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**Peculiarities of students’ experiencing a life meaning crisis**

**Annotation:**

The article is devoted to the following important philosophical and psychological phe- nomenon: a life meaning crisis and the peculiarities of its experience in student age. This concept is considered in the context of the intersection of studies of hardiness, basic be- liefs of the individual and existential fulfillment. It is stated that the process of experi- encing a life meaning crisis in its severity and unexpectedness resembles an emotional state that disrupts the normal course of human life and is experienced as feelings of suf- fering, grief, loss, despair, danger, and its course does not depend on human efforts or de- sires. The study sample consisted of 78 students. The average age of respondents was 19.2 years. The existence of statistically significant inverse relationships between experiencing a life meaning crisis and hardiness, emotional fulfillment and basic personal beliefs has been empirically proven. Peculiarities of students with different levels of experiencing a life meaning crisis are determined. It was found that as the level of life meaning crisis increases, students’ dissatisfaction with what they do increases, they do not feel includ- ed in life, instead feel helpless, unwilling to take risks and actively assimilating knowl- edge, unable to rely on their own experience in relevant situations, which ultimately leads to internal tension in stressful situations and lack of resilience.

**Streszczenie:**

Artykuł poświęcony jest ważnemu zjawisku filozoficzno-psychologicznemu – znaczeniu kryzysu życiowego i specyfice jego przeżywania w wieku studenckim. Pojęcie to rozpatry-

wane jest w kontekście przecięcia studiów nad witalnością, podstawowymi przekonaniami osobowości i egzystencjalnym spełnieniem.Stwierdza się, że proces przeżywania kryzysu sensu życia w jego dotkliwości i nieoczekiwaności przypomina stan emocjonalny, który za- burza normalny bieg życia człowieka i jest doświadczany jako uczucia cierpienia, żalu, straty, rozpaczy, zagrożenia i jego przebieg nie zależy od ludzkich wysiłków czy pragnień. Próba badawcza liczyła 78 studentów. Średnia wieku badanych to 19,2 lat. Istnienie statystycz- nie istotnych odwrotnych związków między przeżywaniem znaczącego kryzysu życiowe- go a witalnością, spełnieniem emocjonalnym i podstawowymi osobistymi przekonaniami zostało udowodnione empirycznie. Zidentyfikowane cechy studentów o różnym poziomie znaczącego kryzysu życiowego. Stwierdzono, że wraz ze wzrostem poziomu sensownego kryzysu życiowego studenci stają się niezadowoleni z tego, co robią, nie czują się włącze- ni w życie, zamiast tego czują się bezradni, stają się nieprzygotowani na ryzyko i aktywne uczenie się, nie mogą polegać na sobie doświadczenie w odpowiednich sytuacjach, co osta- tecznie prowadzi do wewnętrznego napięcia w sytuacjach stresowych i braku witalności.

S ł o w a k l u c z o w e : sensowny kryzys życiowy, sens życia, podstawowe przekonania, witalność, spełnienie egzystencjalne

**Introduction**

ur modernity is characterized by gradual but relentless and purposeful development in the direction of further informatization and technicaliza-

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tion on the one hand, and the transformation of the moral and value founda- tions of human life on the other. This increasingly distances man from nature and deprives him/her of a sense of security in the world, clearly illustrating the human dilemma of E. Fromm, who describes the situation that became the precondition for the spiritual crisis of modern man, manifested, in par- ticular, in the fact that man ceased to worry about his/her soul, its values and its conformity to morality, replacing it with the desire for greater benefit: hu- man domination over nature has not gone unnoticed for both, and the further it goes, the more obvious it becomes that its consequences will long resonate with both contemporaries and descendants as «revenge of nature» in general and human nature, in particular, for what was done to them by man himself. In addition, man’s ability to think, which made him/her an «abnormal phenom- enon of nature… the irony of the universe»1, now leads him/her to existential

1 Freyger, R., *Erich Fromm and dialectical humanism, or humanistic psychoanaly-*

questions that have no answer2. One such question is the question of the mean- ing of life, which becomes a problem for those people who need it to live, who seek but do not find it, experiencing a life meaning crisis of varying duration and intensity or realizes that it is already lost. Moreover, the number of such people is gradually increasing: if K. Jung wrote that «a third of patients con- sult with him because of anxiety related to the meaning of life»,3 V. Frankl’s logotherapy is already focused on psychotherapy of noogenic neuroses been a consequence experiencing an existential vacuum (feeling «abyss» due to loss of meaning in life). W. Frankl argued that the question of the meaning of life arises even when a person lives worse than ever4, but I. Yalom describes situ- ations where this problem is faced by well-off and successful people5.

In fact, most modern people want to get the most out of life (and not always significantly, how it will be expressed and perceived from the outside), not thinking about whether there is meaning in their lives (if a person is «a com- plete human, active, creative personality» can realize himself/herself in the spontaneous activity of union with the world, he/she will «take his/her place under the sun and therefore will no longer feel doubts about the meaning of life and himself/herself», realizing that the «single meaning of life is life it- self», says E. Fromm6. Moreover, they try not to think about serious prob- lems, and this is natural. When a person is prosperous, completely satisfied with life, he/she does not have to think about the meaning. Those who begin to be interested in the question of the meaning of life may find that human- ity lives in a world of utter nonsense, that any meaning is contrived, not im- peratively necessary to justify its own existence. E. Giddens concludes: «the loss of meaning in life is the most important feature of the psychological cli-

*sis*. In *Personality: theories, experiments, exercises*. Ed. by Freyger R., Feydimen J. Pri- me-EVROZNAK, Saint Petersburg 2002, p. 648; Zvarych, I.M., Chujko, G.V., & Koltun- ovych, T.A., *Existential and humanistic psychology*. ChNU Chernivtsi 2019, p. 138.

2 Giddens, Je., *Consequences of modernity*. Praksis Moscow 2011, p. 67. 3 Jalom, I., *Gift of psychotherapy*. Izdatelstvo «Je» Moscow 2016, p. 190. 4 Frankl, V., *Man in search of meaning*. Progress Moscow 1990. p. 29.

5 Jalom, I., *Gift of psychotherapy*. Izdatelstvo «Je» Moscow 2016, p. 192.

6 Fromm, Je., *Escape from freedom. A man for himself*. OOO «Popurri». Minsk 1998, p. 56.

mate of modernity», due to «limiting the likelihood of encountering the ba- sic problems of human existence» of modern, prosperous and well-off person, which leads to leads to a «growing sense of the absurdity of people’s exis- tence»7. Thus, the present objectively actualizes the problem of the meaning of life and the meaning of the crisis of personality.

