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ORIGINAL RESEARCH



The Impact of Psychological Transformation Game “My Dao” on Value Orientations of Participants



Authors' Contribution:

- A – Study design;
- B – Data collection;
- C – Statistical analysis;
- D – Data interpretation;
- E – Manuscript preparation;
- F – Literature search;
- G – Funds collection

Melnyk Yu. B.^{1,2} ABCDEFG , Stadnik A. V.^{1,2,3,4} ABCDEFG

¹ Kharkiv Regional Public Organization “Culture of Health” (KRPOCH), Ukraine

² Scientific Research Institute KRPOCH, Ukraine

³ Social-Psychological Center KRPOCH, Ukraine

⁴ Kharkiv National University of Internal Affairs, Ukraine

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Background and Aim of Study:

Abstract

Psychological transformation games that have great potential for solving a wide range of problems related to clients' mental health are becoming increasingly popular among psychologists and psychotherapists. These techniques should be not only interesting and attractive to clients but also effective as a form of psychological practice.

The aim of the study: to investigate the impact of the psychological transformation game “My Dao” on value orientations of participants using the diagnostic method of Schwartz.

Material and Methods:

The study used the toolkit of the psychological transformation game “My Dao”. The effectiveness of the game impact on the participants was determined by means of the diagnostics of value orientations suggested by Schwartz. The treatment group consisted of 134 people, 75 men (55.97%) and 59 women (44.03%) aged 17-35 years. The control group included 126 people, 69 men (54.76%) and 57 women (45.24%) aged 18-30 years. The results of the treatment and control groups were measured using the SPSS Statistics Module. The obtained results prove statistical significance ($p < 0.05$).

Results:

The greatest impact of the developed game on the participants is observed at the level of normative ideals: tradition, conformity, security, hedonism and universalism. This indicates their certain change towards increasing harmony and stability, as well as reducing humility and acceptance of their destiny. At the level of individual priorities, there is an increase in hedonism, power and stimulation, which indicates an increase in the role of satisfaction, success, ambition, the desire for novelty and strong emotions. The obtained high results of universalism, hedonism, self-direction and conformity indicate an increase in understanding, tolerance, enjoyment of life, self-control, self-government, self-discipline and politeness of game participants.

Conclusions:

The use of the transformation game “My Dao” in psychological practice is an effective psychotherapeutic method that affects the value orientations of participants, changes in self-esteem and motivation, disclosure of their personal resources to solve problems and develop further. This technique is universal due to the age category of participants and the ability to solve psychological problems.

Keywords:

psychological transformation game, value orientations, motivation, diagnostics, toolkit, psychological problems

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Information about the authors:

Melnyk Yuriy Borysovych (Corresponding Author) – <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8527-4638>; y.b.melnyk@gmail.com; Doctor of Philosophy in Pedagogy, Associate Professor; Chairman of the Board, Kharkiv Regional Public Organization “Culture of Health” (KRPOCH); Director, Scientific Research Institute KRPOCH, Ukraine.
Stadnik Anatoliy Volodymyrovych – <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1472-4224>; Doctor of Philosophy in Medicine, Associate Professor, Kharkiv National University of Internal Affairs; Director, Social-Psychological Center KRPOCH, Ukraine.



Introduction

Socio-cultural and socio-economic changes taking place in society in recent years, firstly, are global, and secondly, the speed of these changes is increasing, which affects the psychophysical state of the population. New pandemics are emerging. Thus, governments of a vast majority of countries respond to the COVID-19 pandemic by introducing social distancing, which affects the psycho-emotional state of population and contributes to deviant behaviour, neurotic disorders, etc. All this increases the demand for psychological care and draws increasing attention of various segments of population to psycho-preventive and psycho-hygienic measures (Melnyk et al., 2020).

Among a wide range of psychological approaches, as well as methods, we will consider one of the most universal, in our opinion, the method of psychological game. Psychological game, in contrast to “entertaining game” or “educational game” that focus mainly on recreation or learning (intellectual development), has an impact on all areas of a person’s life: motivational, cognitive, affective, conative, value, and helps to improve the mental health of the individual in general (Melnyk, 2004).

Psychological transformation games have become increasingly popular among psychologists and psychotherapists in recent years, as they, directly and indirectly, address a wide range of issues related to the mental health of their clients. In particular, they develop cognitive activity, emotional intelligence, somatic awareness and archetypal integration, value orientations, which contribute to psychologically significant personal transformations.

