Protecting Mental Health in an Epoch of Virtualization

(Olena Andriienko)
Legal Department of "CCM" SE (Publicis Groupe Ukraine), Kyiv, Ukraine

Introduction. The huge amount of digital phenomenon stresses the permanently virtualizing character of our "way of being" (Rogers, 1994). It could be frightening, however, this is not the very first experience of virtualization as each transition to the next level of abstraction may by estimated as the virtualizing act (including development of natural languages, writing systems invention, book-printing and computation) (Nosov, 2000: Zhurba, 2016). The future steps on this way are hardly predicted, but all of them are united by the psyche, which may be defined as the independent physical force that creatively regulates the information-energy exchange in its movement between different levels of virtualization driven by meanings (Frankl, 2018; Gleiser, 2017).

Humanity is creating new realities with their own space-time in the digital sphere now. In language of physics (Wilczek, 2018) the new metric field is expanding, which gives rigidity to space-time and causes gravity on our individual mental maps and in this "brave new world" (Hucksley, 2014) as a whole. Therefore, virtualization gifts the both new threats and new opportunities including ideas of singularity and immortality connected with the cyber sphere. However, these ideas accentuate the search for an "answer to the ultimate question life the universe and everything".

Purpose. Any reality demands its own rules to exist. These rules or system of limitations (often called "laws" in physics and in social sciences) are the necessary precondition not for development and existence of liberty, responsibility, beauty, creativity only, but, first at all, they are the ground for state of well-being in physical, psychological and social aspects, in other words for the health. This is correct for any carrier of psyche including a separate person, the certain group or the global community, who acts in the corresponding virtual space-time.

The lack of verbalized socially agreed rules for the virtual digital reality provokes the feel of uncertainty and permissiveness and an extremal behavior, which causes the psychic instability (Holmes, 2016), deviation in different forms and very new forms of psychic disorders: from obsessive behavior, anxiety and neuroses related with gadget dependency, game and social network addiction until cybercrimes like incitement to suicide.

Thus, the purpose of the study is describing an effective instrument for the cyber sphere normative regulation as a precondition for the mental well-being.

Design/Methodology/Approach. The first step in any norm development is the differentiating as the simplest case of energy and information processing demands two poles. It could be 0 and 1, good and evil, energy and information, etc. Even life is possible within a comparably narrow corridor of poles – in gravity, space-time, temperature, and infinite quantity of others. Thus, human psyche also mirrors this polarity and is highly effective in operating with them. The individual and social development pass through different poles: progress and traditionalism (conservatism), independence and globalization, etc.

However, polarization creates tension and may cause diseases on the individual and social levels. At the same time, this tension stimulates movement to the next level of virtualization, which may help to solve the poles of the previous level and heal by retrieving the wholeness. Then the new pair of polarities starts development on this new level of virtualization and process repeats with new degree of complexity. Thus, the key for treatment is overcoming the polarities and forming the wider field of conscious and responsible activity both on the individual and social levels.

In view of this, society needs a supranational instrument for fast-reacted self-regulation, especially in cyber space, including rules for virtual and alternate realities and interaction with artificial intellect or robots.

However, the most of governmental and private official institutions are too slow acting, often unduly politically and economically motivated, while their legal acts are overcomplicated for perception (for instants, EU GDPR or Facebook policies).

Results. For this reason, the wisdom and potential of collective consciousness may (and should) be used for creating a **global crowd platform to self-regulate the fast-developing and weakly predictable virtual space**.

The described platform may be effective for natural development and systematizing the customs as the source for the cyber sphere normative regulation.

Limitations and strengths of the study. Description of the approach is the very first, but necessary step in development of the global crowd platform for virtual space self-regulation.

The general advantages of the mentioned platform are following:

1) It combines the enthusiasm of Wiki projects (Isaacson, 2017; McGonigal, 2016) with laconism of Ten Commandments given to Moses.

2) It is fast-reacted sources of law for private (civil) relations known as custom in international and local jurisdictions (Polanski, 2007).

3) It activates the power of self-enforcing agreement as any person may feel like co-creator through involving in corresponding discussion and decision-making (McGonigal, 2016; Ramo, 2018).