**The problem of the meaning of life**

ccording to V. Frankl8, we live in a time and century of sense of loss of meaning, which is increasingly widespread when a person’s faith in the meaning of his existence is undermined, and it is important to learn to distin- guish what is essential and what is not, what makes sense and what doesn’t…

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». Because our «society of affluence» (which E. Fromm calls market defining its essence more precisely) satisfies the basic needs of man, «not realizing his/ her desire for meaning»9. However, it is the modern course of life that «ge- nerates an excess of free time» of a person, and he/she tries to get rid of it by finding any occupation for himself/herself. After all, excess free time makes a person either bored or thinking. And then he/she faces awkward existential questions, in particular about the meaning of life.

Note that W. Frankl10 is convinced that a person is always focused on mean- ing, seeks to discover and implement it, that his/her life can never be meaning- less. However, according to the scientist, the question of the meaning of life in general is wrong (meaningless), because it «vaguely appeals to the gener- al ideas about life, and not to their own, specific, individual existence»11, it is impossible to discover the meaning of life that could be shared by many peo- ple that others could benefit from.

7 Giddens, Je., *Consequences of modernity*. Praksis, Moscow 2011 p. 66.

8 Frankl, V., *Man in search of meaning*. Progress, Moscow 1990. p. 39.

9 Op. cit. p. 256.

10 Op. cit. p. 174.

11 Op. cit p. 190.

This looks really absurd. However, this conclusion leads the scientist to sev- eral somewhat contradictory ideas. First, he emphasizes the uniqueness and originality of the meaning of each person’s life (also unique) but tends to un- derstand the meaning of life as the meaning of each individual life situation:

«discovering opportunities against the background of reality»12. That is, the question of the meaning of human life, according to Frankl, «makes sense only in relation to a particular situation and in relation to certain personally»,13 and life consists of a sequence of «unique» situations. These provisions encour- age Frankl’s followers, in particular A. Lengle to further specify the defini- tion and the concept of existential meaning «is reduced» to an equation with two variables. These variables are the «conditions and possibilities of a par- ticular situation and the characteristics of the person who is in that situation». Thus, meaning is set to possibility, «which we read between the lines of real- ity»14. Although, in another case, A. Lengle interprets the meaning of life as the answer of life itself to man’s question «Why live?».

We are ready to agree that each life situation should have its own specific meaning for each person (although we tend to replace the concept of meaning with the concept of «value» to separate the «life situation» and «life path» of the individual in terms of their scale (temporal, spatial, event related)). How- ever, the question of the meaning of life in general is not considered complete- ly absurd, because in the absence of meaning in life everyone would live not even just one day («here and now»), but from situation to situation. However, this is not the case, so there must be something that unites all life situations (or at least life situations for a certain, fairly long period of life; for example, if a person experiences a life meaning crisis, loss of meaning in life or level- ing its significance and will be forced to find a new meaning for his/her life). Faced with a new life situation, we ask ourselves what it means and decide how we should behave. Revealing the meaning of life (everyone has his/her own) what is most important (valuable) for us in life (and not just at a certain mo- ment), we do not think about the meaning of meaning, it is obvious to us, we

12 Op. cit. p. 37.

13 Op. cit. p. 189.

14 Leangle, A., *A life filled with meaning. Applied Logotherapy*. Genezis, Moscow 2009.

perceive it as vital goal, the most important existential task, and think of ways and means to achieve it. Moreover, when a person has the meaning of life, he/ she may not think about it as a healthy person does not think about the disease. In our opinion, only those who do not have a meaning in life (which is as- sociated with experiencing an existential vacuum, according to Frankl, or a life meaning crisis) can focus exclusively on the meaning of each life situa- tion (without noticing what unites them), who has lost hope to achieve in life the most desirable, subjectively important and valuable, without which a per- son cannot live, although he/she can continue to exist biologically and even psychologically, from situation to situation, discovering its significance for himself/herself or attributing it to him/her. We believe that the subjective sig- nificance for a person of certain life situations, events, his/her own actions is determined by him/her through relationship with the meaning of life as the most important existential value that integrates human life into a single unity,

without which a person experiences inability to continue a full life15.

V.E. Chudnovsky, to some extent imitating and sharing W. Frankl’s ideas, clarifies and develops them somewhat. He believes that «the meaning of life allows a person to perceive a specific situation in the light of a holistic» living space «and accordingly to plan and implement his/her own ideas», that discov- ering the meaning of his/her own life, a person «builds» his/her own destiny. The difficulty of identifying the meaning of life, according to the scientist, is to «find it among the many manifestations of the absurdity of life»16. That is, the primary is the meaning of life, which determines the place of a particular life situation in human destiny.

Secondly, we see a certain paradox in the fact that, on the one hand, V. Frankl believes that in every life situation a person can discover the mean- ing of life, on the other he argues that true meanings and values exist only in the noetic (spiritual, transcendent) dimension of human existence (and not in its biological or social existence), and everything that is in the noetic dimen-

15 Chaplak, J. V., Chujko, G.V., The meaning of life as a guide to human’s way of life.

*Psychological Journal*, *1(5)/2017*

16 Chudnovskii, V. Je., The problem of the optimal meaning of life. *Psihologija i shko- la*, *1/2015,* p. 100–117. <http://akme31.narod.ru/1.html>

sion (existential meanings and values), at the biological or psychological lev- els of human existence remains inaccessible to understanding or explanation. Third, recognizing meanings as individual and unique, V. Frankl, however, proposes three classes of eternal and universal values, ways of understanding life, «universals of meaning… faced by society or even all mankind»,17 able to make life meaningful, the values of creative activity (this is what a person performs beyond their professional responsibilities, gives to society), experi- ences (as feelings and emotions that a person receives from life) and attitudes (to complex situations and life circumstances that a person can not change, the

need to suffer and find deep meaning in it).

To some extent, it is clear to us why W. Frankl considers the question of the meaning of life in general as meaningless, because following his logic, that the meaning of life can be neither pleasure nor happiness, because the more effort we make to achieve this (satisfaction, happiness, social status), the less chance to get it, and continuing this logic we find that increasing the de- sire to find meaning in life actually reduces the possibility of doing so. I. Ja- lom18 summarizes these ideas in his own way: the search for meaning is «just as paradoxical»: the more we rationally seek it, the less we find it. Neverthe- less, V. Frankl, speaking of spirituality as a purely human dimension, invol- untarily gives a kind of interpretation of the meaning of human life: «Man is not here to observe and reflect himself/herself; man is here to give himself/ herself, to yield to himself/herself, to give himself/herself knowing and lov- ing»19. I. Yalom agrees with the conviction that giving oneself to others, be- ing useful to them, making the world better for others is good and provides a powerful source of meaning: the more a person «sees life as the fulfillment of the tasks set before him/her, the more meaningful it seems to him/her»20.

