




## The Specificity of Personality Conflict in Adolescent Age

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### Article Information

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### Abstract:

The article examines the theoretical foundations, psychological content and personal determinants of conflict and its overcoming. The authors have determined the specific meaningful characteristics of proneness to conflict in youth, the essential features of personal determinants of its occurrence and overcoming. They have substantiated the personally-determined approach to overcoming conflict and described the structure and content of psycho-techniques for the activation of personal determinants of overcoming conflicts and proneness to conflict among modern students.

**Keywords:** *conflictology, determination, interpersonal relations, moratorium, representative plan.*

### Introduction

Adolescence is an exceptionally complex, contradictory and defining stage of an individual's life path. The transition from independent and dependent childhood to independent and responsible adulthood affects all aspects of life, accompanied by internal and external contradictions reflected in theoretical approaches to the analysis of adolescence.

Adolescence as an ontogenetic period of personality development means a significant development period – the time from the end of puberty to the beginning of adulthood (Maksimenko, 1998). Early and late adolescence are defined, and the latter is explicitly qualified in recent domestic works as early adulthood. The two main stages of adolescence are characterized by different crises of personality development. Thus, in early youth there is a crisis associated

with the desire to be freed from childhood relationships of dependence, and the later period of youth is characterized by a crisis of "detachment", which is often accompanied by a feeling of loneliness.

### Methods

The problem of conflict interaction in adolescence is decisive for the further life of an adult. Neglect of conflict as the main mechanism for the destruction of a young man's mental activity and, at the same time, a mechanism for self-reproduction leads to a young man, and later an adult, getting stuck in the problems of this period of development, the most acute of which is obsessive-compulsive neurosis. That is why, the purpose of the article is to identify the characteristics of the adolescence's conflict as a



determinant of further self-realization in adulthood. The main hypothesis of the study was the proposition that late adolescence as a stage in personality development is characterized by the presence of personal determinants that cause conflict situations in interpersonal interaction. Such personal determinants are psychological properties of the individual, such as anxiety, aggressiveness, rigidity, accentuation of personal traits, externality of the locus of control, and the formation of behavioral forms of a conflict nature. The essence of personal determinants consists in the projection of subjective factors on objective interaction and is determined by the destructive coloring of the psychological determination of the individual.

The main research methods were theoretical analysis, synthesis with generalization, comparison of the obtained results. An empirical experiment with the author's diagnostic method was also used to formulate the main provisions of the work. The methodology involved self-assessment by young people of psychological properties (anxiety, aggressiveness, rigidity, frustration) according to the methods of H. Eysenck, A. Bass, A. Darky, diagnosis of locus of control of the personality (methodology of J. Rotter adapted by E.F. Bazhin, S.A. Halynkina and A.M. Etkind), diagnosis of the psychological atmosphere in the team (A. Fiedler), as well as the method of diagnosis of interpersonal relations by T. Leary.

## Results and Discussion

Conflict interaction and ways of its regulation dominate in researches of modern psychology, pedagogy, and conflict studies (Makarchuk, 2005). The general provisions of modern theoretical and methodological aspects are based on the identification of the personal factor in conflict interaction as the main and key one. Psychological determination as a personal factor of conflict interaction, its isolation and experimental research allows to more accurately determine the factors of the specified problem (Soto and Tackett, 2015). It is appropriate to base the psychological analysis of youth on the characteristics of its two main stages – early and late youth. Early youth is characterized by the

consolidation of the main new formations of the previous age (adolescent) stage of personality development, namely, the acquisition of self-awareness in the formation of life experience, abilities and skills in the implementation of leading activities (Leung, 2020).

Late adolescence is a stage of personality formation in its ontogenetic development characterized by a specific manifestation of the internal features of the individual's subjectivity, which influences the specifics of the objective factors represented by the surrounding reality of a young man (Makarchuk, 2006). It is at the stage of late youth that intrapersonal contradictions aggravate, ensuring the formation of a representative plan for later life.

The specific features of the late youth period are the development and functioning of psychological mechanisms of self-awareness, which primarily include self-determination in the life perspective, where interpersonal relationships are the sphere of manifestation of objective factors and, at the same time, a form of personal subjective attitude towards them.

There are quite a number of models and studies of the youth period of personality development highlighting the main psychological new formations of this period of personality development, its differences and acquisitions. Summarizing all identified domestic and foreign theories and models of personality development in young adulthood, we will note the main psychological features of this period of personality development.

Adolescence is most often considered as a period of self-awareness crisis, a stage of spiritual development, a time of life space expansion, formation of one's identity, complication and development of intellectual processes flexibility, etc.

In addition, adolescence is marked as a period of internal conflict, mental imbalance, and unstable behaviour. Two polar states characterize the psychological features of youth: on the one hand, it is selfishness, interest only in oneself, perception of oneself as the centre of the Universe, and on the other hand, it is a high level

of inclination to self-sacrifice and devotion (Ishmuratov, 1996).

The main new formations in the youth period of personality development are the discovery of one's own "I", the formation of self-awareness, the awareness of one's individuality and its qualities, the emergence of a life plan, and the determination to consciously build one's own life.