The programming means, which may be a basic for the development of the mentioned platform, are first at all wiki software, blockchain and artificial neural networks.

This paper makes a step to popularize the mention idea, develop it, and create the sensitive collective perception. The next steps are the project plan development; involving the like-minded theorists and practitioners, team development, and the pilot project realization.

Practical/Social value. Society receives the effective supranational instrument for fast-reacted self-regulation, especially in cyber space, including rules for virtual and alternate realities and interaction with artificial intellect or robots.

Originality/Conclusion. The described approach summarizes and develops theoretical ideas in many different fields of study, including psychology (Frankl, 2018; Rogers, 1994), law (Harvey, 2017; Polanski, 2007), physics (Deutsch, 2015; Wheeler, 1990; Wilczek, 2018), information theory (Hidalgo, 2016) and game theory (McGonigal, 2016), and, of course, everyday practice. This integrated approach is very natural for the new stage of the Anthropocene when all of us are creating the unitary social network with radically new characteristics (Isaacson, 2017; Ramo, 2018; Sloman, 2018).

As any joke, the popular Internet meme: "Save me!" – "As.jpg or.pdf?" reflects some deepest wisdom and is something more than a fun only. Thus, we have a unique opportunity to develop a new approach to creation of regulatory framework for the mental health protecting in any types of newly invented human world.

Keywords: virtual reality, digitization, mental health, collective activity, crowdfunding, self-regulation.

References:
1. Deutsch, D. (2015). *The Fabric of Reality: The Science of Parallel Universes and Its Implications*. Moscow: Alpina non-fiction. (In Russian).
2. Frankl, V. (2018). *The Doctor and the Soul: From Psychotherapy to Logotherapy*. Kharkiv: Family Leisure Club. (In Ukrainian).
3. Gleiser, M. (2017). *The Island of Knowledge: The Limits of Science and the Search for Meaning*. Saint Petersburg: Piter. (In Russian).
4. Harvey, D. (2017). *Collisions in the Digital Paradigm: Law and Rule Making in the Internet Age*. Oxford: Hart Publishing.
5. Hidalgo, C. (2016). *Why Information Grows: The Evolution of Order, from Atoms to Economies.* Moscow: Eksmo. (In Russian).
6. Holmes, J. (2016). *Nonsense: The Power of Not Knowing*. Kyiv: Nash Format. (In Ukrainian).
7. Hucksley, O. (2014). *Brave New World*. Moscow: AST (In Russian).
8. Isaacson, W. (2017). *The Innovators: How a Group of Hackers, Geniuses, and Geeks Created the Digital Revolution*. Kyiv: Nash Format. (In Ukrainian).
9. McGonigal, J. (2016). *Reality Is Broken: Why Games Make Us Better and How They Can Change the World*. Moscow: Mann, Ivanov and Ferber. (In Russian).
10. Nosov, N. A. (2000). *Virtual Psychology*. Moscow: Agraph. (In Russian).
11. Polanski, P. P. (2007). *Customary Law of the Internet – In the Search for a Supranational Cyberspace Law*. The Hague: T.M.C. ASSER PRESS.
12. Ramo, J. C. (2018). *The Seventh Sense. Power, Fortune and Survival in the Age of Networks*. Kyiv: Yakaboo Publishing. (In Ukrainian).
13. Rogers, C. (1994). *On Becoming a Person: A Therapists View of Psychotherapy*. Moscow: Progress. (In Russian).
14. Sloman, S., Fernbach, P. (2018). *The Knowledge Illusion: Why We Never Think Alone*. Kyiv: Yakaboo Publishing. (In Ukrainian).
15. Wheeler, J. A. (1990). Information, physics, quantum: The search for links. *Complexity, Entropy, and the Physics of Information*. Retrieved from http://cqi.inf.usi.ch/qic/wheeler.pdf on 2018-08-08.
16. Wilczek, F. (2018). *The Lightness of Being: Mass, Ether, and the Unification of Forces*. Saint Petersburg: Piter. (In Russian).
17. Zhurba, M. A., Pagava, O. V., Baidyk, V. V. (2016) *Labyrinths of virtual: Theseus in search for Ariadne*. Kharkiv: Tochka.