At the same time, from the point of view of V. Frankl, it is not a person who asks himself/herself what is the meaning of his life, but life itself offers him/her to unravel why and for what he/she lives, „throwing up” different sit-

17 Frankl, V., *Man in search of meaning*. Progress Moscow 1990. p. 288.

18 Jalom, I., *Existential psychotherapy*. RIMIS Moscow 2008, p. 325.

19 Frankl, V., *Man in search of meaning*. Progress Moscow 1990, p. 100.

20 Jalom, I., *Existential psychotherapy*. RIMIS Moscow 2008, p. 187.

uations and tasks that need to be solved. The more inimitable, original and unique life situations and goals, the more important is the meaning of human life, its implementation and at the same time, its responsibility for it. In this context, life looks like a sphinx. D.O. Leontiev adds that the main thing is not the awareness of the meaning of life, but that the real everyday life of a per- son to be saturated with real meaning21.

The loss of the meaning of life (life meaning crisis) is experienced by a per- son as a feeling of emptiness of life, an existential vacuum: a person not only does not know what he/she needs or needs to do, but also what he/she would like to do.

Therefore, he/she does exactly what others do or what «others want of him/ her»22. An existential vacuum is, in essence a loss of vital support, a state of suspension in emptiness, when neither the nature of the life meaning crisis, nor the forces that will need to be applied to overcome it, nor the vital energy it will take, nor its consequences for man are unknown.

I. Yalom is also quite right, believing that we will probably be able to do without answering the question of why we live, but it would not be easy for us to do the same with the question of how we should live23 (Jalom, 2008). Quite similar ideas are expressed by K.A. Abulkhanova, considering the meaning of life as a psychological way of experiencing the value of life24.

Analyzing the problem of meaning, I. Yalom comes to the correct con- clusion that in fact we notice the absurdity of things only when we evaluate them from too remote distance, «space perspective» or «galactic view», which

«takes away our hardiness». That is, life becomes meaningless when we try to look at it from an objectively distant, external point of view, forgetting that it is our own life. The meaning, the sense of meaning of life, according to I. Yalom, is a «by-product» of the search, involvement in the flow of life. In- volvement leads to the fact that the issues of «galactic perspective» cease to

21 Leontiev, D.A., *Psychology of meaning: nature, structure and dynamics of meanin- gful reality*. Smysl Moscow 2019, p. 181.

22 Frankl, V., *Man in search of meaning*. Progress. Moscow 1990, p. 308.

23 Jalom, I., *Existential psychotherapy*. RIMIS Moscow 2008, p. 167.

24 Abulkhanova-Slavskaia, K.A., *Life strategy*. Mysl. Moscow 1991, p. 38.

be important: the problem of finding meaning disappears (and for the «east- ern world», as noted by I. Yalom25, «life does not need justification», it just is);

«Involvement... increases our chances of combining the events of our lives into a holistic picture,» concludes the scientist26. He also concludes that constant self-development, improvement or movement to higher achievements (to an incomprehensible and essentially unappreciated goal) is not the meaning of life, because the meaning is closely related to the inclusion of man in the flow of life, gives meaning to the “self-transcendent base”27.

**The concept of life meaning crisis**

. Yalom writes that people strive for meaning, but «had the misfortune to be thrown into a world devoid of intrinsic meaning»28. However, he sees the task of man in «inventing» meaning so strong that it could be the basis for maintaining his/her life, while denying his authorship of this (note: «invent» and not «discover», as Frankl notes). However, people’s search for meaning systems, without ceasing during life, often «involves them in crises of the me-

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aning of life»29.

The crisis of meaning, according to I. Yalom, is manifested, in particular, in the fact that a person is «suddenly forced to ask a question about the value» of his/her goals as the main aspiration of life. Such a crisis can be caused, in par- ticular, by early achievement of a life goal, confrontation with death, or other borderline experience that forces a person to face «an existential situation and opens his/her eyes to the illusory nature of many semantic systems»30. Man gradually begins to realize the relativity of his/her own values, which previ- ously, until now, seemed to him/her absolute. However, semantic systems can

25 Zvarych, I.M., Chujko, G.V., & Koltunovych, T.A., *Existential and humanistic psy- chology*. ChNU Chernivtsi 2019, p. 465.

26 Op. cit

27 Jalom, I., *Gift of psychotherapy*. Izdatelstvo «Je». Moscow 2016, p. 194.

28 Op. cit, p. 190.

29 Op. cit. p. 190.

30 Op. cit. p. 306.

not simply be rejected without accepting anything in return, and the «substi- tute» must be at least relatively adequate to the situation, and this is the main essence and task of the life meaning crisis: not only to bring a person to the realization that the meaning of life is missing or lost (a person does not know, does not understand why he/she lives), but also to encourage him/her to seek meaning in life with life goals and with the existential values of the individual. Note that the academic explanatory dictionary of the Ukrainian language31 defines the crisis as «a sharp change in the normal state of affairs; breaking, aggravation of the situation», human dissatisfaction with themselves and their activities. In our opinion, this is too short and superficially general description of what a person feels when experiencing a crisis of meaning in life. The Ency- clopedia of Modern Ukraine differentiates the narrower concept of life crisis, considering it a «difficult period of life», when a person changes his/her attitude to the world and himself/herself in it, understanding his/her own experience and life path, noting that the cause of such a crisis may be deep long internal

conflict due to dissatisfaction with one’s own life or lack of meaning in it32.

K.V. Karpinskii33 as a result of his own research found that the problem of life meaning crisis is considered mainly in terms of age psychology and personology. In personology, the life meaning crisis is defined as «a systemic crisis of personal existence that arises due to unformed or inconsistent mean- ing of life with the objective conditions and individual possibilities of its im- plementation»; from the point of view of age development of the personality, it is «a normative crisis of mental development of the person in the period of adulthood, absolutely inevitable and necessary for achievement of the high- est level of personal maturity». The essence of this crisis is in the reflection and reassessment of former life values. The scientist himself defines the life meaning crisis as «a long mental state that arises on the basis of unresolved

31 Kryza T., *Dictionary of the Ukrainian language*: in 11 volumes (Vol. 4). Naukova dumka, Kyiv 1973, p. 343. <http://sum.in.ua/s/kryza>

32 Tytarenko, T. M., The crisis of life. *Encyclopedia of Modern Ukraine The Encyclo- pedia of Modern Ukraine*.: Institute of Encyclopedic Research of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine Kyiv 2006. <http://esu.com.ua/search_articles.php?id=963>

33 Karpinskii, K.V., *The questionnaire of the meaning of life crisis*. GrGU, Grodno 2008, p. 4.

contradictions in the search and practical implementation of an individual meaning of individual life», «a form of subjective experience of objectively existing meaningful life contradictions that hinder or block formation of per- sonality as a subject of life»34.

