

ПСИХОЛОГІЧНІ АСПЕКТИ СУСПІЛЬНИХ КРИЗ І НАДЗВИЧАЙНИХ СИТУАЦІЙ

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THE PROBLEM OF PSYCHOLOGICAL HELP TO A PERSON IN THE FACE OF MODERN CHALLENGES Spring 2020 Lessons

The problem of psychological help to a person in the context of modern challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, is considered from the point of view of compliance of this help's content to the public demand for it. The article aims to substantiate the need for a specific revision of traditional targets and traditional practices of psychological care due to the challenges that arise in the modern world. Reconstruction of the public request for psychological help is carried out according to the mass surveys conducted under the author's leadership: a nationwide representative study, which covered 1202 people aged from 18 y.o. and older, and an online survey conducted directly during the spring lockdown 2020, which involved 565 respondents. The analysis also includes data from other studies conducted during this period and following its «hot tracks.» The article emphasizes that Ukrainian psychologists have shown significant professional activity since the corona crisis. Still, the effectiveness of their efforts was reduced by the fact that these efforts were exposed to barriers of both objective and subjective terms. In the psychological community, the default model of a person in a lockdown is focused on the psychological help implementation in the traditional content field of the individual (personality-oriented), marital, and family counseling. This model determined the main trend of psychologists' counseling activity in media and social networks, but, according to the obtained data, it did not fully meet the realities of life of Ukrainian citizens, the challenges of the information environment in which they were, and therefore their real needs. It is argued that global cataclysms such as the COVID-19 pandemic radically change the nature and principles of the psychologist's practical work, as they sharply shift the focus of their counseling activity from the usual axial to the retial communication systems. It is shown that the semantic field of psychological counseling in the conditions of modern challenges should be supplemented by at least two components – media-psychological and psychological-organizational. The need to launch a targeted state program to monitor mass sentiment and the psycho-emotional state of society is substantiated. The study's practical significance is to use its results and conclusions to improve psychological assistance to the population. Prospects for further development of the problem are seen in the definition of supervisory and technological prerequisites for expanding the content field of psychological counseling.

Keywords: corona crisis; psychological help; public request; semantic field of psychological counseling; information environment; axial and retial communication systems; media-psychological and psychological-organizational components of psychological counseling.

ПРОБЛЕМА ПСИХОЛОГІЧНОЇ ДОПОМОГИ ЛЮДИНІ В УМОВАХ СУЧАСНИХ ВИКЛИКІВ Уроки періоду весни 2020 року

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Проблема психологічної допомоги людині в умовах сучасних викликів, прикладом яких є пандемія COVID-19, розглядається під кутом зору відповідності змісту цієї допомоги суспільному запитові на неї. Метою статті є обґрунтування потреби певного перегляду традиційних мішеней і традиційних практик психологічної допомоги з огляду на виклики, що постають у сучасному світі. Реконструювання суспільного запиту на психологічну допомогу здійснюється за даними проведених під керівництвом автора масових опитувань: репрезентативного загальнонаціонального, яким було охоплено 1202 особи віком від 18 років і старше, та проведеного безпосередньо в період весняного локдауну 2020 р. онлайн-опитування, у якому взяли участь 565 респондентів. До аналізу залучаються також дані інших досліджень, що проходили в цей період та по його «гарячих слідах». У статті наголошено, що українські психологи від самого початку коронакризи виявляли значну професійну активність, однак результативність їхніх зусиль знижувало те, що ці зусилля наражалися на бар'єри як об'єктивного, так і суб'єктивного плану. У психологічному співтоваристві утвердилася за промовчанням модель людини, що перебуває в умовах локдауну, зорієнтована на здійснення психологічної допомоги в традиційному змістовому полі індивідуального (особистісно спрямованого), подружнього та сімейного консультування. Така модель визначала основний тренд консультативної активності психологів у засобах масової інформації та соціальних мережах, проте вона, як свідчать отримані дані, не цілком відповідала реаліям життя громадян України, викликам інформаційного середовища, у якому вони перебували, і отже, їхнім реальним потребам. Автор обстоює думку про те, що глобальні катаклізми на кшталт пандемії COVID-19 докорінно змінюють характер і самі засади практичної роботи психолога, оскільки різко зміщують фокус його консультативної активності зі звичних для нього аксіальних у ретяльні системи комунікації. Показано, що змістове поле психологічного консультування в умовах сучасних викликів має бути доповнене щонайменше двома складовими – медіапсихологічною і психолого-організаційною. Обґрунтовано потребу започаткування цільової державної програми відстеження масових настроїв та психоемоційного стану суспільства. Практична значущість дослідження полягає у використанні його результатів та зроблених висновків для вдосконалення психологічної допомоги населенню. Перспективи подальшого розроблення проблеми вбачаються у визначенні супервізійних і технологічних передумов розширення змістового поля психологічного консультування.

Ключові слова: коронакриза; психологічна допомога; суспільний запит; змістове поле психологічного консультування; інформаційне середовище; аксіальні та ретяльні системи комунікації; медіапсихологічна та психолого-організаційна складові психологічного консультування.

Statement of the problem. There is no doubt that the Coronavirus crisis that humanity is currently experiencing has medical, socio-economic, political, and psychological components. Therefore, from the very beginning, the COVID-19 pandemic has needed a response from the professional psychological community. And such a response took place. It should be emphasized that the majority of Ukrainian psychologists did not stay away from the processes that have changed social life, trying to respond adequately to the public inquiry regarding the solution of the

psychological problems caused by the pandemic and quarantine measures. This is evidenced in particular by the activity of the Ukrainian community of professional psychologists in an online format (Kovalenko, 2021; Naydonova, 2020; Naydonova, & Diatel, 2020; Slyusarevskyy, 2020a; Slyusarevskyy et al., 2020).

However, it should be noted that their efforts faced obstacles that reduced the effectiveness of these efforts. Such barriers were both objective (mandatory quarantine requirements) and subjective. The latter include the non-articulation of the public request for psychological expertise, psychological recommendations, and services by those institutions, first of all, public authorities, which are supposed to articulate this request.

