






MANUAL

Specially Developed Response Guidelines in Crises

Adult stress management project

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Introduction

The processes of globalization and rapid development of technologies are fundamentally changing the modern world, as along with the opportunities and perspectives they reveal through the modern person, they also bring many unknowns and challenges. It turns out that in recent years, countries and societies are often hit by crises that in one way or another leave their lasting imprint on the individual, physical and mental health for each one of us.

The Covid-19 pandemic that swept the world in 2020 turned our lives and economies upside down, leaving in its wake the deaths of many people, prolonged social isolation and fears that it could provoke the emergence of more more dangerous, contagious and deadly strains.

Shortly after the world breathes a sigh of relief that the Covid-pandemic can be contained, in February 2022, the war in Ukraine breaks out, bringing a new dose of shame and worry to the global space. The economic consequences of war are severe as they spread quickly and far, in neighboring countries and beyond, affecting, most severely, the most vulnerable people in the world. Hundreds of millions of families have to contend with lower incomes and higher energy and food prices. For the first time in many years, inflation is becoming a clear and real danger for many countries around the world. Along with the economic consequences that it provokes in its wake, war is also a great human tragedy, because it forces many people to leave the borders of their homeland, becoming refugees, and others lose their lives.

In the context of the war in Ukraine, attention must also be paid to the flows of illegal migrants from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and other Arab countries, who, although transiting through our country, create a number of problems and concerns in society. The crossroads geographical position of our country, as well as Bulgaria's membership in the EU since 2007, make it an external border of the

union and pose the question of whether the security of the citizens is guaranteed despite the migrant pressure.

Along with the global crises that press modern man, each of us is also faced with different types of personal crises that are related to work, family, friends and close people and cause confusion, anxiety, fear and tension in their wake.

Regardless of the type of crisis, whether it is short or long, the common thing between all of them is that they arise unexpectedly and are an invariable part of life. Therefore, it is important to accept that it is impossible to eliminate the crisis, but everyone should realize that the approach of its constructive perception would contribute to its faster and more effective overcoming. The constructive approach of perceiving the crisis assumes that the crisis is:

- possibility and source of change;
- help to overcome static and inertia;
- stimulation of certain interests;
- stimulating problem solving;
- an opportunity to check and re-evaluate relationships - interpersonal and in the sphere of the social system.

It is precisely this approach that underpins this crisis response guide. The same has an informative nature and aims to practically guide the reader in how to react in a crisis situation. The guide clarifies both the essence of the concept of crisis and examines the specifics of certain types of crises that have affected modern society in recent years. Specific crisis response mechanisms are also outlined, which are of a practical nature and aim to bring more clarity and calmness to the individual in case he gets caught up in the maelstrom of the crisis.

1. Nature, causes and manifestations of the crisis

1.1. Defining the concept of crisis

Since ancient times, crisis has been perceived as an event that occurs periodically and irreversibly in life and is seen as a prerequisite for the evolutionary development of everything related to man.

The term "crisis" has an ancient Greek origin, with the Latin word crisis meaning a dramatic change in the state of an organism or system - family, organization, community, country or in the ordinary course of a process.

Over time, from ancient times to today, the concept of "crisis" has been given different definitions. If Hippocrates, the greatest physician of antiquity, perceived the crisis as closely related only to the human organism, then the German psychologist and psychoanalyst Erik Erikson examined the phenomenon of crisis through the prism of its ambivalence, pointing out that human life goes through 8 stages and the transition from one another stage is related to overcoming a specific psychosocial crisis and through the establishment of new meaningful relationships with other people and with society as a whole. Thus, human development takes place by resolving conflicts and overcoming crises. From any crisis, the individual can come out with increased opportunities, but can also get bogged down without a perspective of identity growth . Namely, his understanding of the crisis sounds relevant even in modern times, as it points to how the crisis will be perceived, through the prism of constructiveness or destructiveness.