Depending on the nature of the contradictions that provoke its emergence, the scientist identifies three types of such crises: crisis of nonsense, crisis of meaninglessness and crisis of suboptimal meaning of life, focusing on the third:

«the case when the desire to discover and realize meaning... turns against the individual because of the impossibility to realize, to realize the meaning of life accepted by him/her»35. Moreover, according to K.V. Karpinski, a very realis- tic meaning of life will also be suboptimal (I. Yalom called it «early achieve- ment of life goal»36 (Jalom, 2008)), the meaning of which completely merges with the existing being, due to its inability to «motivate, guide and lead the person»37. That is, the meaning of life should indicate some ultimate purpose in life and at the same time to be quite significant, rather than focusing on the immediate process of life.

It is obvious that the «suboptimal» meaning of life, the scientist identifies following the definition of V.E. Chudnovskii’s notion of «optimal» meaning of life as «a harmonious structure of meaningful life orientations, which deter- mines the maximum disclosure of human abilities and individuality, its emo- tional comfort, which is manifested in experiencing the fullness of life and satisfaction with it»38 (as opposed to it). The essence of the «optimal» mean- ing of life is manifested in the organic combination of adequate for human life purpose and satisfaction with the process of its realization.

F. Vasiliuk among the «difficult life situations», which in general represent a «conflict between the desire and ability of man to fulfill it», considers the crisis, which he defines as a «situation of impossibility»: in it a person «faces

34 Op. cit. p. 63-64.

35 Op. cit. p. 63.

36 Jalom, I., *Existential psychotherapy*. RIMIS Moscow 2008, p. 85.

37 Karpinskii, K.V., Unrealistic meaning of life: functional features and crisis poten- tial. *Psychological research, 5 (23)/2012.* <http://www.elib.grsu.by/doc/4606>

38 Chudnovskii, V.Je., The problem of the optimal meaning of life. *Psihologija i shko- la*, *1/2015,* 100–117. <http://akme31.narod.ru/1.html>

the impossibility of realizing their aspirations, motives, values, all that can be called the inner needs of her life»; it is a conflict from which a person does not find a way out; «Turning point of life, which arises in a situation of impossi- bility of realization of the formed life plan»39. That is, in this context, the life meaning crisis can be understood as a difficult life situation of inability to re- alize the meaning of one’s own life (due to inability to detect it; loss of vital meaning; leveling its significance for man; lack of vision of its implementation). Life meaning crisis is a type of existential crisis, human experience which, according to L. Brammer, is accompanied by feelings of sadness and doubt in the ability to achieve life goals, in the effectiveness of the process of self-re- alization of the individual as a whole; thinking that life passes aimlessly and past a person, i.e. has lost its extraordinary value for him/her40. This crisis can not be considered typical or obligatory for a person: not everyone experiences it. In addition, it is not «tied» to a certain age and is experienced by everyone in their own way. Perhaps the only common feature in our opinion, is that it destroys the usual course of human life, and after experiencing a life meaning crisis, it is not restored in its original form, because, as a result of its experi- ence, a person rethinks his/her life in a sometimes futile attempt to find a new, no less valuable and subjectively important meaning that can replace the lost. In our opinion, a life meaning crisis is a life situation of acute and/or long- term impossibility of realization of a person’s meaning of life or continuation of his/her established, habitual existence, which becomes a subjectively in- surmountable obstacle in the life path of an individual and realization of his/ her life plan, internal conflict between the desired (which seems to a person crucial and absolutely necessary for life) and possible (lack of internal and external prerequisites for the realization of the meaning of life)41. Losing the meaning of life, a person simultaneously loses the basis of his/her own life

and part of himself/herself.

39 Vasiliuk, F.E., Typology of experiencing various critical situations. *Psychological journal*, *16 (5)/1995*, 104–114.

40 Chujko, G.V., Komisaryk, M.I., The problem of life crises of personality in psy- chology. *Psychological journal*, *1(21)/2019* 41–56. https://doi.org/10.31108/1.2019.1.21.3

41 Chujko, G.V., The Crisis of Meaning as a Turning Point in Human Life. *Problems of Modern Psychology, 45/2019,* p. 422.

**Manifestations, causes, and consequences of experiencing a life meaning crisis**

reating a method for diagnosing the life meaning crisis, K.V. Karpinsky42 not only defines it as «a meaningful crisis in the development of personali-

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ty, which blocks primarily the meaningful regulation and processes of meanin- g-making of the individual life path», but also names its main manifestations:

1. frustration of the need for meaning of life and reduced personal activ- ity associated with its search;
2. the lack of a single meaningful direction of life and reduced motiva- tion for life;
3. devaluation or radical revaluation of former values - sources of mean- ing in life;
4. disintegration of understanding, experience and realization of the mean- ing of life (cognitive, affective and conative components);
5. feelings of unrealization or devastation, exhaustion in life;
6. problems with the ordering (structuring, hierarchization) of values, sources of meaning in life;
7. substantive contradictions in the system of existential values of the in- dividual (conflicting meaning of life);
8. negative feelings about the unproductiveness of the individual way of life;
9. subjective difficulties in understanding life circumstances, events and making biographically important decisions based on a system of mean- ingful values;
10. narrowing the meaning of life and reducing the general level of aware- ness of life43.

In our opinion, the author of the method should add that the life meaning crisis can be said about only if a person finds the vast majority of these «man- ifestations», because, in our opinion, the last three of them are not absolute

42 Karpinskii, K.V., *The questionnaire of the meaning of life crisis*. GrGU, Grodno 2008, p. 63.

43 Ibidem.

evidence of the life meaning crisis. As for the fourth «manifestation» of the crisis, it should be noted that it is hardly appropriate to equate the meaning of life with a social attitude.

Glenn Perry, who is convinced that the crisis of life is experienced exclu- sively individually and subjectively, quite fully and logically in our opinion described the features / signs of human experience of such a crisis, we have only slightly changed the order of its presentation, emphasizing the regulari- ty of their appearance. Thus the life meaning crisis occurs unexpectedly, sud- denly for the person himself/herself (although others may notice its precursors, manifested in the behavior of the individual); it always to some extent dis- rupts the normal course of human life; it is not only a state, but also a rela- tively long process, experienced as feelings of suffering, grief, loss, despair, danger, in particular, because the development of life meaning crisis and its consequences and its impact on the future remain uncertain for a long time and unknown; the course of the crisis of the meaning of life is independent of human efforts or desires: when the crisis begins a person can do nothing, he/ she has a sense of loss of control over what happens to him/her in particular and his/her own life in general44 (How to cope, 1995).

