person to search of individual ways of spiritual development, ability to moral and ethical autonomy, possibility to plan and carry out healthy personal development.

Scientists "sound the alarm" thinking that this problem is very urgent. And still, in spite of the fact that the modern adult has a decrease in comprehension and value of life, degree of satisfaction in self and life, there are few works devoted to research to this subject matter. Researches are generally carried out within the limits of children's and youthful age.



Both science and society really need a new psychological understanding of this subject matter.

The concept of personal development (personal growth) is closely connected with such categories as self-implementation, self-improvement, self-realization, self-actualization; it is a complex process of continuous development and self-improvement. "If a person has more interests... and stimuli to live – sense filling of life, possibility to analyze, possibility to synthesize – to see relations of events and phenomena, understanding of people and self, possibility to forgive, internal freedom and independence, the responsibility assumed voluntarily, love of the world, people and self, then the person grows personally. Sincerely and spiritually are synonyms" [2].

The concept of reflection has special importance in research of personal formation in the context of moral and ethical development of personality; this concept owing to its complexity and multilevel theoretical importance may be attributed to a system generating personal category.

The relevance of our research consists in understanding of the moral and ethical reflection as an integrated characteristic of personality reflecting value and sense orientation, which defines harmonious personal development; obvious necessity of increase of the person's active role in independent definition of a vector of personal development, and the necessity of moral and ethical definiteness and autonomy for this purpose.

The purpose of our research is to study features of the moral and ethical reflection of the modern adult and its interrelation with the valuable and sense sphere of personality and self-realization.

The research object is the modern adult's psychology.

The research subject is studying of the moral and ethical reflection, as a factor defining personal development of the modern adult.

Proceeding from the research purpose we have designated the following **experimental aims**.

1. Creation of the experimental study logic according to the purposes, theoretical and methodological problems of our work.
2. Development of two questionnaires for definition of the level and features of the moral and ethical reflection of the modern adult.
3. Testing of the developed questionnaires.
4. Selection of techniques for research of the person's value and sense sphere and features of his/her self-realization.
5. Investigation features of interrelation of the level of the modern adult's moral and ethical reflection with the value and sense sphere of personality and self-realization.
6. Development of the program of training for creation of the developing environment focused on increase of the level of general personal and moral and ethical consciousness.



Hypotheses of our research

1. The moral and ethical reflection is an essential factor defining the specificity of the modern adult's personal development.
2. There is an interrelation between the level of a moral and ethical reflection of personality and the level of development of the valuable and sense sphere, general personal consciousness (reflection), responsibility, ability to self-realization, and the person's desirable value relations to life, self, people (that it is possible to name the general level of moral and ethical good breeding).

There is an opportunity to develop the program for increase of the level of the general personal and moral and ethical consciousness that will make it possible to lower the level of personal disorientation, will raise the level of satisfaction with life, motivate the person to search of individual ways of spiritual development, ability to moral and ethical autonomy, opportunity to plan and carry out healthy personal development.

At the **first stage** of experimental study we have developed two questionnaires for studying of the level of the moral and ethical reflection of respondents. Initially 200 persons took part in questioning: 110 men and 90 women at the age from 35 to 63 years. For further participation in the experiment we have selected 170 people: 100 men and 70 women.

Having analyzed the generalized indices by two questionnaires we have created two experimental groups; each of them included 60 persons: group 1 – respondents with a low level of the moral and ethical reflection, group 2 – respondents with a high level of the moral and ethical reflection.

At the **second stage** of the experimental research we have created the test battery for research of the value and sense sphere of personality and features of self-realization of respondents of two experimental groups on the following parameters: **urgency of the need for self-realization** (the "Pair comparisons" technique of urgency of basic needs in I.A. Akindinova's modification); the **degree of realization of the need for self-development** ("Diagnostics of realization of the need for self-development"); **steadiness of desirable value relations to life, people, self** (S.M. Petrova's "Proverbs" test); **sense of life orientations** – consciousness (existence of life purposes), interest in the life process (eventfulness of life), satisfaction with life, orientation of the responsibility locus (D. A. Leontyev's "Test of sense of life orientations"); **general level of reflexivity** (A. V. Karpov's "Definition of a level of development of reflexivity").

At the **third stage** for comparison of two experimental groups by the degree of discernibility of the above described parameters we have carried out the correlation analysis by means of Mann-Whitney's U-criterion.