In a radio broadcast, the former Minister of Health Protection of Ukraine, Vasyl Knyazevych, said that the initial reaction of public authorities to the pandemic was a step of despair. It is difficult to disagree with this. Due to the neglect of the medical sector, there were no resources (unfortunately, we should note a catastrophic lack of resources today) to help people with severe coronavirus disease and test the population to the appropriate extent. Therefore, in the spring of 2020, instead of establishing testing and ensuring strict compliance with all citizens' epidemiological security measures, as it was in South Korea (Siruk, 2020), the Ukrainian government immediately introduced unprecedented quarantine that led to the complete closure of small and medium-sized businesses, cessation of vital transport links, closure of all educational and cultural institutions, and even recreation parks. By resorting to such «steps of despair,» statesmen simply forgot about psychologists. However, their professional advice could help, if not to refrain from some overly strict quarantine measures, then at least to provide them with proper informational and psychological support and, thus, to prevent deterioration of social well-being, as well as to predict the negative psychological consequences of the quarantine measures and to develop tools to mitigate these consequences.

The non-involvement of psychologists was explained not only by the confusion of public authorities under conditions of a pandemic threat but also by the lack of state experience in systematic involvement of the representatives of psychological science in the development and scientific support of public administration decisions. The Ukrainian statesmen are not accustomed to turning to psychologists for many reasons, such as the low level of psychological culture of the population and, consequently, government officials; inherited identification of psychology with psychiatry since Soviet times; ignorance of the range of its real interests and potential opportunities; as well as insufficient institutionalization of psychology as a scientific field and a sphere of providing relevant services to legal entities and individuals.

The negative role is defined, in particular, by the encroachment of the Ministry of Healthcare of Ukraine on the monopolization of the sphere of psychological assistance to the population, which is not provided with adequate professional resources. This encroachment, coupled with a stubborn reluctance to establish partnerships with the psychological research institutions¹ independent of the Ministry of Healthcare, lead to a de facto one-sided, narrowly medical («psychiatric») interpretation of psychological issues, as evidenced by the Concept of Mental Health Development in Ukraine for the period up to 2030, approved by Government Resolution № 1018-r on December 27, 2017 (<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1018-2017-p#n8>).

Lacking an adequate understanding of the possibilities of psychological science and psychological practice, the Ministry of Healthcare of Ukraine, of course, did not feel the need to consult with psychologists about their actions during quarantine and, moreover, could not convey an understanding of such needs to the President, Parliament, and Government. Psychology was mentioned only by the then chief sanitary doctor of Ukraine, and now the Minister of Healthcare of Ukraine Viktor Liashko, who uttered a nasty remark that the recreation parks were closed to the visitors for psychological impact only, to put it simply, to scare people as much as possible. And it

¹ It is well-known that all scientific institutions of psychological profile in Ukraine are subordinate to the National Academy of Educational Sciences.

is only surprising that this remark was not «promoted» in all ways by the media, and it did not cause the public unrest that could be expected.

The army of thousands of school psychologists, who did not find a place in the online educational process, was not officially involved during the hard lockdown. Again, they were simply forgotten in the spring of 2020.

The effectiveness of the efforts of the psychological community was also negatively affected by the lack of a system aimed at monitoring mass sentiment and the psycho-emotional state of society. Of course, it was challenging to establish this monitoring in quarantine. Still, there is no doubt that if it was carried out in the «pre-quarantine» times, then, probably, the acceptable forms of its modification would be found. Under these conditions, the counseling help that psychologists tried to provide to people on a volunteer basis on social networks or in the mass media was deprived of a diagnostic foundation. Therefore, they were forced to outline the content of their recommendations based on their hypothetical ideas about the range of advice a person in quarantine needed and their repertoire of psychological care techniques. Of course, this did not apply to cases where the potential beneficiary themselves reported their problems on the Internet. Still, at the same time, such isolated «SOS signals» could lead to false generalizations. For example, some colleagues even stated that society was experiencing a personal crisis.

We should not lose sight of the fact that psychologists themselves belonged to the category of citizens who were most «lucky» in terms of both the duty and the ability to comply with quarantine restrictions. Those who continued working in their institutions (most of them) worked as a rule remotely, received the same salary as before the lockdown, and could usually afford to leave home exceptionally rarely. Such isolation from the direct contacts with the outside world influenced to some extent the perception of psychologists about the needs of the average Ukrainian in the quarantine, sometimes prompting the extrapolation of their mental states to potential consumers of psychological recommendations.

The mentioned factors contributed to the establishment among the professional psychologists of a specific model of a person who needed their help due to quarantine restrictions. This default model was based on the idea that after the announcement of the lockdown, citizens (the vast majority, if not all) felt confused and helpless: went painfully through almost complete isolation; suffered from forced inaction; reworked all the household chores, and did not know what else to do, thought about the threat of coronavirus infection only; and, if they had a family, vented their anger caused by such thoughts on their relatives. Therefore, based on this model, the main targets of psychological help should be stressful personal disorders and interpersonal relationships in the family (between spouses, parents, and children) complicated or damaged by social isolation. Thus, psychological assistance should be provided within the traditional individual (personality-oriented), marriage, and family counseling.

This model of a person in quarantine conditions was mostly used by psychologists, who were invited by both television and radio programs on coronavirus issues. They advised on: how to cope with stress, how to deal with excess free time, how to build relationships in the family under lockdown conditions, how to avoid family conflicts and «extinguish» them in time (however, it happened that they postulated the inevitability of disputes advising how to quarrel «correctly» and stating other dubious maxims). Issues such as better time planning for people who continued to work remotely, workplace equipping, dividing the workload between work and family responsibilities, caring for children, etc., were raised only occasionally. These practically significant issues were obviously outside psychologists' primary trend of counseling activity in the media space.

So, the question is: was such a trend justified? In our opinion, not entirely, which prompted the writing of this (admittedly debatable) article.

Analysis of recent studies and publications. The issue of corona-crisis is increasingly coming into the field of research of Ukrainian and foreign psychologists. However, today, most publications are of a research nature rather than on the practical problems of a psychologist's work in the context of a coronavirus pandemic. Among the works of the research plan, a monograph

authored by T. Tytarenko highlights the results of the author's study of the personality texture of pandemic everyday life (Tytarenko, 2020). The other example is the longitudinal study of the dynamics of emotional states of the population started by the American scientist E. Peters (see Cornwall, 2020b). It is also worth mentioning the publications of the British psychologists on the psychological impact of quarantine measures of varying severity; individual characteristics of persons quarantined; quarantine duration and its psychological consequences (Brooks et al., 2020); Chinese researchers' investigation of the coping strategies that Chinese students at home and abroad preferred in times of corona crisis with indicators of their psychological well-being and post-traumatic stress (Tszykhan, & Syao Gan, 2021); empirical data on personality traits that contributed to successful adaptation to the stressful situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic obtained by M. Yegorova and co-authors (Yegorova et al., 2020), etc. A particular idea of the socio-psychological issues of the corona crisis is provided by the survey results obtained among professional psychologists by the Institute of Psychology of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Ushakov et al., 2020; Yurevich et al., 2020).