Thus, for a psychologist, game as a form of activity is universal and attractive, it simulates the experience of difficult situations and their solutions. Therefore, in modern psychological practice, transformation games are actively used.

The aim of the study. To investigate the impact of the psychological transformation game “My Dao” (Melnyk & Stadnik, 2018b) on value orientations of participants using the diagnostic method of Schwartz.

Materials and Methods

The toolkit of the psychological transformation game “My Dao”: 12 figures representing animal symbols; 108 picture cards (reproduction of classical paintings), divided into 3 groups; 36 incentive (motivation) cards with words of wishes; a six-sided dice (each of its six facets marked with a different number of dots from 1 to 6); a game board, divided into 3 sectors (from 1 to 36 points in each) according to the leading activity (play, study, work).

The method of diagnosing the value orientations by Schwartz (adapted by Karandashev (2004) was used to test the effectiveness of the impact of the developed methodology of the psychological transformation game “My Dao” on the study participants. The first part of the questionnaire is designed to study the values, ideals and beliefs that affect the individual. The list of values consists of two parts: nouns and adjectives, which

include 57 values. The participant evaluates each of the proposed values on a scale from 7 to 1 points. The second part of the Schwartz questionnaire is designed to study the personality profile. It consists of 40 descriptions of a person, characterizing 10 types of values. A scale of 4 to 1 points is used to evaluate the descriptions.

The treatment group consisted of 134 people, 75 men (55.97%) and 59 women (44.03%) aged 17-35 years. The control group included 126 people, 69 men (54.76%) and 57 women (45.24%) aged 18-30 years.

The methods of mathematical statistics were used – Pearson criterion (χ^2). The means of value orientations of the treatment and control groups were measured using the SPSS Statistics Module. The obtained results prove statistical significance ($p < 0.05$).

Results

Let us consider the main provisions of the developed psychological transformation game “My Dao” or “My Way” (hereinafter – “My Dao”).

The name of the game is a phrase that characterizes the philosophical concept of the developed methodology. If the first word “My” does not require clarification, the second is a rather complex category. The Chinese concept of “Dao” (“Tao”) is complex and ambiguous. This is one of the most important categories of Chinese philosophy. Confucius and the early Confucians gave it moral significance, interpreting it as the “path of man”, i.e. moral behaviour and a social order based on morality. The most famous Taoist interpretation of the Dao (Tao) is contained in the “Tao Te Ching” treatise: “Dao is eternal and has no name” (Didyk, 2013), where the phenomenon of “Dao” can be understood as a universal principle, rationally inaccessible, and therefore a person should interfere as little as possible with this principle of self-realization by his conscious action and desire. Lao Tzu considered that following the Dao means seeing, experiencing the forces and sailing along with the wave without resisting the flow (Didyk, 2013). This does not mean that a person should rush into the first wave that comes across. First, you need to feel intuitive how this world lives and then surrender to the wave. Living naturally in Taoism means following naturalness, avoiding arbitrary actions caused by attempts to comprehend what exists, instead of feeling what exists (Yachyn et al., 2011).

This term should not be confused with the acronym DAO, which has recently emerged and means a decentralized autonomous organization in which control is distributed and distributed among team members, rather than hierarchically around a single authoritative figure. Although our proposed methodology is focused on the client(s) and not the group leader, we use the term “Dao” as the notion of Taoism, not as a distributed ledger technology.

“My Dao” methodology is a complex intertwining of psychological approaches, theories and techniques, including:



- the psychoanalytic approach to the analysis of the player's personality through the study of psychological ego defence mechanisms and the use of psychoanalytic techniques (Freud et al., 1953/2001);
- the analytical approach to the analysis of complexes and the unconscious through the choice and interpretation of the choice of game pieces by players (Jung, 2014);
- the transactional analysis (structural analysis, transactional analysis, game analysis, scenario analysis) to study the interaction of players in communication, accompanied by the presentation of their positions (Berne, 1964/2016);
- the Gestalt approach to the interpretation and discussion of picture cards and stimulus cards carried out by participants in the game (Perls, 1973);
- the individual approach to the analysis of life goals and lifestyle at different age stages (game zones) of players (Adler, 2013);
- the activity and body-oriented approach to the analysis of behaviour and nonverbal actions of players that they perform during the game (Reich, 1972).