Analyzing the event-related (represented by F. Vasiliuk) and subjective (R.A. Akhmerov) approaches to understanding the meaning of life, K.V. Karpinskii quite logically as for us, notes that the emergence of a life mean- ing crisis is determined by both external and intrapersonal factors45, the scien- tist tends to distinguish two forms of crisis: «exogenous» and «endogenous», depending on the predominance in its development of relevant factors. In our opinion, this is a somewhat artificial division, because although the impor- tance of external and internal factors in the emergence of life meaning crisis may be different / unequal, ultimately a person’s crisis causes the most sub- jectively assessed combination and interaction of these factors: interacting in each case, they are mutually reinforced.

44 Fontana, D., *How to cope with stress.* Perry, G. *How to Deal with the Crisis.* Brum, A., Dzhelliko, H. *How to live with your pain.* Pedagogika-Press Moscow 1995, p. 352.

45 Karpinskii, K.V., *The questionnaire of the meaning of life crisis*. GrGU Grodno 2008, p. 63.

S. Muddy considers the result of a person’s experience of a life meaning cri- sis or «small death» to be an existential neurosis, when a person feels «fear of the meaninglessness of life». He describes this experience as a state in which a person’s lack of meaning in life results in boredom, general disinterest and passivity in situations where you need to have your own opinion, or make a conscious choice or make an independent decision46. The scientist identifies three clinical forms of «existential disease» (S. Muddy’s term to denote the feeling of meaninglessness that penetrates into all corners of life): crusader- ism, nihilism and vegetativeness.

Crusaderism (from the word crusade) (also called «ideological adventur- ism») is characterized by a strong tendency for a person to find effective and important measures for himself/herself to immerse, jumping from one «im- portant» case to another to stay one step of the nonsense that haunts them. I. Jalom notes that the usual form of nonsense is the «stereotype of manic ac- tivity», which so depletes a person’s energy that the problem of meaning los- es its meaning for him/her47.

Nihilism is characterized by an active tendency to discredit activities that make sense to others. The energy and behavior of the nihilist are generated by despair, as I. Jalom notes, he/she seeks the vicious pleasure inherent in de- struction; according to S. Muddy, he/she will quickly prove that white is really black, and good does not happen at all, because «good» is really hidden «bad». The vegetative form of existential disease, according to I. Jalom, express-

es the extreme degree of futility: a person does not seek meaning in worthy deeds and noble motives, although he/she does not ridicule the meaning in which others believe. Instead, it is deeply immersed in the experience of aim- lessness and apathy i.e. a condition that has broad cognitive, affective and be- havioral manifestations. The cognitive component here is a chronic inability to believe in the usefulness or value of any life effort. Affective mood is ex- pressed in deep (inhibited) calmness and boredom, replaced by episodic de- pression. As the condition progresses, the individual becomes indifferent, and

46 Zvarych, I.M., Chujko, G.V., & Koltunovych, T.A. (2019). *Existential and humani- stic psychology*. ChNU Chernivtsi 2019, p. 300.

47 Jalom, I., *Existential psychotherapy*. RIMIS Moscow 2008, p. 314.

periods of depression occur less frequently, it becomes irrelevant to the per- son what he/she is busy and whether he/she is busy with anything at all (after all, why bother with work for life if it all ends in death?)48.

Some consequences of experiencing a life meaning crisis may be, in partic- ular, a thorough reassessment of a person’s own way of life and style, values, life goals and meaning, understanding of their non-absoluteness and the pos- sibility of change; awareness of the need to change / replace them with those that correspond to the new life situation, the desires and needs of the person himself/herself (which has also changed), can make his/her life meaningful again. Whatever the concrete consequences of experiencing and overcoming the crisis of the meaning of life are, it is worth realizing that after it, noth- ing in human life, nor he/she himself/herself will remain as before this crisis.

**Hardiness**

n the late 1970s, S. Kobeysa introduced the concept of hardy, noting the existence of a positive relationship between endurance and resilience, as endurance facilitates a person’s experience of stressful life events. Enduran- ce, which thanks to D.O. Leontiev received the name of vitality in Russian, consists of three basic components: commitment to goals and work, a sense of control over experience and its consequences, as well as the perception that

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change is a life challenge, and thus give a person the opportunity to grow49.

In psychological science this phenomenon came as «hardiness», according to S. Maddi50, who understood hardiness as a combination of three attitudes or areas of vitality of the individual (courage to live): acceptance of the chal- lenge, involvement in life and control over events.

48 Ibidem, 314-315.

49 Puri, R., Does Hardiness Improve Resilience? *International Journal of Engineering Technology Science and Research*, *3 (4)/2016*, p. 47–49.

50 Maddi, S.R., The story of hardiness: twenty years of theorizing, research and prac- tice. *Consulting psychology journal: practice and research*, *54(3)/2002* p. 160. https://doi. org/10.1037/1061-4087.54.3.173

Involvement is a person’s ability to be sympathetic to people and events, to be involved in their development and understanding, even though they cause anxiety, which generally contributes to a positive self-attitude of the individu- al; control is manifested in a person’s awareness of the possibility of influenc- ing everything that happens to him/her, despite the obvious complexity of this process, instead of manifestations of passivity or helplessness; accepting the challenge / risk is understood by the scientist as a person’s openness to exter- nal influences, understanding that changes in life should be turned into oppor- tunities, as a person’s desire to learn from their own experiences and mistakes, realizing that it contributes to further personal development51.

These three dimensions of hardiness, according to the scientist, provide courage and motivation of a person to carry out psychological work, turning crisis stressful circumstances into opportunities for growth, into superiority, creativity, wisdom and self-realization of a person; maintaining and ensuring his/her psychophysical health. Together, these attitudes of hardiness facilitate (promote) the realization that man formulates the meaning of life through his/ her own decisions and actions, and that the constant choice of the future leads to a full life; understanding that a person is able to cope with the difficulties and problems that life throws at him/her every day, including those that are in crisis. However, this activity involves the courage to overcome, endurance and effectiveness of social interactions and bold self-care52 and can be the ba- sis for the formation of a positive life philosophy of the individual.

In his works, S. Muddy emphasizes that sufficient functionality of human hardiness demands all three components to be developed. The predominance of one of the attitudes of hardiness at a low level of development of the other two entails not only a change in behavior but also personality characteristics. **The aim of the article** is to study the peculiarities of students’ experienc-

ing a life meaning crisis.

51 Maddi, S.R., The story of hardiness: twenty years of theorizing, research and prac- tice. *Consulting psychology journal: practice and research*, *54(3)/2002.* p. 174. https://doi. org/10.1037/1061-4087.54.3.173

52 Maddi, S.R., Hardiness: the courage to grow from stresses. *The Journal of Positi- ve Psychology*, *Vol.1*, Issue 3/2006 p. 165. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760600619609

### Objectives of the study:

1. to determine the levels of students’ experiencing a life meaning crisis;
2. to find out the peculiarities of the relationship of the life meaning crisis with the basic beliefs of students, existential fulfillment and hardiness;
3. to analyze the characteristic features of experiencing a life meaning crisis by students with different levels of its formation.