Also of interest are the reflections on the crisis by E.K. Stern, who points out that " *a crisis is a situation determined by the change of external and internal factors of the environment and is determined by three characteristic features: a threat to the basic values of society, extremely limited time to resolve the*

situation, a high level of uncertainty» [1], as well as to G. Yolov, who is of the opinion that in a state of crisis " *people are tightly pressed from all sides by the threat both to their lives and to the material and spiritual values they possess"* .[2]

For the first time, however, the concept of "crisis" was used as a specific term by Gerald Kaplan (Gerald Caplan), whose classic definition of the crisis is as follows: " *a violation of the stable state of the individual occurring when he found out that the achievement of important life goals is blocked by serious obstacles. These obstacles appear to be insurmountable using conventional problem-solving methods."*[3]

By itself, the concept of crisis turns out to be broad-spectrum, and the presence of a large number of definitions clarifying its essence proves it, but what they all have in common is that the crisis, upon its occurrence, undoubtedly causes changes, and they are almost always of a radical nature . At the same time, the crisis is an objective and necessary phenomenon with a relatively frequent practical manifestation, but with difficult predictability. It always goes together with reformation processes in a given sphere of socio-political and personal life, but the consequences of these reforms make people think about what and how should be done to prevent a subsequent total collapse for the individual and society , as a result of the emerging crisis. In search of answers to these questions, it is important to know the reasons that can give rise to the crisis, as well as its possible manifestations.

[1] Doikov, J., Crisis Management, Sofia, 2018, p.23
[2] There again
[3]Stoyanov, V., Psychology of the crisis, Part 2. Lecture course, Varna, 2022.

1.2. Main causes and manifestations of the crisis

The emergence of a crisis situation can be provoked, in practice, by various reasons, which can hardly be covered by their nature, but can generally be classified into the following several groups:

- Causes having a global character and not depending on a person at an individual level. All those risks that are the result of a constantly and rapidly changing world can be attributed to this group. These are risks related to urbanization, technical and technological development, as well as risks of a health nature such as pandemics and epidemics, risks related to the national and international development of countries, risks resulting from acts of terrorism, and together with them, risks having migration, organizational , natural, ecological and management nature.
- Reasons having a personal nature, as the special thing about them is that the psycho-behavioral and personal specifics of a person can be a factor that provokes crises. Accordingly, personal characteristics, personal ambitions, conflict of interests, behavioral characteristics, ineffective management, conflict of beliefs, differences in the value system, lack of awareness, emotional imbalance, psycho-physical incompatibility, etc. fall here .

Regardless of the reasons that provoke the crisis, it is always accompanied by symptoms that prove to be a serious barrier to adequate decision-making about what to do, as well as to the structuring of time and space, in a way that contributes to more its quick overcoming. Usually, the occurrence of a crisis provokes chaotic actions, inefficiency, hopelessness, etc. in the person. These symptoms manifest themselves at a different level for the person, namely:

- guilt , sadness, depression, loss of interest, intrusive, unexpected and sudden flashbacks back ; increased tension, confusion, feeling of helplessness; deviations in self-assessment; in extreme situations, psychotic episodes may also occur.
- Physiological symptoms that manifest as dizziness, fainting, hair loss at the knees, pallor, palpitations, nausea, numbness, hot and cold waves, sweating, trembling, etc.
- Behavioral symptoms such as aggressive outbursts, social isolation, disturbed sleep, drug and alcohol abuse, overeating, lack of appetite, etc.
- Cognitive symptoms that manifest as an inability to think about the problem, inability to assess the real situation, inability to formulate possible solutions to get out of the critical situation, difficulties in prioritizing the important tasks to solve, etc.

Crises can also manifest themselves in overt and hidden ways. Its hidden manifestation can create more worries, since it goes unnoticed and this prevents adequate measures to be taken to limit it. The apparent progress of the crisis always provokes an active or passive reaction of the individual, and in cases of active reaction, aggressive behavior, refusal to fulfill duties, affective actions, etc. can be observed. Passive refusal manifests itself in detachment and dissatisfaction.