Among the many methodological approaches and theories that we relied on in the development of "My Dao", the theory of "Leading Activity Periodization" should be singled out (Elkonin, 2001). According to this theory, psychologists traditionally distinguish childhood, teenage, and early youth periods.

In the developed methodology, we have divided the game into three stages:

- 1) childhood, where the leading activity is play;
- 2) adolescence and youth, where the leading activity is education;
- 3) the period of adulthood and old age, where the leading activity is a professional activity.

The important starting points and key principles of the "My Dao" methodology are:

- the principle of neutrality;
- the principle of equal position;
- the principle of unity of decision and action.

The principle of neutrality is realized through the inner position of the psychologist. This is due to the fact that the attitude of the game master affects the outcome of the game even if it has not been pronounced verbally. In the game, the shown leading verbal and nonverbal signals of the psychologist can (consciously or unconsciously) be added by the participants to their personally significant self-created story. And this, in turn, further affects certain decisions. The position of neutrality, in this case, implies a non-judgmental approach, impartiality and professional interest of the game master in the client. If a psychologist has personal feelings and thoughts, it is important that he/she defines them as a personal position and as one of the possible points of view.

In addition, the principle of neutrality is manifested in the fact that the game master does not interpret the information that arises during the game. He/she generally works based only on the formal signs of what he/she hears and sees during the game. But he/she can

support clients by creating the conditions for the game to continue without delving into the content.

If necessary, the game master uses metaphorical images (words, parables, anecdotes, stories) in the form of therapeutic metaphors. A therapeutic metaphor deals with the unravelling of the hidden content of the client's inner world and generates in his subconscious mind the processes associated with the construction of various internal associations. As a result, conscious and unconscious processes interact, giving rise to new interpretations and new behavioural reactions. This reflects the inner experiences and the ability to reflect on them. Another facet of the principle of neutrality is realized through the game master's concern for the emotional background of the game. In the proposed methodology, it is the unity of word and action, decision and its implementation that is the key to the transformation effect. The optimal background for the game is a positive atmosphere without an emphasis on the emotions of clients. This approach is not superficial, it provides the lightness and dynamism necessary to maintain the focus on the goal. We usually perform more profound work with clients' emotions at an individual session.

The principle of equal position is transmitted through the position of the game master, who does not provide assistance or teach. He/she only creates the conditions for the game. Thus, each of the participants is the only expert in his/her life who is responsible for deciding and achieving his/her own goals. The psychologist is responsible for strict compliance with the rules and the order of the game of participants. In addition, he/she can ask formally logical questions without delving into the semantic aspects.

The principle of unity of decision and action is key to the transformation process. It is realized not only in the semantic story that the client creates during the game but also in a combination of sensorimotor and ideomotor components. We believe that when a participant of the game has no internal contradictions but enough motivation, the successful implementation of the plan is inevitable. This idea is suggested by the psychologist to participants of the game. That is, if a participant has set a goal but cannot achieve it during the game, it does not mean that the task is not solved in principle. But that means he/she is not to blame for his failure.

The developed psychological transformation game "My Dao" simulates the participants' passage through typical stages of human life.

The aim of "My Dao" is to research the self-esteem and motivation of participants, disclosing their personal resources for problem-solving and further development. The target group of "My Dao": it is designed for clients of a fairly wide age range – from young people (from 17) to the elderly, as well as for clients with a wide range of deep personal problems. It can be used for individuals in non-clinical and clinical psychotherapy.

"My Dao" toolkit:

- 1) 12 figures representing animal symbols and corresponding to the types of temperament (properties) of the nervous system:



- mammals (elephant, monkey, dog);
 - birds (peacock, crow, eagle);
 - reptiles (turtle, chameleon, crocodile);
 - waterfowl (whale, goldfish, dolphin);
- 2) 108 picture cards – reproduction classical paintings, turned upside down and arranged in separate groups:
- 36 cards depicting scenes related to the age of childhood, where the leading activity is play;
 - 36 cards depicting scenes related to the age of youth, where the leading activity is education;
 - 36 cards depicting scenes related to the age period of adulthood, where the leading activity is professional activity (work);
- 3) 36 incentive (motivation) cards with the words of wishes, which are composed in a pile and turned upside down, except for one card, which is face up and placed next to this group;
- 4) a six-sided dice (each of its six facets marked with a different number of dots from 1 to 6);
- 5) a game board, divided into 3 sectors (from 1 to 36 points in each) according to the leading activity (play, study, work); each sector of the game board has stop-marks: “growth”, “prize”, “penalty”.