One of the main areas of research conducted by psychologists has become the peculiarities of human consumption of information about the coronavirus. Here we can refer to the study of E. Peters that aimed to identify the sources of «coronavirus» information, which were most often referred to and most trusted by the respondents (see Cornwall, 2020b). Under the guidance of T. Martsinkovskaya, the ways of obtaining information about COVID-19, the level of trust in it, and the peculiarities of behavior in virtual and real spaces related to changes in the time perspective of people of different ages were studied (Martsinkovskaya, 2020). However, it should be noted that, in general, the study of informational aspects of the pandemic by psychologists is not much different from the corresponding sociological research. This applies in particular to the study of information queries of users of Internet search engines with the word «coronavirus» carried out by the Russian Institute of Psychology (Zhuravlev & Kitova, 2020). The publication of their results is accompanied by rather arbitrary psychological interpretations, which, of course, does not deprive these results of some practical interest.

Peculiarities of financial behavior of the population in a situation of COVID-19 pandemic are also actively studied. For example, the behavioral strategies of entrepreneurs trying to keep their businesses going in various economic sectors and coping strategies of the unemployed, whose number is multiplying in all countries, are analyzed (Cornwall, 2020a). But such studies are conducted mainly by the representatives of the other socio-humanitarian disciplines, including management specialists, and not by psychologists.

The publications that discuss specific issues of psychological assistance to the individuals in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic are less frequent. Mostly, these are materials of mass events at which psychologists exchange practical work experience under these conditions. An example of such publications is an electronic collection prepared by us (Slyusarevskyy et al., 2020). Turning to the articles and theses of the collection, we can see that the problems of helping the population, as a rule, are considered by psychologists, so to speak, in the microsocioal dimension. These are the traditional areas of its provision, such as helping a person to master unpleasant emotional states; maintaining their intellectual and physical tone; overcoming fear of illness and obsessive-compulsive disorder; preventing complications of relationships with relatives in self-isolation; ways to reconcile; reducing the level of anxiety in the child, etc.

Against this background, the publications of L. Naydonova and her colleagues stand out. In them, psychological assistance is de facto associated with media education. According to the scientists, media education under quarantine conditions should prepare children and adults for healthy and socially responsible interaction with the information space, which involves the formation of instrumental skills of media literacy (such as identifying reliable sources of information, recognizing fakes, verifying facts, etc.) and gaining the ability to manage own media practices consciously (Naydonova, 2020; Naydonova, & Diatel, 2020; Naydonova, Diatel, & Chaplinska, 2020). Such issues are partly raised in the other publications (Коваленко, 2021). This immediately introduces the problem of psychological help in a much broader social context.

However, it is generally considered within the primary trend of counseling activity of psychologists, which was discussed. The problem of matching the content of psychological assistance to albeit vague, implicit, but still available public demand is not raised at all. Therefore, without questioning the value of the experience gained by the psychological community during the lockdown, we will refrain from further analysis of the publications dedicated to it. We do not see the need for this analysis because the purpose of our article goes beyond the outlined field.

We see **the article's goal** in substantiating the need for a particular revision of traditional targets and traditional practices of psychological assistance through the lens of the challenges of the contemporary world. As it is clear from the subtitle of the article, the realization of this goal will be carried out on the example of the initial period of the corona crisis, which, in our opinion, is a concentrated expression or at least a vivid illustration of the challenges in the modern world.

The statement of the main research material. First of all, let's try to understand to what extent the model mentioned above of a person under quarantine conditions corresponded to the factual circumstances of an average Ukrainian's life and, consequently, to their actual needs. The results of mass polls and other surveys conducted during the spring lockdown of 2020 will help us do this. We will use in particular the data of a nationwide survey conducted under our leadership by the Institute for Social and Political Psychology of the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine on September 5-14, 2020, that represented the adult population aged 18 and older and a Google online survey conducted by the Institute during lockdown (April 28 – May 29, 2020).

The latter, for reasons that are easy to understand, unfortunately, did not meet the requirements of representativeness (the sample was formed spontaneously, primarily women aged 30 to 60 with a university degree). Still, the convergence of many online results with data from the nationwide autumn survey gives grounds to consider these results as reflecting some significant realities of consciousness and behavior of Ukrainians at the initial stage of the corona crisis. Therefore, we will use them, of course, with some reservations.

But first of all, let's recreate, so to speak, the background degree of isolation of the population during the lockdown. According to a study by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology conducted from May 24 to June 4, 2020, by the CATI method (computer-assisted telephone interview based on a random selection of mobile phone numbers), 90% of citizens left home once or more a week. Of these, 37% left their homes several times a day, 22% – once a day, i.e., almost 60% were away from home at least once a day. And only 10% of respondents, primarily elderly, said they did not leave home for a week. And most of those who left their homes several times a day were among people aged 30-44 (46%) and 45-59 (44%) (Kyrychenko, 2020). As we can see, the isolation was not so total, and it was pretty relative for many citizens. Not only was it confirmed by the numbers, but it was also confirmed by the situation observed in Ukrainian cities and villages. People generally behaved as usual. They tried to lead an everyday life subjecting only to the restrictions imposed by the cessation of transport, the closure of non-food outlets, etc. Perhaps, the only exclusion – there were almost no retirement gatherings on the benches. Psychologists' ideas about the isolation of potential consumers of their recommendations were obviously exaggerated.

The idea of forced inaction of the citizens can also be characterized as exaggerated. Let's refer to table 1. According to the data, during the spring lockdown in 2020, 34.1% of Ukrainians were temporarily unemployed, and 7.5% lost their jobs. It is a massive part of the population, the life dramas of many people. But at the same time, it should be borne in mind that less than half of the respondents were in this situation. And the majority continued to work. Among working citizens, 33.1% answered that the strict quarantine restrictions introduced in March-May did not affect their professional life. These people, according to their responses, are working as usual. Another 25.3% said they worked without a significant reduction in production responsibilities. And taking into account the data of the online survey (Table 2), we can see that for many of those who worked, their responsibilities even increased, and their work became more intense. It's necessary to emphasize many difficulties associated with the lack of experience in organizing remote work and lack of technical and technological support, etc. It was not easy for those who said they worked in

the usual mode. How much energy, nerves, and sometimes money was taken away by getting to work in the conditions of the termination of transport connections! Thus, most Ukrainians did not suffer from inaction during the lockdown. And among those who temporarily or entirely lost their jobs, probably not everyone did not know how to spend their free time. Apparently, many of them were trying to correct the situation, find a way to improve their well-being, look for work on the Internet, or do household chores.

