

EMOTIONAL REGULATION STRATEGIES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO STUDENTS' ANXIETY LEVELS

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Abstract

Emotional regulation is a set of conscious and unconscious processes that aim to manage a person's emotional states, maintain internal balance, and adapt to changing environmental conditions. At the student age, there is a special dynamic of emotional processes due to the high level of academic workload, social adaptation, the need to master new roles and a high degree of uncertainty about the future. All these factors predispose to an increased level of anxiety, which, in turn, actualizes the problem of effective emotional regulation in this age period.

Keywords: Emotional regulation, anxiety, students, strategies, stress, adaptation, cognitive rethinking, self-reflection, support, emotional intelligence.

Introduction

Modern research shows that there are many typical strategies for regulating emotions, from constructive ones, such as reflection, rethinking, and seeking support, to destructive ones, such as avoiding and suppressing feelings. Each of these strategies has its own psychological consequences for the individual, especially against the background of chronic anxiety, which often becomes the background of student life. Anxiety is a stable psychoemotional state characterized by the expectation of adverse events, internal tension, a sense of uncertainty and self—doubt. Student anxiety is formed as a response to educational and social demands, as well as due to personal characteristics, upbringing, previous experience, and many other factors. It is the combination of these components that gives students a feeling of pressure and insecurity, which determines the choice of certain emotional regulation strategies [1].

The regulation of emotions in college age requires a high degree of awareness and reflection from the personality. Cognitive rethinking is recognized as one of the most effective strategies — the ability to change one's own perception of a stressful situation, find positive sides in it, or weaken its significance. This allows the student not only to control the outburst of emotions, but also to develop a more adaptive type of response to difficulties. For example, when a student is faced with an exam failure, cognitive rethinking will help focus on growth opportunities rather than negativity. Among other strategies, an important place is occupied by the ability to formulate and express your emotions, both for yourself and for others. Non-verbal and verbal expression of emotions creates a positive emotional climate, helps to reduce internal tension and create a favorable social atmosphere. This is especially true for students who are away from home, in an unusual environment, where support from peers and teachers becomes a crucial



factor in psychological well-being. Many students tend to use avoidance strategies—attempts to ignore, ignore, or suppress their feelings, not acknowledge anxiety, and not talk about it. Such a strategy can reduce anxiety levels only for a short time; in the long run, it can lead to an aggravation of emotional problems, the appearance of somatic symptoms, and even the development of depressive states. Therefore, it is extremely important to develop the skills of a conscious attitude to one's emotions and working through anxiety, rather than denying its existence [2].

Considering emotional regulation from the perspective of modern psychology, one can note the influence of interpersonal factors. Support from peers, parents, or academic supervisors greatly facilitates the adaptation process, reduces anxiety, and provides a sense of security. Openness to discussing one's problems with others increases the likelihood of choosing constructive strategies for emotional regulation and minimizes the risks of developing chronic anxiety. An important aspect is the availability of internal resources of the individual: and we are talking not only about strong-willed qualities, but also about the ability to self-support, self-compassion, self-confidence. The formation of these qualities occurs throughout student life and is directly related to the experience of overcoming difficulties. High levels of anxiety often lead to emotional imbalance, sleep disorders, decreased adaptability, conflict, and even decreased academic performance. In this context, the task is actualized not only to correct anxiety manifestations, but also to form sustainable strategies for coping with stress, among which awareness of one's emotions, control over them, and adequate expression of feelings play a leading role [3].

One of the basic strategies for emotional regulation is the development of emotional intelligence skills, which is the ability to understand emotions, both your own and others', use them to solve life problems and build productive relationships. Emotional intelligence helps students to cope with anxiety more effectively, as it allows them to differentiate emotions, predict their development, and choose appropriate ways to express and work through them. Prevention also plays an important role — preventing the excessive development of anxiety by reinforcing healthy behavioral patterns. It is important to create a comfortable learning environment, work with psychological services, conduct stress management trainings, as well as teach self-regulation skills: breathing exercises, meditation, rational use of free time and the formation of positive life attitudes. There is also a close relationship between the personal characteristics of students, their type of temperament and the chosen strategies for regulating emotions. People with pronounced emotional lability are more likely to be prone to impulsive reactions and avoidance, while students with a high level of self-reflection prefer constructive strategies and are able to return to a state of emotional balance more quickly [4].

Research shows that the targeted development of emotional regulation skills in students leads to a reduction in chronic anxiety, increases motivation, improves interpersonal relationships, and increases individual psychological well-being. In turn, a high level of anxiety, left without attention and correction, leads to the development of negative emotions, a decrease in self-esteem, the appearance of internal conflict and even neuroses. The practical significance of recommendations for the development of emotional regulation strategies is reflected in the need to integrate special programs into the higher education system. Such programs should be aimed



at developing sustainable skills of mindfulness, reflection, empathy, the ability to set goals and withstand stress without loss to mental health. Psychological support for students is necessary not only during periods of acute stressful situations (for example, exam sessions), but also throughout the entire educational process. Timely identification of signs of anxiety, work with its causes and the development of constructive coping strategies can not only increase the adaptability of students, but also form in them the value of caring for their own psychological state.

Conclusion

The development of emotional regulation strategies is a key factor in reducing anxiety among students. Conscious emotional management, the support of others, a well-formed culture of self-reflection, as well as timely psychological assistance contribute to the formation of internal balance, resistance to stress and improvement of the quality of life of students. The formation of constructive models of emotional response is becoming one of the priorities in the higher education system, as they determine not only the success of studies, but also readiness for future professional and social activities.

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