“My Dao” game description.

Usually, before the start of any transformation game, participants are asked to define the playing focus. This technique is used to record changes in players that occur after the game, the reflection of the participants of the game or it is even an indicator of the effectiveness of the psychologist. We do not use this technique in our proposed methodology, as we believe that it is much more important to study the changes that occur in players during the game than the “classic” result of the game (who has won; what the result is; whether the goal was achieved, etc.).

The game is divided into three stages: preparatory, main and final.

The preparatory stage. The master instructs players selected in advance, informs them about the rules and the goal of the game, draws lots to determine the order of the participants’ play. Then playing cards are shuffled, creating a random sequence of these cards. After that, the master asks the players to take turns (according to the results of the draw) to choose one of the 12 animal characters. Analyzing their conscious or random choice, each player answers the question: “Why did I choose this particular animal?”, “What do I like/dislike about it?”, “What does it look like?”. An important condition for this stage is to create an atmosphere of trust and friendliness.

The main stage. Players take turns throwing the dice on a flat surface to get a random number and according to this number make a certain number of moves. After moving a figure on one of the three sectors of the game board, they take a picture card from a certain pile. The ordinal number of this card in the pile must correspond to the number of moves. They then describe the associations that this card evokes in them, and answer the master and participants’ questions if any. For example: “What does this image remind you of?”, “What do the characters in the picture feel?”, “What are

their problems?”, “What is their goal”, “What associations does the chosen picture evoke?”, “Who would you like to talk to?”, “Who is this?”, “What would you like to ask?”, “What did they answer you?”. Players keep the picture card until the end of the game, they symbolize their achievements in life.

After the answer, players take a motivation card from the pile of face up incentive cards or choose to take it from the pile of face down cards. They then answer the master’s questions, aimed at the player’s understanding of the resource/anti-resource of wish words to achieve the goal and solve problems. For example, “Why have you chosen a face up/face down card?”, “What does this wish word mean to you?”, “What does this wish word motivate you to do?” or “Why do you think you have chosen/you have got this wish?”.

Each answer is commented on and discussed if players wish. At this stage, game participants must identify their resource states (meditation, serenity, confidence, inspiration, interest, attentiveness, daydreaming, energy surge, relaxation, anticipation, emotional uplift, feelings of freedom, intellectual uplift, focus, calm, a sense of the path, etc.). that were obtained or strengthened during the game. The master focuses on their causes and consequences, actions and deeds. After discussing this card, the player puts it back to the pile face down, and with it, he/she puts the one that was face up. He/she then opens the top motivational card from this pile, which he/she places next to the pile. This gives the next participant the opportunity to choose a motivational card.

Participants go through all three sectors: first yellow (play), then green (study) and red (work). They make the next moves, describing the associations with the taken picture cards and the taken/selected motivational cards. When a player stops at the “growth” mark, he/she moves forward (doubles the result of the last throw). When a player stops at the “prize” mark, other participants must present him with one of their picture cards that they choose at their discretion. When a player stops at the “penalty” mark, the participant misses the next move. Having reached these points, participants can express their opinion on the justice/injustice of destiny.

The final stage. Participants and the master make conclusions. Participants analyze their life achievements, associating them with the cards accumulated during the game. The master can discuss the following issues: the importance of the place and size of a particular area of life for the participant; the actual amount of energy spent on a particular area of their lives; active and passive spheres, the use of legal or other strategies of professional activity; general characteristics of personal resources; conditions and opportunities to master the professional sphere for self-realization; personal balance of values. Summing up, the master emphasizes that the winner in this game is not the one who came first to the finish line or collected more cards, but the one who was able to rethink the essence and meaning of his/her life.

To test the effectiveness of the psychological transformation game “My Dao” we used the method of



diagnosing the value orientations by Schwartz (adapted by Karandashev (2004) applied to study the dynamics of changes in values in groups and individuals in connection with their life problems. The questionnaire is based on the theory that all values are divided into social (cultural orientations) and personal. The respondent was asked to rate the importance of each value as the dominant principle of his life in points. The higher the score, the more important this value is for him/her.