Table 1

**Distribution of answers of employed respondents to the question
«How have the strict quarantine restrictions imposed in March-May 2020 due
to the COVID-19 pandemic affected your professional life?»**

(Data from the national survey conducted on September 5–14, 2020, %) N = 822

Answers	According to the sample in general		In the regional context			
			West	Center	East	South
did not affect, worked in the usual mode	33,1	58,4	27,9	31,0	36,8	41,6
worked remotely without a significant reduction in production responsibilities	25,3		22,9	31,0	22,8	15,7
was temporarily unemployed	34,1	41,6	38,5	29,4	36,0	37,1
lost my job	7,5		10,6	8,6	4,4	5,6

Table 2

Distribution of answers of respondents to the question

«How have the restrictive measures introduced in Ukraine due to the COVID-19 pandemic affected your professional life?» (Data from the online survey conducted on the Google platform on April 28 – May 29, 2020) N = 565

My professional life:	Share of responses, %
did not stop, I work in the usual mode	25,1
has become more intense, my responsibilities have increased significantly	28,2
has become less intense, I perform only the minimum necessary part of my normal duties	20,9
temporarily suspended, my work will be resumed after the end of quarantine only	10,0
stopped completely, I lost my job due to quarantine	2,9
on the contrary, it started: I found a new job	0,7
not applicable, because I did not work before quarantine	7,8
other	4,4

Perceptions of the psycho-emotional state of Ukrainian citizens were also not quite adequate within the psychological community. Contrary to the gloomiest of these ideas, the intensity of the stress response to the risk of falling ill or the need to comply with restrictive and protective measures among the citizens of Ukraine was quite moderate. A short leap in psycho-emotional disorders and/ or mental dysfunctions, at least primarily, was not observed. Thus, according to a narrative interview conducted online by T. Tytarenko during the lockdown period, about half of the respondents (44.8%) assessed the quarantine situation in a balanced or neutral way. And more than 19% were inclined to see in it even in a positive way. And only one in five respondents (20%) rated it negatively.

The data of surveys conducted by us demonstrates the moderation in the perception of pandemic circumstances (Table 3). At the turn of April-May answering the question «Which of the following emotional states do you experience most often during quarantine?», 40.4% of

respondents said: hope and optimism, 23.6% – peace and tranquility. Together with other positive choices (joy, pleasure, curiosity, excitement), these feelings accounted for almost 80% – about the same as negative emotional states. And only in the fall, when the rate of disease jumped dramatically, and it became clear that quarantine was for a long time, the adverse conditions began to outweigh the positive ones significantly: the «share» of peace and tranquility (up to 8.6%), hope and optimism (up to 30.3%) decreased, while the share of depression and hopelessness increased (up to 29.8%). But it is noteworthy that the levels of negative emotions, namely anger and rage, remained relatively low among the Ukrainian population (a little more than 20%, which, incidentally, echoes the above data obtained by T. Tytarenko). However, from the very beginning, respondents attributed these sharply negative emotions and feelings of depression and hopelessness to the other people (most Ukrainian citizens) much more often than they noticed these emotions in themselves. We will discuss this discrepancy between their assessments and self-assessments in more detail later, and for now, we want to emphasize once again that the psycho-emotional state of Ukrainians did not look as dramatic as one might expect.

Table 3

Respondents' assessment of emotional states experienced by themselves and other people during the quarantine restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (in %)

Experience of emotional states	Formulation of questions posed during the online survey on April 25 – May 29, 2020. N = 565		Formulation of questions posed during a nationwide representative survey September 5–14, 2020. N = 1202	
	Which of the following emotional states have you experienced most often during quarantine?	What emotional state, according to your opinion, have the majority of Ukrainian citizens experienced most often?	Please recall which of the following emotional states have you experienced most often during the last six months?	What emotional state, according to your opinion, have the majority of Ukrainian citizens experienced most often?
anger, rage	23,4	47,4	20,7	34,1
hope, optimism	40,4	19,2	30,3	17,5
sadness, grief	30,4	25,1	28,3	22,5
depression, hopelessness	22,9	49,4	29,8	40,2
joy, pleasure	8,5	1,2	5,8	1,2
peace, tranquility	23,6	3,6	8,6	1,9
curiosity, excitement	9,2	2,2	2,8	0,7
difficult to answer	8,3	16,5	14,9	18,3

Note. In all cases, the amount exceeds 100%, as respondents could choose several answers to each of the questions shown in the table.

Finally, let's turn to the results of our online survey, which reflects the state of interpersonal relations of citizens during the lockdown. Table 4 shows that nothing catastrophic had happened in Ukrainian families at that time, contrary to expectations. Often, interpersonal relationships in the family circle had not undergone any changes. And sometimes, they had improved. 15.7% of respondents had improved their relationship with their parents, 18.4% – with their spouse, and 24.7% – with their children. The share of those whose relations with parents, spouses, and children had deteriorated significantly lower – 6.2%, 7.6%, and 3.8%, respectively. In other words, the improvement of family relations on average was almost four times higher than the number of cases of their deterioration.

**Distribution of respondents' answers to the question
«Have your relations with people from your immediate environment changed during
the period of restrictive measures, and, if so, how?»** (Data from the online survey conducted
on the Google platform from April 28 to May 29, 2020, in%) N = 565

Relationships	Answers			
	have changed for the better	have not changed	have changed for the worse	difficult to say
with parents	15,7	72,1	6,2	6,0
with spouse/partner	18,4	64,5	7,6	9,6
with children	24,7	57,8	3,8	13,7
with neighbors	6,9	74,4	8,8	9,8
with colleagues at work	6,7	67,9	17,5	7,9
with friends	7,9	69,0	18,9	4,2

And what had happened outside the family? The relations with the neighbors had undergone the slightest changes; excesses of deterioration and improvement were approximately equal – 8.8% and 6.9%, respectively. However, relations with the colleagues at work had deteriorated significantly more often than its improvement – more than two and a half times. The deterioration was indicated by 17.5% of respondents, while the improvement was indicated only by 6.7%.

Deterioration of relations could be caused by technological or psychological unpreparedness of the employee to work in a remote format, non-compliance with the established work schedule (for example, an employee could go out to the store during working hours and be absent near the monitor when needed), as well as management requirements for a civil servant who did not have their car to show up for work every day, etc. Not only led this situation to a broken relationship, but it also led to administrative measures – up to dismissal. It is more difficult to explain that the share of respondents whose relations with friends had deteriorated during the lockdown was also significant (18.9%). This might be partly due to the fact that friends could be among colleagues at work, and to some extent due to the lack of direct contacts, which could not be fully replaced by phone calls or social networking, and probably with the phenomena of group polarization in Internet communication (Naydonova, 2020). However, it is more important to note that during the lockdown, interpersonal relationships primarily improved in the family and deteriorated, so to speak, within the second circle of communication – more remote or formalized and officially regulated.