Constructive and destructive are the other two manifestations of crises. The constructive manifestation of crises stimulates the manifestation of certain progressive processes, causing self-improvement. Thanks to them, the conditions in the situation are improved and the relationships are improved also. In the destructive manifestation of crises, the opposite processes are observed - contradictions, ignoring, compliance with rules.

From the point of view of a person's mental health, it is important to keep in mind that a crisis does not necessarily refer to a traumatic situation or event, but to the person's reaction to the event that occurred. In practice, this means that one person can be very seriously affected by the event, while another person would react much more calmly to the same event without it provoking signs of impaired mental health. Thus, the subjective experience of the crisis turns out to be key for its faster overcoming and for the restoration of the disturbed equilibrium. For this purpose it is necessary:

- The individual should have an objective and realistic view of the event.
- Get support from those around you.
- To apply adaptive mechanisms to deal with the crisis such as involving the social environment; mobilization of relatives and friends; seeking help from professionals.
- To minimize and, if possible, exclude maladaptive mechanisms such as withdrawal, isolation, depression, abuse of psychoactive substances, various manifestations of regression, incl. a position of strong dependence on others, challenging behavior or direct aggression, disorientation, etc.

2. Types of crises and their impact on society and personality

This paragraph presents the specifics of several major types of crises that modern society faces today. These are the Covid-19 pandemic, acts of terrorism, the war in Ukraine. They have a global character and affect countries and societies in an international aspect. Knowing their characteristics would help one better understand the environment and the threats that accompany it. Along with

them, emphasis is placed on the specifics of some personal crises that can lead to changes in a person's daily rhythm.

2.1. COVID -19 pandemic

In the scientific literature, it is stated that the term "pandemic" is of Greek origin and means all people. [4]In practice, a pandemic is associated not with the severity of a particular disease, but with the geographic spread of the disease. According to the World Health Organization, a pandemic is declared when a new virus to which people have no immunity spreads around the world. Therefore, health authorities associate the pandemic with a widespread epidemic that spreads among the population of a certain large geographical region, continent or the whole world, infecting many people. Also, in pandemic waves, the mortality rate is particularly high, and therefore the pandemic is perceived as a serious threat to the life of humanity.

The modern world also falls into a pandemic situation, at the beginning of 2020, when the coronavirus infection breaks out and affects a large part of the countries of the world. The epicenter of the epidemic is the Chinese municipality of Wuhan , which is spreading at a high speed, quickly reaching other regions of China. Later, the World Health Organization officially recognized the new coronavirus as SARS - CoV -2, and the disease was named COVID -19. Just a few months later (on the night of February 19, 2020), a patient with unusual symptoms arrived at the clinic in Codogno, Northern Italy, and after being tested for coronavirus, the result turned out to be positive .

According to data from the World Health Organization, as of April 5, 2020, the total confirmed global cases of infection are 1,213,199; recovered cases: over 290,000 (91%); deaths: over 65,600 (16%). In the following months, the number of infected, on a global scale, is increasing exponentially, and the lack of

[4]Vlaikov, S., Pandemics in the history of mankind, S., 1998, p.21

information about this new virus and the serious concerns about its possible consequences for the health and life of the population are forcing the governments of many countries to take covert measures to limit the impact his. However, the Covid-19 pandemic is having its effect on a number of sectors, which, taken together, are proving to be a serious challenge to the survival of the economy, social and health systems of countries. The Covid pandemic caused in its wake the overloading of the healthcare and social security systems, as well as creating disruptions in the existing links of industrial production. Along with this, it provoked a strong restriction of consumption, a drop in economic growth, an overload of the banking sector, as well as the blocking of a number of economic sectors. The pandemic also has a negative impact on the decline in employment, contraction of the "consumption" and "services" sectors, as well as a global decline in production activity. All this multifaceted impact of the pandemic generates new and unknown threats, both for the economic development of countries and for the social protection of modern society. Therefore, it can be quite justifiably argued that the Covid-19 pandemic has a significant impact on the national security system by affecting its conceptual, strategic, doctrinal and legal-normative basis, the institutions and the mechanisms of interaction between them.