Here is a brief definition of value orientations according to their central goal according to Schwartz:

- Power – social status, dominance over people and resources;
- Achievement – personal success according to social standards;
- Hedonism – pleasure or sensual gratification for oneself;
- Stimulation – excitement and novelty;
- Self-Direction – independence of thought and action;
- Universalism – understanding, tolerance and protection of the welfare of all people and nature;

- Benevolence – preservation and improvement of the well-being of loved ones;
- Tradition – respect and responsibility for cultural, religious customs and ideas;
- Conformity – restraint of actions and motives that may harm others and do not meet social expectations;
- Security – safety and stability of society, relationships and oneself.

For the study, we selected a group of clients before and after the psychological transformation game “My Dao” – 134 people, including 75 men (55.97%) and 59 women (44.03%) aged 17-35 years (high school students, university students, employees). The control group consisted of 126 people, including 69 men (54.76%) and 57 women (45.24%) aged 18-30 years (mostly university students).

The study of the values by the methods of Schwartz showed the means of value orientations of treatment (before and after the game) and control groups (in points) (Table 1).

Table 1

The Means of Value Orientations of Treatment (Before and After the Game) and Control Groups According to the Method of Schwartz

Levels studied at different stages	Value orientations (in points)									
	Universalism	Power	Hedonism	Self-Direction	Security	Stimulation	Conformity	Tradition	Achievement	Benevolence
Level of normative ideals										
Treatment group before the game (n=134)	6.6	6.1	6.9	6.4	4.4	5.9	6.8	6.2	6.4	7.0
Treatment group after the game (n=134)	5.9	5.7	6.2	6.4	5.8	5.5	6.2	5.3	6.2	6.6
Control group (n=126)	6.4	5.8	5.8	6.6	4.2	5.1	6.8	6.1	6.5	6.8
Level of individual priorities										
Treatment group before the game (n=134)	4.2	3.2	3.7	4.2	4.5	3.7	4.2	4.0	3.9	4.2
Treatment group after the game (n=134)	4.5	3.8	4.5	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.3	3.9	4.0	4.3
Control group (n=126)	4.3	3.4	3.8	4.5	4.0	3.6	3.8	3.6	3.9	3.9

As we can see, the values of benevolence (7.0), hedonism (6.9) and conformity (6.8) are the highest in the treatment group at the level of the normative ideals before the game. These indicators characterize a person for whom loyalty, indulgence, pleasure, enjoyment of life, obedience, self-discipline, politeness, respect for parents and elders are important. After completing the game, these indicators dropped to 6.6 and 6.2 points, respectively. At the same time, the most significant dynamics of some indicators during the game should be noted. There was an increase in safety indicators from 4.4 to 5.8 points ($p < 0.05$), which indicates an increase in the role of harmony and stability. There is also a noticeable decrease in the role of tradition from 6.2 to 5.3 points, universalism from 6.6 to 5.9 points and hedonism from 6.9 to 6.2 points ($p < 0.05$), which indicates the devaluation of humility, acceptance of one's own destiny after participating in the game.

As for the control group, the most significant results are shown in the following values: benevolence (6.8), conformity (6.8) and self-direction (6.6), which corresponds to such qualities as honesty, responsibility, friendship, self-discipline, politeness, self-control and self-government.

At the level of individual priorities in the treatment group, an increase in hedonism (3.7/4.5), power (3.2/3.8) and stimulation (3.7/4.1) during the game is observed, which indicates that for the students the role of satisfaction, success, ambition, desire for novelty and strong emotions increased.

At the same time, high results of universalism (4.5), hedonism (4.5), self-direction (4.3) and conformity (4.3) after the game indicate an increase in understanding, tolerance, enjoyment of life, self-control, self-government, self-discipline and politeness. The level of individual priorities of the control group is also



characterized by high results of self-direction (4.5) and universalism (4.3).

Thus, the greatest impact of the developed psychological transformation game “My Dao” on the client according to the method of diagnosing the value orientations by Schwartz is observed at the level of normative ideals (security, tradition, hedonism and universalism), which indicates a certain change towards the increase in harmony and stability, decrease in humility, acceptance of one’s destiny, satisfaction, enjoyment of life, understanding and tolerance. At the level of individual priorities, there is an increase in hedonism, power and stimulation.

