

Readaptation of ATO Veterans and their Wives: Experience of Psychosocial Assistance School

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Introduction. Veterans may have posttraumatic conditions and disorders of adaptability. Those can provoke secondary psychotrauma for their wives. So both veterans and their wives require adaptations. Such approaches as CBT and EMDR are effective for re-adaptation processes, but in case of a dangerous situation for a veteran the re-trauma may arise.

There is a need for short-term technological interventions aimed at transforming negative states to positive experience. There is a need to teach veterans and their wives how to provide self- and mutual assistance to cope with posttraumatic states and dis-adaptive reactions. We have developed a re-adaptive complex of technologies for the transformation of negative states into life experience.

The purpose is to determine the results of the re-adaptation of veterans and their wives' technology within the framework of their joint training in the skills of self- and mutual assistance.

Approach. The study was conducted in conjunction with psycho-correction classes and a training course on self- and mutual assistance for veterans and their wives. The School of Socio-Psychological Assistance created by the Laboratory of the Institute of Nursing and Midwifery of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and the Department of Social and Psychological Aid to the Population of Chernihiv National University of Technology was chosen as the form of training.

The course of the School's activities included the learning of the rehabilitation complex. The complex consisted of the author's technology of transformation of negative states into a positive life experience (Lazorenko, 2017), the techniques of breathing therapy and body-oriented therapy, group mutual assistance and psychosocial support.

The School course was conducted free of charge for 4 months and included 12 sessions, 3 hours each. Sessions included role play and mini trainings of participants to assimilate certain technology. The technique of homework tasks was also performed. During the course a closed online-group "Together we are strong" worked within the Facebook for advising and supervising school participants.

To determine the course effectiveness a complex of questionnaires was used: List of symptoms of PTSD (Bezsheiko, 2016), "Multi-level personality questionnaire "Adaptability"" (Maklakov, & Chermyanyn, 2006), authored self-assessment questionnaire on changes in the quality of life. Data collection was carried out in the form of a questionnaire survey of the School members at the beginning and after graduation. The total amount of participants in the course was 36 persons. Two families of veterans and their wives were included in the case-study.

Results. According to The PTSD Checklist in the family "X" a husband showed slight fluctuations of the indicators as a response to the applied re-adaptation technologies. His wife's grades were obtained at the end of the course, as she joined it later. These indicators were used for a general comparison with male indicators after the course ending. Indicators of husband and wife show a certain synchronization of their psycho-emotional states, with the exception of manifestations of excessive reactivity, due, in our opinion, to the fact that in this family the main responsibility of financial support belongs to the woman.

Among the husband's indicators of dis-adaptation the indicator of violations of behavioural regulation became almost three times less after the course. On the other hand, the wife showed still high indicators of violations of behavioural regulation, although they were almost one third less than that in husband's ones.

In the family "X" there were appeared positive changes in the quality of life. A man has moderately improved his physical and psychological well-being, he has felt the moral help of his wife, has ceased to be locked in himself, has significantly improved his attitude towards his parents, wife, and children. Also, the attitude of parents, wife and children towards him has improved. He has learned to control himself, realized that it was necessary to restore order in himself, began to appreciate the family more. The veteran's wife has significantly improved her physical and psychological well-being, she has decided to take care of her health, has become more self-confident. Her attitude towards her parents, her husband and children has significantly improved. She noticed that husband's attitude towards her has improved moderately, the self-confidence, and faith in her husband have appeared. She has learned to realise her emotions and to cope with them.

In the family "Y", according to The PTSD Checklist, the wife has showed a general decrease in symptoms, with the exception of the increase in the symptom of excessive reactivity more than doubled, which (according to our observation) indicates the search for solutions to family problems. Such search can be testified by the insignificant fluctuations of the husband's indicators.

According to the questionnaire of adaptability the husband's indicators of violations of behavioural regulation and communicative abnormalities decreased more than twice. At the end of wife's studies the indicator of the breaches of behavioural regulation slightly increased, other indicators of violations decreased almost twice.

Positive changes in relationships were recorded by the self-assessment questionnaire on changes in quality of life. The husband noted his attitude towards his parents, wife and children and, vice versa, their attitude towards him has improved significantly. The wife noted that her physical and psychological well-being have improved significantly. She stopped aggressiveness, became more balanced and confident. Her attitude towards her parents, her husband and children has improved significantly.

Members of the family's "X" and "U" have acquired the skills of psychological self- assistance and the skills of giving it to their partners.

Limitations and strengths of the study. The aim of the progress in the psychotrauma overcoming was achieved through this study. But better results could be achieved by more tough control of the individual sessions attendance as we associate the enhancement of attendance with increasing responsibility and motivation for both men and women.

Practical/Social value. The rehabilitation complex and the School form of its implementation could also be helpful as the way to reduce manifestations of post-traumatic states and dis-adaptation, and to improve the quality of family life for more veterans, internally displaced persons, their families and all those who had psychotraumatic experience.

Originality. Such a comparative study of the dynamics of post-traumatic states and the adaptability of the veterans' family and also positive changes in quality of life was conducted in Ukraine for the first time.

Conclusions. The effectiveness of rehabilitation technologies for veterans' families is revealed. It has been determined that veterans and their wives have acquired primary self- assistance skills and skills in providing and receiving psychological assistance. The decreases in the rates of post-traumatic disorders and abnormalities of adaptability has been confirmed empirically. According to the spouses' self-esteem, the quality of their family life has improved significantly.

Keywords: re-adaptation, psychological, assistance, learning,

References.

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