The coronavirus infection is becoming a threat to national security, as the possible collapse of health and social systems that it can cause, as well as the difficulties in controlling it, can unleash in its wake social unrest, destabilization of political systems in the poorer and vulnerable regions of the world and deepening conflicts.

It is also necessary to pay attention to the fact that during the spread of Covid-19 there is an intensification of the flow of disinformation, propaganda and fake news, and the crisis is used as a tool to conduct hybrid operations and

campaigns at the national and international level . The information flow tends to and is permanently dominated by negative, fear-mongering information related to COVID -19, and this increases uncertainty and anxiety among the public.

The Covid-19 pandemic is moving like a wave, racing to slow the spread of the virus by testing and treating patients, tracing contacts, restricting travel, quarantining citizens and canceling large gatherings. At the same time, it reminds people that they are not immortal and should value time, and economic and financial representatives that nothing is certain and that one should think coolly and big in crisis situations like this.

The psychological consequences of the pandemic are serious, and the global problem it unleashes is fear. This is the fear of the disease, that is, whether we ourselves will get sick from the virus, if this happens, how the disease will proceed. There is also a serious anxiety about the close people - children, parents, relatives, friends, colleagues and how they will be affected by the disease. Along with this fear, the fear of losing a job and income due to quarantine or layoffs due to a reduced volume of work is becoming more and more evident. Attention should also be paid to the situation related to social isolation, which increases the frustration pressure on emotionally labile and emotionally immature individuals. During the period of quarantine and social isolation, there is a sharp increase in the number of anxiety disorders, a change in the psychosomatic dynamics of patients with pre-existing diseases, as well as a sharp increase in aggressive reactions directed at others and auto-aggressive behavior. The crisis caused by the pandemic is proving to be a serious challenge for many people.

2.2. Terrorism

In recent years, terrorism has become a global phenomenon, but in itself it is a tool that has been used since ancient times to exert pressure and achieve goals that would otherwise be difficult to achieve. Therefore, one of the paradoxes of

terrorism is that what appears to be an atrocity to some is often considered an act of liberation by others. In the modern world, there are many examples of the use of terrorism as a tool and weapon of the weak against the strong, as an inevitable result of the resistance against the "new order", which legitimizes the domination of powerful countries over the production and economy of poor and developing countries. Therefore, and with reason, modern terrorism is defined as a complex and dynamic phenomenon [5], which successfully manages to adapt to the political and economic situation, and its main goal is to create chaos and destabilization, but also to cause fear and psychosis among the population.

Europe is an example in this direction, as in recent years the European countries have been strongly pressured by the manifestations of modern terrorism, and the reasons for it can be sought in the stormy events that began in 2010, known as the "Arab Spring". The wave of protests that began on December 18, 2010 in Tunisia was followed by those in Egypt, Algeria, Yemen, Bahrain, Libya and Jordan. On a smaller scale, protests are taking place in Mauritania, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Sudan, Syria, Iraq, Kuwait, Morocco and Western Sahara, with protesters everywhere demanding the replacement of authoritarian regimes with democratically elected ones. Tensions in many of these countries have escalated to the point of armed clashes between protesters and security forces. During the conflicts, the role of Islamists grew more and more, as did the influence of fundamentalist groups, which was also the basis for the emergence in 2014 of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) also called the Iraqi State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), which is a terrorist group covering territories in northeastern Syria and western and northern Iraq. The Islamic State claims all of the territories of these two countries, as well as those of Palestine, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, Cyprus and parts of Turkey (Hatai). The emergence of the Islamic

[5] Petkov, M., Military conflicts in the context of the new geostrategic and geopolitical environment, S., 2016, p.38

State, which relies entirely on the fundamentalist understanding of Sharia, greatly worries the international community, which is unprepared for what is happening and deeply concerned about ensuring international security and peace.