At the **fourth stage** by means of Spearman rank correlation coefficient we have carried out the statistical analysis of correlation between the results obtained by all techniques of our experimental research.



The research results

The carried out research and the correlation analysis have made it possible to reveal reliable distinctions ($p < 0,01$) between respondents of group 1 and group 2 by all five techniques focused on research of the value and sense sphere and features of self-realization.

When comparing the results of groups by certain scales of the SLO technique we have received significant distinctions on scales 2 (interest in life process), 4 (confidence in own abilities to control own life), 5 (belief in possibilities to control life) ($p < 0,01$). By scales 1 (existence of life purposes) and 3 (satisfaction with life) distinctions are insignificant ($p > 0,05$).

In spite of the fact that by the "Proverbs" test the correlation ensures us to speak about the importance of distinction ($p < 0,01$) of the level of stability of the desirable value relations to life, people and self (the general level of the moral and ethical good breeding) between respondents of two experimental groups, we find it interesting to describe the obtained data by each of 15 scales of this technique.

Table 1

Aggregate figures by 15 scales of the "Proverbs" technique

No.	Scale	Group 1	Group 2
1	Spiritual relation to life	44	81
2	Insignificance of material welfare in life	43	58
3	Happy, good life	62	66
4	Optimistic relation to life	54	58
5	Resolute relation to life	56	58
6	Self-determination in life	49	58
7	Aspiration to achievements in life	70	66
8	Good attitude towards people	62	67
9	Collectivistic attitude towards people	51	47
10	Egocentric attitude towards people	60	60
11	Altruistic attitude towards people	57	61
12	Importance of friendship	44	76
13	Importance of learning	77	79
14	Importance of labour	53	79
15	Importance of observance of laws	45	74

We have obtained a considerable difference in results (group 2 > group 1) by scales 1 (spiritual relation to life), 12 (importance of friendship), 14 (importance of labour), 15 (importance of observance of laws).

We have obtained the insignificant difference in values (group 2 > group 1) by scales: 4 (optimistic relation to life), 5 (resolute relation to life), 10 (egocentric attitude towards people), 11 (altruistic attitude towards people).



By scales 7 (aspiration to achievements in life), 9 (collectivistic attitude towards people) we state the insignificant difference in values (group 1 > group 2).

The results of the comparative analysis which we have carried out by means of Spearman rank correlation coefficient are reflected in tab. 2; these data reveal the existence of positive correlation between techniques.

Table 2

Correlations between techniques

	Questionnaire No.1, No. 2 (aggregate indices)	Proverbs	SLO	Need for self-realization	Realization of the need for self-development	Reflection
Questionnaire No.1, No. 2 (aggregate indices)		0,404	0,314	0,582	0,465	0,560
Proverbs	0,001		0,155	0,332	0,230	0,480
SLO	0,001	0,1		0,239	0,233	0,177
Need for self-realization	0,001	0,001	0,01		0,346	0,299
Realization of the need for self-development	0,001	0,05	0,05	0,001		0,467
Reflection	0,001	0,001	0,1	0,001	0,001	

Comment: the result of comparison of methods is on crossing of a line of one method and a column of another. The value of correlation is above the diagonal line, the value of the probability of mistake is below the diagonal line.

Thus, the aggregate indices by the questionnaire No. 1 and the questionnaire No. 2 and results by techniques "Pair comparisons" (urgency of the need for self-realization) and "Diagnostics of realization of the need for self-development" have obtained a positive correlation with all techniques of our experiment.



The results of the SLO test have had positive correlations with techniques: the aggregate indices by the questionnaire No. 1 and the questionnaire No. 2, "Pair comparisons", "Diagnostics of realization of the need for self-development", and negative correlations with the "Proverb" technique and "Definition of a level of development of reflexivity".

Let's generalize the obtained data. Respondents with a high level of a moral and ethical reflection (group 2) unlike respondents of group 1 have shown higher rates in the following parameters: value and sense filling of life as a whole (in particular, the interest in life process, internal locus of control (possibility to assume the responsibility for own life), the general level of moral and ethical good breeding); self-reflection; need for self-realization; realization of the need for self-development. We have established that the level of the moral and ethical reflection correlates with indices of the person's value and sense sphere, the general level of personal reflexivity, desire for self-realization and ability to self-development.

Further we plan to develop the program of training for increase of the level of the general personal and moral-ethical consciousness and autonomy that will enable the person to plan and carry out healthy personal development effectively.

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