The tendency of deteriorating relations with the degree of their remoteness and official regulation is also observed in the sphere of power-subject relations of the respondents (Table 5). First of all, these relationships had changed more dynamically than interpersonal relationships, unlike family relationships, for the worse. Thus, the «share» of people whose attitude towards the President of Ukraine had deteriorated reached 41.6% at the time of the poll, and those whose attitude towards him, on the contrary, had improved amounted to 6.3%. The deteriorated attitude outweighed the improvement one by six to seven times. The Verkhovna Rada and the Cabinet of Ministers had an even more negative balance of improved and worsened attitudes.

This is understandable because the central bodies of state power made decisions that strained society. People attributed the inconveniences of quarantine, both real and imaginary shortcomings in the organization of anti-epidemic measures, lack of justification, some incomprehensibility and inconsistency of these measures, and the prospect of deteriorating financial situation to their activities. For the average Ukrainian in such circumstances, medical and pedagogical workers had become almost the only credible representatives of the conditional «government» – both due to selfless work, which despite the catastrophic shortage of resources, still helped to cope with the challenges of the pandemic and quarantine and as a result of its proximity to the person, at least limited experience of positive interaction with physicians and teachers. Therefore, it is natural that

44.5% and 32.6% of respondents had changed their attitude to medical and pedagogical workers during the lockdown, respectively. Only 5.4% and 10.2% respectively had changed it for the worse. In a sense, the intermediate place between the central government, on the one hand, and doctors and teachers, on the other, was occupied (also due to more excellent proximity to the citizens) by local governments, which increasingly demonstrated their opposition to unpopular actions of the central government. Attitudes towards local governments also deteriorated (23.4% of respondents). Still, the cases of such deterioration were, firstly, almost balanced by the cases of its improvement (16.1% of respondents). Secondly, they occurred much less frequently than precedents of deteriorating attitudes toward the President, Parliament, and Government that soon affected the results of the local elections, where the ruling party lost a significant share of its former popularity. However, this aspect of the data obtained, of course, goes beyond the issues discussed in this article.

Table 5

**Distribution of respondents' answers to the question
«Has your attitude to officials and institutions listed below changed since the beginning
of quarantine, and if so, how exactly do you feel about them?»** (Data from the online survey
conducted on the Google platform on April 28 – May 29, 2020, in%) N = 565

Attitude	Officials and institutions					
	PU	VRU	CMU	LGB	MW	PW
have changed for the better	6,3	1,5	2,7	16,1	44,5	32,6
have not changed	47,7	51,3	48,7	52,3	45,0	51,1
have changed for the worse	41,4	42,1	42,6	23,4	5,4	10,2
difficult to say	4,6	5,1	6,1	8,3	5,1	6,1

Abbreviations: PU – President of Ukraine, VRU – Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, CMU – Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, LGB – local government bodies, MW – medical workers, PW – pedagogical workers (teachers, lecturers).

Thus, there is no doubt that Ukrainians faced many problems during the initial period of the corona crisis. However, much more than isolated from the outside world, they were bothered by the troubles associated with the vicissitudes of interaction with this outside world. Difficulties in performing professional duties or the complete impossibility of their performance were especially noticeable. But those who lost their jobs were unlikely to have too much free time. Negative psycho-emotional states also did not become widespread among the population. Although their number tended to increase, this did not usually lead to a deterioration in family relationships.

On the contrary, the family served as psychological protection against the troubles of the outside world, so quarantine often even contributed to the family understanding, strengthening relations between spouses, parents, and children. Instead, there was a tendency to increase tension and conflict in the business sphere, especially power-subordinate concerns, which intensified with the increasing degree of official regulation of such relations reaching its apogee about the central government. In other words, the problems that Ukrainians were concerned about during the lockdown were not limited to those that were solved in the traditional field of individual, marriage, and family counseling. That is why a significant part of the recommendations given by psychologists in the media and social networks did not hit the mark.

Moreover, let us argue that in the face of the new challenges increasingly posed by the modern world, global cataclysms such as the COVID-19 pandemic, psychological assistance in its traditional sense is relegated to the background. It seems that foreign psychologists are beginning to

draw such conclusions. Let us refer to the data of an expert online survey published in the «Psychological Journal», conducted in April 2020 by the Institute of Psychology of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Ushakov et al., 2020). Psychologists attended it as experts who answered the socio-psychological conditions and consequences of the spread of coronavirus infection. In particular, experts were asked about the measures of psychological impact on the population in connection with the coronavirus epidemic. Thus, among the proposed measures, psychological assistance in the sense that is usually meant by this term (hotlines, counseling work to prevent neurosis, etc.) took a modest fourth place (Table 6). Among the measures of psychological impact, it was mentioned by 13 out of 152 psychologists (14.1%).

Table 6

Data from an expert online survey of Russian psychologists conducted by the Institute of Psychology of the Russian Academy of Sciences in April 2020.

(N = 152, experts could choose several answers)

The most typical answers to the question «What measures of psychological impact on the population in connection with the coronavirus pandemic could you recommend to the authorities?»	The share of respondents (in%)
Stop intimidation (avoid intimidation and threats, stop the flow of negative information in the media, show respect and trust; show the possible positive consequences of overcoming the crisis, etc.)	27,2
Carry out explanatory work (more specific recommendations, special information for the population, explanations of experts, to raise the awareness of preventive measures, etc.)	25,0
Inform about measures to support citizens (give punitive and controlling bodies the functions of providing assistance to the population; implement the declared measures and assistance; show concern for people thus inspiring trust, willingness to cooperate, etc.)	21,7
Organize the provision of psychological assistance to the population (hotline, counseling to prevent neurosis, special departments for remote work, etc.)	14,1
Maintain empathy and cohesion (more calls for solidarity, responsibility for each other; support for civic initiatives; talk more about the heroism of doctors; examples of effective socially responsible behavior, etc.)	9,8
Increase the number of news stories and programs not related to the coronavirus (show films on historical topics, introduce chronicles to cover the lives of contemporaries in different regions, etc.)	7,6

It is also thought-provoking that, according to S. Chunikhina, a large group of professional psychologists who implemented the volunteer project were asked for psychological or crisis counseling by about 100 people in a few weeks of lockdown (Slyusarevskyy et al., 2020). It is very good that such requests were met. However, there could probably be more of them in a country of many millions.