Discussion

One of the effective methods in the work of a psychologist is a psychological game. At the same time, in terms of form and content, it is usually clear and interesting to wide circles of people of any level of education. Due to these facts, the psychological game can be a modern, technological and universal tool for psychological assistance.

The game is a universal phenomenon of human existence, inherent in all human communities without exception. The analysis of the phenomenon of game in modern science is based on historically formed approaches in the game theory of previous eras, each of which is characterized by its own views on its essence (Guzik, 2012). Thus, the ancient Greek philosopher Plato (427-347 BC) in his last dialogue (England, 1921) notes that man has to spend his life in the game, playing certain games, to get the support of gods and repel enemies. He even considered its educational and formative functions. In the Middle Ages, the game was dominantly viewed as a manifestation of immoral and sinful life, which according to Augustine’s work “The City of God” destroyed the Romans (Augustine, 2006).

It should be noted that in the 19th century, the teaching of Charles Darwin about the laws of the historical development of living nature had a great impact on the formation of game theory. The ideologist of social Darwinism Spencer believed that game is an artificial exercise of forces, which, in the absence of natural action, become ready for genuine activity (Thomson, 1906). Freud et al. (2001) regarded game as the realization of repressed desires, as the earliest normal forms of activity. Berne (1964/2016), Fink (2016) and Huizinga (1938/2016) made the greatest contribution to the modern scientific understanding and interpretation of the game phenomenon.

Human culture emerges and unfolds in play. Culture arises in the form of play, first it is played out and thus consolidated in the life of society, passed down from generation to generation (Huizinga, 1938/2016).

The game is a set of recurring complementary ulterior transactions characterized by a well-defined psychological manifestation. During a hidden transaction, the participant often pretends, because he/she is doing one thing, but in reality, he/she is doing something else. In general, the game is an infinite and dynamic element of the unconscious plan or scenario of

each person’s life (Berne, 1964/2016).

Fink (2016) calls the play the fifth existential basic phenomenon of human existence, the last in the hierarchical sense, less significant and substantial than death, love, work and ruling. He considers it to be as eternal as these phenomena. It embraces the entire human life to its foundations, take hold of it and significantly determines the existence of man, as well as the way of understanding human existence. It permeates other basic phenomena of human existence, being inextricably intertwined and bound to them.

At a certain stage of society development, game practices are more and more clearly manifested in non-game contexts, and game logic is purposefully used to solve certain problems, including business, managerial and educational. In modern science, these processes are described by the term “gamification” (Frissen et al., 2015). Nicholson (2015) proposes a model of “meaningful gamification – RECIPE” for transformative long-term impact on client’s behaviour based on intrinsic motivation. It contains the following game elements:

1. Play – facilitating the freedom to explore new possibilities and make mistakes, allowing you to overcome the boundaries imposed by structure and rules and experiment with new rules.
2. Exposition – creating stories that are integrated with the real-world setting, as well as the opportunity for participants to create their own stories.
3. Choice – developing systems that put the power in the hands of the participants.
4. Information – using game technologies to allow participants to increase their knowledge about the real-world context.
5. Engagement – encouraging participants to learn from others.
6. Reflection – assisting participants in finding other interests and past experiences that can deepen engagement and learning.

Thus, within the existing system of social relations, the game is one of the mechanisms of transmission of cultural traditions from one generation to another (Nicholson, 2015). Many children’s games, in which the child’s socialization takes place, are imitations of various actions performed by people in real-life situations. The game can be an imitation of a conflict. Having experienced a conflict in the form of a game, a person is prepared for actions in the event of its actual occurrence. According to modern views, the game is a reflection of reality, a simulation of living in difficult situations. The business game acts as a means and method of preparation and adaptation to work, social contacts in professional situations. The modern form of the work of a psychologist is a transformation game (Faerman, 2020). Game technology is used as a universal and attractive type of activity and cognition, a form and method of teaching.

Game activity performs the following main functions (Cherevko, 2006): entertaining (providing satisfaction, arousing interest, inspiring further activities); communicative (teaching interpersonal communication, assimilation of social and cultural values); self-



realization (this is a testing ground for practical activities); therapeutic (overcoming various difficulties that arise in other activities); diagnostic (detection of deviations from normative behaviour, self-cognition during the game); corrective (making positive changes in the structure of personal qualities); socialization (inclusion in the system of social relations, assimilation of the norms of human coexistence).