The "Arab Spring" also unleashes a serious migrant wave to Europe, which is also perceived as a prerequisite for the importation of terrorism and poses a serious challenge to the countries that are the external borders of the union to react flexibly and adequately to the increased movement of people and to guarantee security along the outer border. Bulgaria, which has been a member state of the EU since 2007, is an external border of the union, which inevitably increases its responsibility in terms of the tools and approaches applied to limit illegal migration and at the same time to counter terrorism. At the same time, Bulgaria is also part of the Balkans, which, according to many security experts, are the object of marked interest by international terrorist groups, and the reasons for this can be found in the fact that the region of South-Eastern Europe is filled with very critical areas related to problems in statehood, ethnic and religious opposition, illegal trafficking of weapons, people, drugs, etc. Of course, the circumstance related to Bulgaria's participation in the global anti-terrorist coalition and the presence of Bulgarian contingents in various crisis points around the world cannot be overlooked, which inevitably turns our country into a target for terrorist acts.

Thus, acts of terrorism turn out to be a serious prerequisite for the emergence of a crisis, as they usually cause fear among the population, which manifests itself in the form of fear for life, fear of the breakdown of social ties, fear of being surrounded by people, for which we know nothing about and which could be potential aggressors.

2.3. War and martial law

In its essence, war is an organized violent conflict between different states, governments, communities and paramilitary groups, characterized by extreme aggression, social upheaval and high mortality. Every war has different aims, but always the aim is subjugation, assimilation and destruction.

Although the Second World War left behind heavy consequences, it did not turn out to be the last war in the history of mankind, and in its wake local conflicts broke out in many places on the world map, the consequences of which were destroyed infrastructure and destroyed lives.

Today, the war in Ukraine, which broke out on February 24, 2022, dominates the agenda of states and societies and causes massive consequences of an economic, social, informational, public and political nature. The special thing about this war is that it is being fought both on the front and on the Internet. Accordingly, misinformation and propaganda are multiplied by relying on manipulated and decontextualized content.

Much can be written about the consequences of wars, but on a personal level, every war leaves behind serious traumas on a person, manifested as post-traumatic stress, anxiety, aggression, but on a much larger scale than in a tragedy of another nature. Also, the fear of the experienced horror of war often causes the person to shut down the experience and sink into silence, something that psychologists define as one of the most dangerous mental states.

2.4. Personal crises

This type of crisis is directly related to a person's life and can have different manifestations such as:

- Crises caused by the process of growth and development of the personality, in different periods of life.

- Crises related to the psychosocial development of the personality.
- Situational crises that occur suddenly and unexpectedly, such as accidents and natural disasters. Experiencing a car accident, flood, earthquake, or violence are just some of the situational crises that a person can go through.
- Existential crises that result from internal conflicts related to things like life purpose, direction, and spirituality. Usually, the existential crisis occurs when a person does not know where to direct his life. A person's existential crisis can occur in youth or maturity (at the time of evaluating past years), as the individual matures. Such an experience can be quite painful for the person, since in a state of existential crisis it is difficult for him to make constructive and constructive decisions. Usually, the feeling of confusion, futility, lack of meaning in life, apathy and fear accompany the person experiencing an existential crisis.

3. Stages of the crisis

The occurrence of a crisis, regardless of its type, is always accompanied by *a triggering event* , which can be illness, military action, acts of terrorism, natural disasters, loss of loved ones, car accident, house fire, job loss, divorce and etc. The triggering event brings a threat to the personality, which can be physical, social or psychological in nature and causes a change in the usual rhythm of the individual's life and provokes the first phase of the crisis, known as the initial stage.