But does this mean that psychological assistance is becoming obsolete? In our opinion, no. However, its content field should be built based on the real needs of potential consumers, not just on providers' hypothetical ideas. At the same time, one should carefully consider the qualitatively new conditions in which a psychologist works in extreme circumstances of a global level – such as the COVID-19 pandemic. These conditions are primarily related to the development of the modern information environment. The vast majority of practicing psychologists and those willing to give the population some practical advice have not yet had time to adapt to its challenges.

The fact is that psychological assistance is known to be traditionally provided mainly on an individual basis. Psychologists are accustomed to working with people in the most professionally comfortable axial communication systems, in which the clients themselves confidently report their problems. Therefore, the choice of targets of psychological influence is beyond doubt. And suppose

one of these practicing psychologists is invited to participate in TV or radio programs. In that case, they usually choose the path of least resistance: in fact, they duplicate their work in axial communication systems in the information space focusing on the same targets of influence – in the hope that their recommendations may find recipients with similar results problems. In other words, participation in TV and radio programs is a peculiar and, let's face it, optional supplement to traditional psychological counseling. However, cataclysms such as the COVID-19 pandemic are sharply shifting the focus of psychological care to retial communication systems – the media and social networks, where potential recipients of this assistance are undefined (thousands or millions) recipients who are largely unable to report their problems and often even reflect on them. And here, there is a sharp contradiction between the poorly reflected public demand for psychological assistance and a reasonably approximate idea of psychologists about its likely targets, as seen from the above. And this request is poorly reflected, in particular, because the media proposals of psychologists, who tend to work within the common problematic field, inadvertently limit the problems of the request. As a result, the number of individual cases seeking help from psychologists is minimized.

We should also emphasize that the problems of citizens during the initial period of the coronavirus crisis and, accordingly, their potential needs for psychological assistance were determined by the changed circumstances of their lives and the realities of the modern information environment. We dedicated another publication to these realities (Slyusarevskyy, 2021). Therefore, we are going to repeat only some of its theses.

First of all, we want to note that the challenges of the modern world that are dangerous for humans, their physical and mental state, despite their different origins (natural, man-made, social) have an informational nature, informational basis, or at least clear, informational correlates. Whatever the challenges, such as natural or artificial disasters, the spread of epidemics, wars, and civil conflicts, they are (of course, from time to time) directly faced by relatively few people. The vast majority of the population are indirectly aware of them – based on information received from TV or radio or found on the Internet. This is exactly what happened at the beginning of the corona crisis. At that time, almost none of the Ukrainians personally knew people who were ill with COVID-19 symptoms, not only among relatives and friends but also among distant acquaintances. Under such conditions, ideas about the pandemic were formed by its media (information) image and not by the very substantive content of this challenge. The role of the media in shaping the idea of the epidemiological threat increased the collapse of the sphere of direct communication between people. Although this collapse was not as total as one might assume, it was undoubtedly observed to some extent in all citizens, which naturally expanded the scope of media-mediated communication, i.e., the lack of feedback on the consumption of media reports and speeches in the media by officials. Therefore, the peculiarities of the attitude towards the consumed information received from TV and radio significantly determined the public perception of public authorities' epidemiological threat and anti-epidemic actions.

There was a clear polarization of public reactions to the pandemic and the quarantine measures. A smaller proportion of the population (those who used media messages more often and trusted them more, and were able to comply with quarantine restrictions as much as possible) took the risk of coronavirus infection very seriously and expressed increased concern for their health and the health of their loved ones. On the contrary, the majority (especially those who had to go to work, worked a lot, and consumed fewer media reports) tended to deny or ignore the danger of infection, seeing the main threat, not in the cause but the consequences of quarantine and advocating for its cancellation.

This polarization was already reflected in the thoughts of the participants of our online survey, which was conducted in the spring – about the judgment «A complete cessation of economic activity, in the long run, could kill many more people than the coronavirus. Therefore, quarantine restrictions should be lifted, even if it could trigger new outbreaks». 51.9% of respondents agreed with it to some extent, 39.1% disagreed with it to some extent (9% did not decide). And this division of opinions was not accidental. It showed a steady trend in the state of

public consciousness (for that time), which was confirmed by a nationwide representative survey conducted in the fall (Table 7). Similarly, more than half of the respondents (56.3%), despite the increase in the number of diseases, said that quarantine losses from economic downturns could cause more harm to Ukrainian citizens than the spread of coronavirus disease. And only in the red quarantine zone, where diseases had become widespread, the share of opposing views (31%) was significantly higher than in Ukraine in general (19.2%).

Table 7

Distribution of respondents' answers to the question
«What, in your opinion, can cause greater harm to the citizens of Ukraine – the spread of coronavirus disease or economic losses due to quarantine measures?» (Data from the national survey conducted on September 5–14, 2020, in%) N = 1202

Answers	By sampling in general	Among the inhabitants of different quarantine zones			
		green zone	yellow zone	orange zone	red zone
spread of coronavirus disease	19,2	16,5	22,1	18,1	31,0
economic losses caused by quarantine measures	56,3	63,7	55,3	50,4	52,1
difficult to answer	23,8	19,3	22,1	30,7	16,9
I don't care	0,8	0,5	0,4	0,8	0,0

It should be borne in mind that, since the beginning of the crisis, the information environment has been oversaturated with conflicting information of a global nature. Coronavirus news and thematic mass media reports had flooded the heads of millions of people every hour, instantly filling their lives with elements of real external danger. As a result, the life situation of a person who actively consumed these messages even with a narrow range of private interests inadvertently grew at least to the national and even global scale, coping with which alone was not possible (Slyusarevskyy, 2007). Such a permanent oversaturation of the information environment with contradictory content arose spontaneously – due to the fierce competition of media content producers for the attention of potential consumers. Media professionals covered the coronavirus and quarantine topics, supporting (less often) or criticizing (more often) the measures taken by public authorities. Numerous experts (medical doctors, law enforcement officers, etc.) were involved in the discussion. But as far as the nature and consequences of the coronavirus were (and still are) not fully understood, those who tried to talk about the coronavirus on TV and radio could not agree on the most basic things (protective functions of the medical masks, the distance between people in public places, etc.). Therefore, TV and radio programs on coronavirus issues only deepened the state of uncertainty and disorientation, which a certain part of society experienced (Slyusarevskyy, 2020b).