### Research hypotheses:

There is a connection between students’ experiences of the crisis of the meaning of life and their resilience, basic beliefs that form the basis of a sense of security and existential fulfillment.

Decreased levels of hardiness, negative changes in basic beliefs and the ability to make sense of their lives are accompanied by changes in the sever- ity of students’ experiences of life meaning crisis.

**Characteristics of the sample and research methods**

### Sample

The study involved 78 students of 1-3 courses majoring in «Psychology». The sample is homogeneous. The average age of the subjects was 19.2 years.

### Methods used in the study:

1. Questionnaire «Life meaning crisis» of K.V. Karpinskii53 contains 50 statements characterizing various aspects of a person’s attitude to his/ her own life, the degree of agreement with which (from «completely true» – 4 points, to «absolutely incorrect» – 1 point, max=200 points) a respondent must express. The sum of points scored by the respondents indicates the level of severity of signs of experiencing a life meaning crisis; the larger this amount, the more acutely and deeply the respon- dent experiences the crisis of the meaning of life.

53 Karpinskii, K.V., *The questionnaire of the meaning of life crisis*. GrGU Grodno 2008, p. 122-125.

1. «Hardiness Test» in the adaptation of D.O. Leontiev, O.I. Rasskazova54 is a Russian-language adaptation of the third version of the Hardiness Survey – The Personal Views Survey III-R, developed by S. Maddi. It consists of 45 points and diagnoses the hardiness of the individual (max=135 points) as his/her existential courage (personal characteris- tics and belief system related to himself/herself and the world and allow to overcome the anxiety felt by a person in a situation of uncertainty or choice), and its severity components: commitment, control and chal- lenge, S. Muddy’s understanding of which is given above.
2. «World Assumptions Scale, WAS» Ronnie Janoff-Bulman55 (1989), ad- aptation by O. Kravtsova, standardization by M.A. Padun, A.W. Ko- telnikova56 developed within the cognitive concept of basic beliefs of the individual, according to which one of the basic human sensations is a sense of security based on three categories of basic beliefs, which are the basis of subjective human world: 1) general attitude to the commitment of the world (belief that the world is more good than evil (combines the attitude to the world and people in it; is defined as the arithmetic mean between BW benevolence of world and BP benevo- lence of people); 2) general attitude to the meaning of the world (belief that the world is filled with meaning, that everything happens by ac- cident and subject to the law of justice (defined as the arithmetic mean between indicators J justice of the world, C – control of events in it and reversible R – randomness as a principle of distribution of events); 3) belief in the value of one’s own «I» (I’m a good person, I behave cor- rectly and I’m lucky) the arithmetic mean between SW – self-worth, SC – self-control and L – luckiness).

54 Leontiev, D.A., & Rasskazova E.I., *Hardiness test*. Smysl. Moscow 2006, p. 59-62.

55 Janoff-Bulman R., *World Assumptions Scale, WAS, adaptation by Kravtsova O. (2007). Test for a Sense of Security.* https://psycabi.net/testy/601-shkala-bazovykh-ubez- hdenij-r-yanov-bulman-adaptatsiya-o-kravtsovoj-test-na-chuvstvo-bezopasnosti

56 Padun, M. A., Kotelnikova, A.V., Modification of the Methodology for Researching the Basic Beliefs of a Personality R. Yanoff-Bulman. *Psychological journal, 29,* 4/2008, p. 98-106.

Respondents determined the degree of their agreement (from 1 point «true» to 6 points «no») with each of the 32 statements of the methodology, forming 8 scales – categories of beliefs about: 1) BW, benevolence of world; 2) BP, be- nevolence of people; 3) J, justice; 4) controllability of the world (C, control);

5) randomness as a principle of distribution of events (R, randomness); 6) SW, self-worth; 7) the degree of self-control (control over events) (SC, self-con- trol); 8) the degree of luck (L, luckiness).

The author notes that the normal rates on all scales are at least 3.5 points. Subjects who score so many points are characterized as more optimistic about the world and consequently more mentally stable in everyday life.

4) «Existence Scale» (Existenz-Skala, ESK; Existence Scale) A.Laengle, Ch. Orgler (1988–1989), adaptation by S.V. Krivtsova,57 measures how subjec- tively the existential fulfillment is felt, which indicates the degree of mean- ingfulness of his/her life, how well he/she lives and does well, being in inner harmony with his/her essence. That is, it determines a person’s subjective as- sessment of his/her own life.

The questionnaire consists of 46 items, according to which the respondent evaluates various aspects of his/her life, based on how appropriate the state- ment is: from «true» to «false» (6 assessment options in total).

When calculating the results, direct and inverse points are taken into ac- count.

The sum of the scores obtained by the subject according to the method is general indicator of existence (G). The indicators of 4 subscales of the meth- od (self-distancing (SD), self-transcendence (ST), freedom (F) and responsi- bility (V) and the following parameters: personality (P) (sum of SD and ST) and existence (E) (sum of F and V) are also taken into account.

Methods of mathematical processing are represented by Spearman’s cor- relation coefficient, Kraskel-Wallis and Mann-Whitney criteria.

Computer data processing was performed using Excel and IBM Statistica 22 software packages.

57 Laengle, A., Orgler, C., & Kundi, M. *Existenz-Skala, ESK*. P. 141-170. https://psyca- bi.net/testy/641-shkala-ekzistentsii-a-lengle-i-k-orgler [ date 12.10.21]

**Results of the research**

he results obtained by the questionnaire of K.V Karpinskii’s «Life me- aning crisis»58 indicate the predominance of students with a medium le-

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vel of severity of psychological signs of life meaning crisis. Only 19.23% of the subjects were diagnosed with its high level, which indicates a deep and intense experience of the crisis of the meaning of life.

Based on the results obtained on the level of severity of psychological signs of experiencing a life meaning crisis, the sample was divided into three subgroups: with high, medium and low levels of experience of a life mean- ing crisis (Fig. 1).