The consequence and, concurrently, the driving force of adolescent personal enhancement is self-realization as an individual. Self-realization completeness depends on the individual's ability to self-determine and set the goals that most correspond to his inner essence. Adolescent age is characterized by personal testing of oneself in various types of work and an active search for a life partner (Ibáñez et al. 2016).

Youth is most often considered from the point of view of strengthening the feeling of one's uniqueness, individuality, and being unlike others. Under unfavourable development conditions, there is a feeling of "I" diffusion, role, and personal uncertainty. According to E. Erikson (1968), adolescence is the time of development of time perspective, future plans, worldview formation, and professional self-determination.

Eight stages of human development have been recognized by researchers (Erikson, 1968), with a particular duty awaiting a person at each level. Any task's solution is frequently accompanied by a conflict. Further character formation and development occur during adolescence, depending on how the conflict is resolved. The personality gains a new good trait as a result of the conflict's effective solution, and as a consequence, additional growth occurs. A negative or inadequate solution to the conflict results in the negative development of the "I". We can point out that in this situation, the conflict is somewhat associated with the crisis that characterizes this period and serves as a clear symbolic representation of it.

It is in adolescence that all elements of consciousness are fully integrated, allowing for the solution to internal conflicts. A person

becomes more "mature" in his identity if he can solve different kinds of internal conflicts. The crisis is over when a person's identity becomes mature and stable in adolescence.

Based on the research results, various psychological roles or "standings" have been determined in which a person can be in his youth:

– "Moratorium." The young men of this group do not assume any obligations and do not define their values but are in the process of actively searching for them. These individuals are experiencing a crisis that has not yet been resolved and are waiting for it to end.

– "The determined individual's path." Young people in this group are characterized by their confident definition of who they want to be. They have already chosen their future path, but it was not preceded by a strenuous search. They have passively accepted the path offered to them by their parents. It is safe to say that people with a certain choice of the path are more authoritarian than representatives of any other group. We can characterize young people of this group as closed and implicit.

– "Suppression of one's own "I". Young people in this group shy away from choosing their life path. Outwardly successful, they constantly feel themselves losers. Quite often, when trying to define themselves in life, they develop an inferiority complex and start feeling alienated. Compared to the "Moratorium" group, they are not in a state of crisis, but they have no desire to strive for it as well.

– "Clearly defined life goals." Young people in this group are characterized by experiencing an identity crisis and successfully passing it. They have formed their life goals and priorities in correlation to their worldview. These young people are confident in their sense of adulthood.

The period of youth ends when the personality comes to conditional truth (Sheehy, 1999), indicating that, gradually moving away from the family, the young man begins to search for "himself". In most cases, this period is defined

as a “youth crisis” (Yatsenko, 2004). However, the goal is achieved not when young people decide who they are and what they will do in this world – such decisions are re-evaluated over time. K. Jung (1910) calls it individualization, A. Maslow (1943) – self-actualization, others – integration or autonomy. Truthfulness in youth is the achievement of such an inner state that provides individuals with knowledge of their own potential and finding space and opportunities that can fully realize them.

Cognitive features in the personality development in adolescence are characterized by the complication of mental operations (transition to formal operations), which contributes to theorizing and reflection as a means for young people to understand life as a whole, to create a picture or concept of their own life. However, youthful thinking is peculiarly self-centred, guided to a greater extent by the category of the eventual rather than the actual. In general, the cognitive features of “young adults” are determined through dialectical thinking, sense bearing systems, the development of obligation and responsibility, and the flexible application of intellectual abilities, which, under the condition of their active development, project such features in the structure of the adolescent’s personality as practicality, organization, personal integrity and contribute to the future success in building a young man’s representative life plan. At the same time, these psychological mechanisms do not always unfold precisely at this stage of ontogenesis.

Therefore, it is reasonable to turn to the development of moral consciousness (Kohlberg, 1973), which probably goes in parallel with mental development, and it is in youth that the conventional and post-conventional levels of moral consciousness development are characteristic.

Some periodizations of youth are based on such psychological characteristics as the structure and strategy of life (Levinson, 1923), demarcating the specificity of the age characteristics of boys and girls in the youth period of personality formation. The structure of life forms the basis

of a way of life, being, at the same time, a boundary and a connecting link between an individual and society. This structure is dominant during the stable period of life because it corresponds to the individual’s current needs. At the same time, with the emergence of new needs, this structure is destabilized by the individual and acquires a new character, meaningful content, structure, and form. A life strategy is formed mainly from the individual’s relationship with the surrounding world, including what the individual receives from these relationships and what he brings to them.

Full development and adaptation within life depend on the growth of the individual in the period of endeavours, which falls on the age from 17 to 33 years and consists of the transition to early adulthood of 17-22 years, entering the world of adults of 22-28 years and the transition to the 30th birthday – 28-33 years (Levinson, 1923).