The initial stage of the crisis is reduced to a disturbance of the stable and sustainable equilibrium state of the individual as a result of the occurrence of the triggering event. As a result, an intense emotional reaction occurs such as anxiety that is accompanied by cognitive (e.g., inability to concentrate, thought "blocking"), behavioral (tension, agitation or numbness, disorganized behavior),

and autonomic (e.g., palpitations, shortness of breath, shaking, etc.) symptoms. The individual, in turn, is placed in a situation that requires him to generate solutions to deal with the crisis. Thus, it moves to the second stage, which is known as *the phase of generating solutions to deal with the problem.* During this phase, basic mechanisms are activated in a person that should contribute to solving the problem. Typically, within 24 hours to 2 weeks, the individual mobilizes resources and develops strategies to deal with the crisis. Initially, familiar coping mechanisms are activated, but in cases where they do not lead to the desired result, feelings of anxiety, confusion and ineffectiveness are triggered and provoke tension, which in turn leads to a loss of control over oneself and others, as well as to high levels of disorganization. Therefore, when a crisis occurs, it is important to be guided by certain actions and not to seek to follow routine and familiar approaches to solving the problem, but to take into account the situation and show flexibility, not stereotyping in thinking.

3. Actions in the event of a crisis

It is impossible to define universal and generally valid rules of action for all crisis situations, and a person needs to be aware of this, because only in this way can he rely on his potential and opportunities to overcome the negative event. At the same time, knowing the direction in which he can direct his behavior and thought in a crisis situation would help him to react in the most constructive and reasonable way possible and to work out a solution that would lead him out of the crisis. In this regard, this paragraph of the guide will define specific guidelines for actions that would facilitate the person in the event of a crisis situation.

- **Don't panic and keep your composure**

Panic as an emotional state often appears in the event of a crisis, and this is normal. It is the result of fear from the traumatic event that occurred. In a panic situation, a person loses control over himself and gives priority to anxiety and destructive emotions.

Unlike panic, self-control is the ability to be master of oneself. It is directly related to self-control and controlling emotions, especially in difficult situations such as a crisis. Maintaining composure in the event of a crisis means that the person approaches the situation realistically and guides it in the direction of getting something constructive out of it. Self-control allows a person not to dramatize the situation and perceive it soberly, giving a clear idea of what is possible and what is not.

In the event of a crisis, if the feeling of panic takes precedence over self-control, you can apply several techniques, through which panic can be defeated more quickly:

- Splash yourself with water - Dipping your hands in cold water and splashing it on your face is one of the easiest things a person can do when they feel anxiety and panic rising . Sensory stimulation with cold water helps to distract from the anxious feelings that overwhelm us and relieves elevated cortisol levels.
- Physical activity and proper breathing - in a situation of anxiety, physical activity always helps to limit it. It is not necessary to perform complex exercises, it is enough to move and breathe deeply. Proper and deep breathing is of great help in such a situation, so it is necessary to inhale well and then slowly exhale the air. After a few minutes, the anxiety will subside. *An effective breathing technique*

that can be applied is the following: inhaling by inflating the abdomen (inhalation should be very slow and light, without any tension). Exhalation should be even slower and lighter and accompanied by relaxation of the chest and the whole body. The left hand can be placed on the chest and the right hand on the abdomen. The right hand ensures that breathing occurs through the abdomen, and the left ensures that the chest is not involved. The mind should be focused solely on the breath and the expansion and relaxation of the abdomen.

- Repetition of phrases that have a calming effect - Along with deep breathing, it is necessary to mentally repeat calming phrases such as: « You *cannot control everything that happens to you, but you can control your own reactions to it»; "I am safe and loved"; "A blessing in disguise"; "For everything you've lost, you've gained something else" etc.* Slow and repeated makes a person feel better.
- Accept the anxiety - admitting to yourself emotions such as worry, anxiety, discomfort allows the person to realize and accept these feelings as part of themselves, and thus much more easily can exercise control over them.
- Cry - crying can have a strong calming effect on the nervous system, so when you feel the urge to cry, you need to give it a go. Crying has therapeutic properties and is a sign that there are emotions that need to be released.
- Write down your problems – writing down your problems and worries on a piece of paper acts as anxiety therapy. Writing out fears helps one more easily see if those fears are real or irrational.