70%

**Fig. 1. Distribution of the studied by levels of life meaning crisis, %**

53%

16,67%

19,23%

64,1%

35%

18%

0%

Low level Middle level High level

Analysis of the results by the method of «Hardiness Test» (adaptation of

D.O. Leontiev, O.I. Rasskazova)59 shows that the study sample is dominated by respondents with average hardiness and its components. Only 16.67% of

58 Karpinskii, K.V., *The questionnaire of the meaning of life crisis*. GrGU Grodno 2008

59 Leontiev, D.A., & Rasskazova E.I., *Hardiness test*. Smysl Moscow 2006, p. 59-62.

students feel fully (at a high level of performance) involved in the course of life, another 20.51% of respondents consider themselves able to control what happens to them in life, and a slightly higher percentage, 24.36% of respon- dents are ready to take risks by accepting life’s challenges and transforming them into opportunities to change lives for the better. In general, a high level of hardiness as courage and willingness to accept life as it is, while maintain- ing internal unity was found in only 14.1% of students. While a low level of this indicator was diagnosed in 16.67% of respondents. They, according to S. Muddy, may have an increase of internal tension in a situation of stress due to lack of sustainable coping, lack of courage to overcome a stressful situation.

Multiple intergroup comparisons of independent samples were performed using the Kraskel-Wallis test, the data was interpreted using the Mann-Whit- ney U-test.

Comparison of groups with different levels of experience of the life mean- ing crisis according to the Kraskel-Wallis criterion indicates the presence of statistically significant differences between them on the scales «commitment» (H=33.67, p≤0.001), «control» (H=26.16, p≤0.001), «challenge» (H=25.85, p≤0.001) and «hardiness» (H=33.95, p≤0.001).

Therefore, it can be argued that with the change in the level of personal ex- perience of the life meaning crisis changes the rate of hardiness and its com- ponents. Thus, as the level of life meaning crisis increases, respondents are dissatisfied with the level of their involvement in the flow of life, feelings of helplessness and inability to meet life’s challenges, take risks for development, control and influence the events of their own lives; it all determines the situ- ation when they cope with life’s problems and stresses, demonstrating a lack of existential courage.

According to the results of the World Assumptions Scale (WAS) R. Ryan- nie Janoff-Bulman (1989), adaptation by O. Kravtsova,60 students perceive the world around them positively, they are open to it, are convinced of a relatively safe way to trust the world (M (BW)=16.37); in that, in general they are good,

60 Padun, M.A., Kotelnikova, A.V., Modification of the Methodology for Researching the Basic Beliefs of a Personality R. Yanoff-Bulman. *Psychological journal, 29,* 4/2008, p. 98-106.

loving and respectful people (M (SW)=16.09) are able to control what happens to them (M (SC)= 15.79), that good and bad events are distributed among peo- ple according to the principle of justice: everyone gets what they deserve (M (BP)=15.64), as well as the ability to control everything that happens in their own lives (M (C)=15.44). This causes them to experience a sense of psycho- logical security, safety, as an important prerequisite for resilience and the ab- sence of a crisis of meaning in life.

However, a comparison of the averages shows that most respondents are convinced of their commitment to the world and the value of their own self (averages – 16.37 and 16.09 points), while the fact that the world is fair, and the events that occur in it are random, respondents believe much less (average

– 15.05 and 14.92 points). However, students of psychology are especially un- convinced of their own luck (14.21 points), luck in a fair world.

It should be noted that the general attitude to the commitment of the sur- rounding world (M=16.01) in the studied above, while the general attitude to the meaning of the world (M=15.13) and beliefs about their own value (M=15.36) are less expressed.

A comparative analysis of data related to global, stable perceptions of stu- dents about the world and their security in it, affecting their emotional state, behavior, thinking (Fig. 5), indicates the presence of statistically significant differences between groups of students with different levels of meaningful cri- sis according to the following scales: «benevolence of world» (H=7.14, p≤0.05),

«benevolence of people» (H=11.321, p≤0.01), «justice» (H=7.2, p≤0.05), «con- trol» (H=9.16, p≤0.01), «self-worth» (H=14.94, p≤0.001), «self-control» (H=7.33, p≤0.05), «luckiness» (H=7.51, p≤0.05). No statistically significant differences on the scale of «randomness» were found.

The use of one-way analysis of variance to compare generalized catego- ries of basic beliefs of students of three groups indicates the presence of sta- tistically significant differences between them on all scales: «general attitude to the commitment of the outside world» (H=13,936, p≤0,001); «general atti- tude to the meaningfulness of the world» (H=9,992, p≤0,01) and «general be- lief about their own basic value» (H=18,701, p≤0,001).

Thus, the greater degree of experience of respondents with the life mean- ing crisis is associated with a slightly lower belief of students in the value of

their self and their luck; in the ability to manage the events of their own lives and influence their course; the world around them is also perceived by them as less favorable to them, and people are not as good as in the absence of a life meaning crisis; while the desire to comprehend everything that happens in the world, and the conviction that all events in it are not accidental, but sub- ject to the principle of justice, make sense to them.

It is interesting that in the group of students with an average level of ex- perience of the life meaning crisis, the indicators on the scales «general atti- tude to the commitment of the world» and «general attitude to the meaning of the world» (controllability and fairness of events) are statistically significantly lower (U=104.5, p≤0,01 and U=137, p≤0.01 respectively) than in students with a high level of its experience. Obviously, respondents who have the experience of a life meaning crisis in an acute phase are more interested in finding the meaning of their own lives and understanding what is happening to them, in discharging the justice of the world towards them and the belief in its mean- ingfulness. We can assume that the acute experience of a life meaning crisis may motivate them to search for meaning in understanding and comprehend- ing a meaningful, just and relatively human-controlled world.

According to the method of «Scale of Existence» (A. Laengle, Ch. Orgler, 1988-1989)61 the results on all scales of the method were at the average lev- el of manifestation.

The average subsistence rate of the sample was 181.47 points out of 275 possible, that is, respondents are sufficiently convinced of the meaningfulness and existential fulfillment of their own lives. At the same time, the value of personality slightly exceeds the average in existence (M=94.18 and M=87.29 points), therefore, we can assume that respondents are more open to them- selves and their existence in the world than seek to be strongly involved in life, accepting decisions and implementing them with a sense of responsibil- ity for what they have done.

Comparing the averages on the subscales, it can be noted that respondents are more capable of «self-transcendence» (M=64.46 points) than of «self-dis-

61 Krivtsova, S.V., Laengle, A., Orgler, C., Existenzskala A. Langle and K. Orgler. Existential Analysis. *Bulletin.* 1/2009. Moscow, 141-170.

tancing» (M=29.72 points), i.e. they emotionally respond to values and mean- ings that are outside of themselves, but have less internal space, which is manifested in an objective attitude towards themselves through the ability to look at themselves from the side, from a certain distance. While the indica- tors of «freedom» (M=41.42) and «responsibility» (M=45.92 points.) in the samples are relatively commensurate and appear at the average level; that is, students are not always convinced of the correctness of their decisions and do not feel sufficient inner freedom to live, being more often in the role of ob- server; nor do they feel obliged to take responsibility for their implementation. Comparison of groups of students with different levels of experience of life meaning crisis in terms of existential fulfillment and meaningfulness of life and its components indicates the presence of statistically significant differenc- es between a group of students with low experience of life meaning crisis and groups of respondents with medium and high levels. That is, deeply experienc- ing a life meaning crisis, a person is able to lose the opportunity to objectively assess himself/herself and his/her actions, mentally moving away from his/her own self, just as he/she reacts less and sympathizes with what is outside him/ her, ceases to understand his/her own desires and becomes insecure about him/ her and relationship with the world; a person feels neither involvement in the process of life nor responsibility for himself/herself. Thus, the increase in the level of life meaning crisis is associated with a decrease in «self-distancing» (H=8.28, p≤0.05), «self-transcendence» (H=16.55, p≤0.001), «responsibility» (H=19.93, p≤0.001), «personality» (H=16.13, p≤0.001), «existence» (H=20.32,

p≤0.001), the «general indicator of existence» (H=20.13, p≤0.001).