The consumer usually responded to contradictory information in the media space with spontaneous informational behavior, which was realized mainly in reorientation on the Internet. However, this only increased the amount of conflicting information. After all, the basis of information and search activity of a person in a crisis characterized by a high degree of uncertainty is usually grounded on false goals. The average Ukrainian (and citizens of the neighboring countries) sought to find the «ultimate truth» about the coronavirus on the Internet instead of being interested in measures that, at least with some degree of reliability, protect against infection.

Ukrainians' compliance with these measures left much to be desired (Table 8), which is understandable because, as can be seen from Table 9, the vast majority of respondents (over 54%) at the time of the survey in fall 2020 were inclined to believe that these measures were unlikely to protect against coronavirus infection (28.2%) or were unsure whether they could protect or not (26.3%). Moreover, disbelief in the effectiveness of personal safety measures recommended by medical doctors had grown with the transition from green and yellow quarantine zones to orange and red.

Table 8

Distribution of respondents' answers to the question
«Do you personally follow the anti-epidemic recommendations listed below?»
(Data from the nationwide survey conducted September 5–14, 2020, in%) N = 1202

Recommendations	Answers			The average (In points, from 1 to 3)
	I always follow	I adhere to it partially	I do not follow	
wearing a mask in public places and on transport	57,1	38,3	4,6	2,53
washing hands and antiseptic treatment after being in public places or on transport	55,8	37,5	6,8	2,45
avoiding physical contacts (handshakes, hugs, etc.) with other people	35,7	47,5	16,8	2,19
keeping a safe distance of one and a half to two meters from other people	26,0	54,8	19,2	2,07
antiseptic treatment of the wallets and gadgets after using them in public places	21,7	42,1	36,1	1,86

Table 9

Distribution of respondents' answers to the question
«Do you think that the implementation of anti-epidemic recommendations (listed above) protects a person from coronavirus infection?» (Data from the national survey conducted on September 5–14, 2020, in%) N = 1202

Answers	By sampling in general	Among the inhabitants of different quarantine zones			
		green zone	yellow zone	orange zone	red zone
rather yes	45,6	52,3	51,1	39,0	40,8
rather no	28,2	25,4	24,0	28,0	36,6
difficult to answer	26,3	22,3	24,8	33,1	22,5

Here is a paradox: people fell ill more often without following medical recommendations, but they explained this by their inefficiency. Therefore, the population's observance of personal security measures should have been considered at the beginning of the corona crisis as one of the highest priorities in the process of psychological impact on citizens, but this, unfortunately, did not happen.

Not enough attention was paid to the problem of correcting citizens' perceptions of the psycho-emotional state of society, which in the process of consuming mass media products appeared in «condensed colors.» Let us turn again to Table 3, which shows significant differences between respondents' self-assessment of their emotional state and its assessment in other people (most citizens of Ukraine). As a rule, such differences are explained by the fact that, when assessing their own condition, a respondent gives socially desirable answers. Still, in fact, he/she expresses it by projecting on other people. We do not deny that this mechanism could sometimes work as well. But it seems more plausible to assume that the opposite could have happened: in the context of a relative narrowing of the sphere of direct contact with the other people, citizens projected media-mediated ideas about social attitudes on their psycho-emotional state, deteriorating their emotional well-being. And if so, then these ideas certainly needed to be adjusted.

So, let's summarize the empirical research discussed above. The analyzed data convincingly show that during the initial period of the corona crisis, the main problems that could cause stress or close to its emotional reactions in Ukrainian citizens were related, on the one hand, to excessive consumption of contradictory, often destructive information about coronavirus and quarantine and, on the other, – to unfavorable conditions of labor (professional) activity (or the excesses of its termination) and the complication of business relations. Such problems, as we know, are within the

competence of media psychology and organizational psychology in particular. Hence, in our opinion, the substantive field of psychological counseling in the conditions of contemporary challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic should be supplemented by at least two components – media-psychological and psychological-organizational. Moreover, these components are objectively brought to the fore. Still, they must be implemented (modified), taking into account the specific requirements caused by the current situation in society and the peculiarities of the work of a psychologist in retail communication systems.

The media psychological aspect of psychological counseling requires an increase in the level of media literacy of the population. It is obvious. However, in extreme situations such as the corona crisis, media psychological counseling should never be limited to developing skills that are traditionally associated with media literacy (recognizing fakes, separating lies from the truth, etc.), as far as such skills alone cannot protect a person from the psychologically harmful effects of an oversaturated information environment. The main «enemy» is its very oversaturation exacerbated by the global nature of information processes, which hinders adequate cognitive processing of the existing challenge. Therefore, a psychologist who consults remotely should be aimed primarily at suggesting how to handle this challenge properly and behave wisely in an unfavorable information environment (similar to behavior in a threatening physical environment).

Citizens, with the help of psychologists, must learn to limit themselves to the consumption of information to the extent necessary and sufficient to solve a particular life problem; adequately assess the scale of their personal life situation (without expanding it to the size of the region, country or world); acquire tolerance for uncertainty and understand that in the modern world there are threats and dangers about which it is currently impossible to find the ultimate truth; realize that it is possible to protect yourself more or less successfully from these threats and dangers following reasonable personal safety measures (Slyusarevskyy, 2021).

From a psychological and organizational point of view, counseling work in conditions such as lockdown caused by the pandemic should be aimed at mitigating current and expected risks of reducing the effectiveness of an organization associated with its limitation or suspension. This involves informing employees in advance about the grounds for adjusting these activities following existing conditions, possible areas of tension and conflict that may arise in both hierarchically defined and horizontal relationships of workforce members, rational ways to avoid these areas, prevention and coping with occupational stress and burnout syndrome due to the difficulties in working both offline and online, and, finally, psychological support for those who found themselves without work providing them with recommendations for future employment and psychologically sound behaviors of an applicant.

At the same time, psychological and organizational counseling (as well as marriage or family counseling), of course, cannot be a «one-sided game.» It will be a proper success if a psychologist not only remotely assures «ordinary» employees that everything will be fine but also appeals to employers, managers of organizations. We are aware that few of them are willing to enter into a dialogue with a psychologist on social networks or at least listen to their recommendations. The vast majority of them, overwhelmed and annoyed by the managerial difficulties that have befallen them during quarantine, tend to consider these recommendations an empty chatter that is insignificant compared to the acute production and financial problems of the corona crisis era. But this should not generate fatalistic sentiments within the psychological community. Relentless promotion of psychological services among employers and management is needed. It is necessary to explain to them by all available means that the image of psychological care, which is associated with the private life of citizens only (and created, unfortunately, by psychologists themselves) is not adequate, convincingly show the prognostic consequences for the production process and the social cost of management and personnel decisions made in crisis conditions, and, finally, inform employers and managers that they need such help as people who are at risk of occupational stress and burnout no less than their employees.