The substantiation of the psychological essence of youth as a stage of the personality’s ontogenesis is carried out depending on the differentiated approach to gender characteristics that affect further definition and perspective of a young man. To fully become an adult, a young man must cope with the solution of four main tasks that arise in the development process: to combine dreams with reality, to find a mentor, to ensure professional realization, and to establish intimate relationships. For a girl, entering adulthood means solving practically similar problems – defining a dream, finding a mentor, building a career, and establishing a close relationship with a “one in a million” person.

It is also determined that the main thing in the process of personality development, which falls on youth, is the passing of a crisis, which is necessary for an effective transition to adulthood and, at the same time, inevitable. There is a relationship and interdependence of personal determination and age aspects. In this case, the crisis of youth is considered, which in the psychological literature is defined as the “crisis of the beginning” and the crisis of identity. The crisis in youth has general characterological



features, such as finding one's own place in a new, adult, independent life and building a representative plan, the main prerequisites for which are created during the period of youth itself. At the same time, a young man can choose transition to adulthood and full self-realization or refuse to go through a rather complex process – the formation of his own personality (Freud, 1992).

A crisis in adolescence requires definition from the standpoint of two aspects of the inevitability of its occurrence, its course, and the necessity of passage for young men. As for its inevitability, we can assume that the crisis may not occur, it can be bypassed in a rather specific form of “continuation of the pleasant irresponsibility of youth.” G. Sheehy (1999) has expressed a curious assumption regarding the necessity: “...if I do not experience a crisis in the period when it should take place, does it occur at a later stage of development? A crisis for the full formation of a personality... Young people who accept this crisis with dignity as a transition stage of their lives, in most cases, become stronger and able to control their own destiny”.

Overall, modern psychological doctrine determines development at all age stages as performing specific tasks by an individual. The main challenge of the development period in adolescence is the formation of psychological readiness for entry into independent adult life. The concept of “psychological readiness” at this age stage implies the presence of abilities and needs that enable a young man to realize himself at maximum in his professional activities and future family life. It is, first of all, the need for communication and mastering the ways of its construction. Secondly, it is theoretical thinking, which takes the form of developed reflection, helping to ensure self-awareness and a critical attitude. Thirdly, it is the need for work and the ability to work, mastering work skills that will allow one to be included in work activities and perform them creatively.

Youth is considered from the standpoint of human adulthood, both biologically and socially (Kohn, 1989). Society sees it not so much as an object of socialization but as a responsible

subject of social and productive activity, evaluating its results according to "adult" standards.

We can notice greater differentiation of emotional reactions and ways of expressing emotional states, increased conscious self-control, and self-regulation of young people. However, with regard to the youthful “I”, it is still undefined, vague and is often experienced as an unspecified concern or a feeling of inner emptiness that needs to be filled with anything, which contributes to an increased need for communication and, at the same time, an increase in its selectivity, the need for solitude. A young man's self-image always correlates with the group image of “We”, that is, with the image of a typical peer of his sex, but never completely coincides with this “We”.

There is an in-depth expansion of the time horizon, covering the distant past and future, with the growth of not only personal but also social perspectives. Changes in the time perspective are closely related to the reorientation of youth consciousness from external control to self-control, with the growing need to achieve specific results. Adolescence thinking is characterized by an evasive-philosophical orientation, which is connected not only with formal and logical operations but also with the peculiarities of the emotional world of early youth.

At the same time, youth is a starting time (Ananiev, 1980), characterized by a person's entry into social life as an independent actor. It is a period of “search for oneself” in various spheres of life: professional self-determination, search for a “life partner”, acquiring one's own behavioural line and independence from parents.

Adolescence is characterized by the search for fundamental principles of consistent behaviour, the time to create one's own “philosophy of life”, and the desire for absolute values, incompatible with the values of the real world. From the point of view of the connection between the mechanisms of centration and decentration as the driving force of ontogenesis, in youth there is a subconscious urge to decentration, to “merging” with the whole

world, and to transforming the real world so that it becomes closer to the ideal (Romenets, 2006).

In youth, an individual experiences the need for his own integrity and integration (Abramova, 2000). A developed body and the desire of the "I" to integrate further exacerbates the need to confirm the reality of one's own "I", possessing not only the potential power but also the real one, accepted by others. Such an individual is ready to establish special relationships with others (Tackett, et al., 2008). Adolescence is characterized by the need to integrate various life manifestations of one's own "I". A young man perceives this as an opportunity to manage his life, and for integration, he needs energy that will allow him to solve and overcome the contradictions of various manifestations of life.

## Conclusions

One of the main personal goals having a conflicting nature is the clear formulation of a plan for further life. The desire to see uniqueness and primacy in the surrounding reality activates the manifestations of intrapersonal conflicts in youth, the main contradictions of which are the ambiguity of feelings, their ambivalence, the combination of feelings of intimacy and, at the same time, hostility to the same objects of interaction. In adolescence, the need for closeness coexists with a pronounced need to maintain a certain distance and readiness for isolation from those who influence personal space. The negative consequences of realizing this need are the formation of a counter-need to avoid contacts that can provoke frank and real closeness.

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