It is found out that transformation games have strong motivational potential (Heckhausen, 1977). The effectiveness of the transformation game is ensured by the “Zeigarnik effect” (the effect of incomplete action and the effect of waiting), which can cause a feeling of approaching success in achieving the goal. In addition, due to the conditions of the game, the resistance of the participants is weakened, and the intrinsic motivation is activated due to the effects of the field (Lewin, n.d.).

The advantage of transformation games is that they capture attention, increase group excitement, along with the so-called game responsibility, increase reactivity in the game situation (Myers, 2009).

Thus, the study of the scientific literature allowed us to conclude that game as a form of activity has advantages for the work of a psychologist because it:

- helps to establish contact with the client;
- helps to remove barriers in communication;
- works directly with the subconscious;
- allows a person to understand, feel and verbalize current, exciting issues;
- searches for unexpected solutions, views and discoveries;
- develops new options for overcoming problems.

For the client, the psychological game is important because it is:

- a teaching method that allows a person to better understand themselves and their values, to understand their problems;
- assistance in achieving an important life or professional goal;
- a way to strengthen relationships with others (relatives, friends, colleagues, etc.);
- the ability to understand interpersonal and intrapersonal conflicts;
- a way of training psychophysiological and psychosomatic activities, developing new skills;
- a way of contact with the subconscious and understanding the causes of life obstacles;
- the possibility of relaxation, pleasant pastime and alternative recreation in a game format.

In modern psychology, there are several theories of periodization of human mental development in ontogenesis (Elkonin, 2001; Freud et al., 2001; Kohlberg, 1969; Piaget, 1959). Despite the fact that none of these authors considers human ontogeny over 20-year period, each of these theories is valuable and reflected in the theoretical foundations of our methodology.

Let us consider one of the most spread theories – “Leading activity periodization” (Elkonin, 2001). Without delving into the specifics of the activity approach, we have to note that the works of this scholar became one of the most valuable for the development of

the theoretical basis of the psychological transformation game “My Dao”. Elkonin (1989) was one of the first to draw attention to the interaction of ideal and real forms: primary forms of affective-semantic formations of human consciousness exist objectively outside each individual, exist in human society in the form of works of art, i.e. these forms existed earlier than individual or subjective affective-semantic formations.

In the process of life, a person develops “psychological neoplasms”, goes through certain stages (age crises), characterized by psychological changes, the sensitivity of the individual to external influences and a decrease in resistance to them (Elkonin, 1989). At each stage, certain personal values become more important. Values are a subjectively interested attitude towards things, phenomena, therefore their development presupposes an interested attitude towards educational and professional activities. They affect life orientation, professional and family orientation, professional growth and other motives that shape personality (Melnyk, 2017; Melnyk & Stadnik, 2018a).

Thus, for a psychologist, the transformation game is attractive because it helps to establish contact, works directly with the subconscious, allows a person to realize, feel and verbalize current, exciting problems and develops their new solutions. At the same time, the psychological game is important for clients because it allows them to understand better their values and problems, helps achieve important life or professional goals, strengthens relationships with others, it is a method of relaxation, fun and alternative recreation.

Conclusions

The developed psychological transformation game “My Dao” is aimed at changing the self-esteem and motivation of participants, the disclosure of their personal resources to solve problems and to develop further. This technique is universal due to the age category of participants and the ability to solve psychological problems.

The greatest impact of the developed game on the participants is observed at the level of normative ideals: tradition, conformity, security, hedonism and universalism. This indicates their certain change towards increasing harmony and stability, as well as reducing humility and acceptance of their destiny. At the level of individual priorities, there is an increase in hedonism, power and stimulation, which indicates an increase in the role of satisfaction, success, ambition, the desire for novelty and strong emotions. At the same time, high results of universalism, hedonism, self-direction and conformity indicate an increase in understanding, tolerance, enjoyment of life, self-control, self-government, self-discipline and politeness of game participants. While the level of individual priorities of the control group is characterized mainly by relatively high results of self-direction and universalism. The study of the psychological transformation game “My Dao” with the elderly participants and participants with various psychological problems as well as its testing in clinical psychotherapy are promising.



Ethical Approval

The study protocol was consistent with the ethical guidelines of the 1975 Declaration of Helsinki as reflected in a prior approval by the Institution's Human Research Committee.

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