Note that the difference between the groups of subjects with medium and high levels of experiencing a life meaning crisis on the scale of «self-distanc- ing» was not detected (Uemp=371 at Ucr=225 p≤0,001), it is obvious that a per-

son’s ability to move away from himself/herself a certain distance, to make an

objective picture of what is happening in his/her own life, a direct response to random stimuli without a holistic perception of the situation and reflection on it and contributes to the formation of a life meaning crisis and its deepening. Analyzing the differences between the three groups of subjects with differ- ent levels of experience of the life meaning crisis by components of existential fulfillment, students with a high level can be described as those whose lives are

not meaningful, because they focus mainly on themselves and their own prob- lems, but due to underdeveloped ability to self-distancing in order to objective- ly assess themselves in terms of the world, they do not feel personally involved in the flow of life, remaining its passive observers (perhaps experiencing a life meaning crisis separates them from the world and other people, locking them- selves and their problems), indecisive and insecure their own decisions, they lack emotional relationships with the world and other people (it is possible that the intensity of the crisis of the meaning of their own lives makes them emo- tionally deaf to the experiences of others and helpless in the perception of be- ing and themselves in it, making their lives more functional than meaningful.

The results of our correlation analysis by the r-Spearman method (n=78) allow us to draw the following conclusions (table 1).

**Table 1 Correlation coefficients on the scale of life crisis and basic beliefs, exis- tential fulfillment, hardiness and their components**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | meaningful life crisis | commitment | control | challenge | hardiness |
| meaningful life crisis | 1 000 | -0,684\*\*\* | -0,644\*\*\* | -0,636\*\*\* | -0,713\*\*\* |
| benevolence of world (BW) | -0,321\*\* | 0,333\*\* | 0,296\*\* | 0,322\*\* | 0,333\*\* |
| benevolence of people (BP) | -0,273\* | 0,333\*\* | 0,206 | 0,104 | 0,333\*\* |
| justice (J) | -0,123 | 0,222 | 0,111 | 0,102 | 0,222 |
| control (C) | -0,227\* | 0,271\* | 0,291\*\* | 0,226\* | 0,271\* |
| randomness (R) | 0,182 | -0,102 | -0,074 | -0,174 | -0,102 |
| self-worth (SW) | -0,461\*\*\* | 0,454\*\*\* | 0,451\*\*\* | 0,492\*\*\* | 0,454\*\*\* |
| self-control (SC) | -0,212 | 0,196 | 0,168 | 0,160 | 0,196 |
| luckiness (L) | -0,329\*\* | 0,342\*\* | 0,311\*\* | 0,463\*\*\* | 0,342\*\* |
| self-distancing (SD) | -0,388\*\*\* | 0,406\*\*\* | 0,349\*\* | 0,297\*\* | 0,390\*\*\* |
| self-transcendence (ST) | -0,485\*\*\* | 0,550\*\*\* | 0,505\*\*\* | 0,546\*\*\* | 0,577\*\*\* |
| freedom (F) | -0,525\*\*\* | 0,686\*\*\* | 0,560\*\*\* | 0,538\*\*\* | 0,658\*\*\* |
| responsibility (V) | -0,522\*\*\* | 0,598\*\*\* | 0,574\*\*\* | 0,529\*\*\* | 0,620\*\*\* |
| personality (P) | -0,512\*\*\* | 0,567\*\*\* | 0,511\*\*\* | 0,521\*\*\* | 0,580\*\*\* |
| existence (E) | -0,556\*\*\* | 0,680\*\*\* | 0,605\*\*\* | 0,567\*\*\* | 0,679\*\*\* |
| general indicator of existence (G) | -0,571\*\*\* | 0,670\*\*\* | 0,599\*\*\* | 0,582\*\*\* | 0,675\*\*\* |

*Notes: \*\*\* – р ≤ 0,001; \*\* – p ≤ 0.01; \* – p ≤ 0.05.*

**Conclusions**

s a person’s experience of the life meaning crisis intensifies, the hardi- ness of the individual as an existential courage in accepting life as it is

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and overcoming obstacles and its components weakens: a person feels out of life, believing that he/she does not influence events or their results, not belie- ving that what is happening in his/her life will contribute to his/her develop- ment; does not feel safe in the world: does not believe in the commitment of the world to him/her, nor in the kindness of people, that is, in general does not consider the world good and safe for himself/herself, does not rely on the abi- lity to influence the course of events, is not convinced of the value of self and luck; human meaningfulness of life and its signs decrease: he/she feels a lack of distance towards himself/herself, inner disagreement and increased atten- tion to himself/herself; he/she lacks emotionality in relations with the world and himself/herself, feels insecure and helpless in the perception of feelings and life values, ceases to understand what he/she really wants; is unable to de- cide, shows indecision and uncertainty in actions; a person does not experien- ce personal involvement in life, not feeling his/her own ability to influence its course or events, being a frivolous spectator, not an active and responsible par- ticipant; is quite closed from the world, busy with himself/herself, solving his/ her problems; not noble to adequately navigate events, it is difficult for him/ her to make decisions and implement them, because he/she is not sure what he/she needs in life and the world; in general, the existence of such a person is not fulfilled, his/her focus on his/her own person leads to an inability to dia- logue with the world; Note that the results of correlation analysis do not say what in this case is the cause and what is the consequence, i.e. the individu- al’s experience of life meaning crisis causes a weakening of other indicators of its existential fulfillment or conversely, their reduction causes a person’s crisis of meaning of life.

Thus, the results of empirical research confirm the hypotheses about the existence of links between human experience of life meaning crisis, its via- bility, basic beliefs and existential fulfillment, as well as differences in the combination of these constructs and their components in students with differ- ent levels of experience of life meaning crisis.

We see the prospect of further investigations of this problem in an empiri- cal study of the experience of the crisis of life meaning crisis by students and the peculiarities of their emotional intelligence.

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