Along with techniques to control anxiety, a person can also strive to improve their self-control and ideas in this direction are as follows:

- Do not react too quickly to the distressing situation - in practice, this means giving yourself a few minutes, taking a breath and controlling the initial impulse of the event to soften its effect.
- Expect obstacles - it is necessary to realize that obstacles are an invariable part of life and regardless of how aware and following clearly set goals, a person will always encounter difficulties along the way. Namely, they are the ones that help a person to develop and improve.
- Learn not to dramatize events - this helps a person more easily accept difficult situations in life.
- In his vocabulary, a person with self-control needs to use the words "I'm stronger than this", "I can handle it", "nothing to worry about" as often as possible. Such verbal formulations will help to look at the existing problem in a different way.
- In any situation, one should always look for the positive moment.

➢ **Inform yourself about basic facts related to the crisis event**

Information, today, is one of the most valuable and important resources that a person can have. It is of vital importance, especially in a crisis situation. The term information has a Latin origin and means "form", "depict" a message that informs about a given situation and activity. Through information, knowledge and data are provided to the environment and the processes taking place in it. Information can also be presented as a means of communication between people and in cognitive processes, therefore it is important that it be objective, clear, accurate, useful, current, adequate, detailed, timely, significant and valuable.

In the event of a crisis such as a pandemic, epidemic, war, terrorist act, natural disaster, etc. The main sources of information that can be used to obtain data on the event meeting the above criteria are:

- Public media news is the first place official institutions turn to in times of crisis to provide official and public information about what is happening.
- Press conferences that official authorities and institutions organize during a crisis event and that are broadcast on public media. Holding a press conference is one of the most effective ways to allow journalists to ask questions of government officials. Usually, experts on the issue are also present at the press conferences, who answer the journalists' questions. The press conference usually begins with a prepared statement from the official authority and is followed by a series of questions and answers.
- Social media is also seen as a primary channel for communicating with audiences during a crisis, as well as a place to share information. Also, social media can be seen as the place and way for people to get information at lightning speed. Therefore, one should always approach the informational content circulating there with caution, as many users write and share information, which may however be contradictory or false and increase feelings of uncertainty and anxiety.

In this regard, it is important that one adheres to specific principles when gathering information and basic facts about the crisis event that has occurred, namely:

- Stick to credible sources of information that have been tested over time. Accordingly, it can be both public and national media, which enjoy the greatest trust among the public, and read opinions of proven experts and specialists in the specific field. It is also important to rely on official information channels such as websites of institutions, ministries, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, national and international centers specialized in specific areas such as: World Health Organization; United Nations; State Agency for Refugees; Ministry of Health; Department of Defense; Ministry of the Interior; Ministry of Foreign Affairs; UNICEF and others. Acquaintance with reliable information contributes to overcoming fear and anxiety.
- Determine a specific period of the day in which to inform yourself about the specific problem. Limiting the time you follow the flow of information on the topic allows you to control the issue. It is important to keep in mind that the media often presents information that is too politicized and tends to "flood" viewers with news on the subject all day long. A lot of fake news or misleading information is posted on social media , which can increase anxiety, stress and feelings of fear. Therefore, the implementation of quantitative and qualitative control over the flow of information that reaches the person is essential to limit its harmful impact on his mental stability.
- You should be critical of the information that reaches you. Critical thinking about the problem allows for better decisions. Critical thinking involves analyzing the structure and sequence of arguments so that they are based on solid, truthful foundations. In other words, it is the reflective and rational mentality in which the person

questions the information received in order to create a more reasonable and unbiased position. The practical manifestation of critical thinking is to analyze information that reaches you; understanding the source of evidence and the relationship that is drawn between the facts presented; you are always looking for arguments regarding the stated position.