The outlined priorities of psychological and organizational counseling also extend to the sphere of media-mediated power-subordination relations, which, as seen from the analysis of

empirical data, have significantly exacerbated during the corona crisis. In this area, psychological and organizational counseling is closely related to the tasks that are designed to be solved by both media psychology and political psychology. At the level of interaction between the government and citizens, psychological assistance acquires, so to speak, a precise political-psychological dimension (Olshanskiy, 2001; Derkach, Zhukov, & Laptev, 2001; Slyusarevskyy, 2009; Traverse, 2013).

We are not focusing on the problems psychologists are facing in the context of power relations, as far as they were largely covered at the beginning of the article. However, it should be noted that the potential for the positive influence of psychologists on the state of these relations can only be properly revealed when psychological counseling is directly integrated into the system of decision-making and implementation of government bodies. This is the primary condition for its effectiveness.

Finally, we emphasize that for successful counseling work of psychologists, primarily if it is carried out remotely, there is the urgent need to create a reliable diagnostic base that provides systematic monitoring of mass sentiment and the psycho-emotional state of society. This requires a targeted state program with appropriate financial support.

Conclusions. From the beginning of the corona crisis, most Ukrainian psychologists have shown significant professional activity trying to respond adequately to the public demand for solving the psychological problems caused by the situation. However, this activity was hampered by barriers that reduced their effectiveness. Such barriers were both objective (strict quarantine conditions) and subjective (insufficient public request for psychological services, lack of articulation by public authorities, lack of experience of systematic involvement of psychologists in the development and scientific support of state and administrative decisions in Ukraine, as well as rather subjective perceptions of psychologists themselves about the needs of potential recipients of their help).

Within the psychological community, the default model of a person in the conditions of lockdown was established. This model focused on implementing psychological assistance within the traditional field of the individual (personality-oriented), marriage, and family counseling. That was the model that determined psychologists' primary trend of counseling activity in the media and social networks. However, according to the analysis of mass polls and other studies conducted during the lockdown or on its «hot tracks,» this model did not fully correspond to the realities of Ukrainian citizens' lives and, consequently, their actual needs for psychological help.

During the lockdown in the spring of 2020, the ordinary people of Ukraine had faced many problems. Still, these problems were much more related to the vicissitudes of interaction with the outside world than isolation. Difficulties in performing professional duties or the complete impossibility of their performance were especially noticeable. Contrary to the ideas of many psychologists, negative psycho-emotional states have not become widespread. Although their numbers tended to increase, this had not usually led to a deterioration in family relationships. Instead, there was a trend in the increase in the level of tension and conflict in the sphere of business, especially power-subordinate relations, which intensified with the increasing degree of official regulation of these relations reaching its apogee about the central government. Thus, the problems that Ukrainians were concerned about during the lockdown were by no means limited to those that could be solved within the traditional field of individual, marriage, and family counseling. Therefore, a significant part of the recommendations given by psychologists in the media and social networks did not hit the mark.

The existing contradiction between the traditional thematic repertoire of psychological counseling and the potential public demand suggests that during the global cataclysms such as the COVID-19 pandemic, psychological assistance to the population in its traditional sense recedes into the background. Therefore, the need for a particular revision of standard targets and conventional practices of psychological care is urgent today. At the same time, one should carefully consider the qualitatively new conditions in which a psychologist works in extreme circumstances of a global level.

Global cataclysms, such as the COVID-19 pandemic have shifted the focus of psychological care from the psychologist's usual axial to retial communication systems (media and social networks). This radically changes the nature and very principles of practical psychological work. The participation of psychologists in TV and radio programs and their Internet activity cease to be sporadic, optional additions to traditional psychological counseling. Potential consumers of psychological assistance are undefined (thousands or even millions) recipients who (unlike situations with a client in axial communication systems) usually cannot report their problems and often reflect on them, which leads to a sharp contradiction between poorly reflected public demand for psychological assistance and fairly approximate ideas of psychologists about its likely targets. A kind of vicious circle is formed as far as the public demand is poorly reflected, in particular, because the media proposals of psychologists inadvertently limit the problem. At the same time, the number of individual requests to psychologists is minimized.

It should be borne in mind that in situations such as the coronavirus pandemic, the problems of citizens and hence their potential needs for psychological care are determined by changed life circumstances and the realities of contemporary information environment characterized by globality and saturation of conflicting content. In the spring of 2020, when the vast majority of Ukrainians had not yet been directly exposed to the coronavirus, their perceptions of the pandemic were formed by its media (information) image and not by the very substantive content of this challenge. There was a clear polarization of public reactions to the pandemic and the quarantine measures caused by it that depended on the attitude to the information and life circumstances.

The global oversaturation of news and thematic mass media reports with contradictory content filled people's lives with elements of all-encompassing external danger. As a result, the life situation of a person who actively consumed these messages, even with a narrow range of private interests, grew at least to a national or even global scale, to cope with which alone was not possible. To the spontaneous oversaturation of the media space with contradictory information, the consumer responded, as a rule, by spontaneous informational behavior, which was realized mainly in the form of reorientation on the Internet. However, this only aggravated the situation because the information and search activity of consumers was usually based on false goals: a typical Ukrainian (as well as citizens of the neighboring countries) sought to find the «ultimate truth» about the coronavirus on the Internet instead of worrying about protective measures.

The spring lockdown of 2020 could cause stressful or close emotional reactions in Ukrainians who are within the competence of media psychology and organizational psychology. It follows that the substantive field of psychological counseling during contemporary challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, must be supplemented by at least two components – media-psychological and psychological-organizational. These components are objectively brought to the fore. Still, they must be implemented (modified), taking into account the requirements of the current situation in society and the peculiarities of the work of psychologists in retial communication systems.

At the level of power-subordination relations, which significantly exacerbated during the corona crisis, the tasks of psychological-organizational counseling are closely connected with those that political psychology is called upon to solve, and they acquire a distinct political-psychological dimension. The solution to this set of problems involves the direct integration of psychological counseling in the system of decision-making and implementation of decisions of public authorities.

A necessary condition for successful counseling work of psychologists, mainly if it is carried out remotely, is creating a reliable, permanently updated diagnostic base. This requires the launch of a targeted state program to monitor mass sentiment and the psycho-emotional state of society that must have adequate financial support.

We connect **the prospects for further development of the problem** with the definition of supervisory and technological prerequisites for expanding the field of psychological counseling.

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