- **Structure your daily life in a new way**

The emergence of a crisis situation inevitably leads to a change in the established way of life and requires a reorganization of everyday life. Namely, this change often increases stress levels in the person, but it is important to look at it constructively and perceive it as an opportunity for something better.

In the event of a crisis such as a pandemic, an act of terrorism, martial law, etc., the home becomes a place of work and leisure . Easier acceptance of the work-from-home situation can happen if the following principles are followed:

- Carrying out a workflow within the working hours that was approved before the change occurred. In this way, the stress on the personality from the new will be much less.
- Adherence to the performance of essential work tasks, regardless of whether the work is performed in a home environment.
- Adherence to a certain rest time during the day, which corresponds to the rest at the workplace.
- Designate a special workplace at home that provides an opportunity for concentration and at the same time is cozy and pleasant to work.
- Create a schedule for working from home, the goal of which is to create a work routine that allows a person while at home not to be tempted to do other activities that would distract him, but to follow

the established work schedule. This schedule provides structure to daily life and protects against chaos and stress.

- Setting clear boundaries that ensure the separation of work and home life.
- Reduction of all possible factors that can affect concentration and cause distraction. This means limiting the impact of television, close people, pets, etc. on you when you work, and for this purpose, providing yourself with the quietest and most isolated space from home.
- Alternating tasks with entertainment. It is very important in the new structuring of everyday life to pay attention to entertainment and the way in which free time will be spent. Exercising for at least 30 minutes a day (may be divided into three sets of 10 minutes each) is enough. Rhythmic aerobic exercises that require simultaneous movement of the arms and legs, such as walking, running, swimming or dancing, are extremely effective and can have a positive impact on a person, especially when experiencing a crisis and being under tension and stress. During sports, a person's body produces more of the hormones of happiness, as a result of which the mood improves, the feeling of pain is dulled and self-esteem increases. In the event that isolation is required and sports cannot be practiced outside, a fully good alternative is sports from home. A large number of sports centers and trainers provide opportunities for online sessions. Also, a good alternative is meditation and yoga, which help restore balance and equilibrium in the personality.

- The availability of free time at home can be filled with activities such as repairs, cleaning, tidying, organizing, etc. of the home that have been postponed for a long time.

It is important to keep in mind that structuring the daily routine and arranging the tasks helps to return the feeling of control over the situation and reduce the anxiety levels.

- **Communicate and share. Fill everyday life with pleasant activities .**

In a period of crisis, communicating with close and loved ones who carry a positive charge is crucial in order to be able to accept the situation more quickly and start thinking in the direction of a solution. Talking and sharing with loved ones about the problem is very important because it helps to overcome the symptoms of anxiety and panic.

Keeping a journal is also a good technique . It reduces stress by eliminating worries and thoughts. Writing down your worries, problems, or dreams on a piece of paper is a kind of technique that separates emotions from the body and seals them on paper.

Another technique that also has its positive impact on the person in a crisis situation is joining different communities and groups that mobilize resources to deal with the crisis that has arisen. These communities and groups include:

- Civic organizations with volunteers who mobilize resources to respond promptly to the crisis. Examples of this are environmental organizations that mobilize resources for humanitarian aid, organizations working in favor of children that structure donation campaigns and for the needs of the health system or in support of those affected by the military conflict in Ukraine, etc.

- Social entrepreneurs and teams that develop spaces with a social mission as well as create new products and services for which interest has grown as a result of the crisis.

It should not be allowed that the emerging crisis becomes a prerequisite for limiting the time dedicated to us and the care for ourselves . In such situations, taking care of yourself is more important than ever, because before we can take care of our loved ones, we must take care of ourselves. And this includes different things for each of us, but above all we must pay attention to our basic needs - enough sleep, home-cooked food, taking enough fluids, physical activity, taking mandatory medications, etc. It is equally important to fill the time with activities that we enjoy, because this helps a person to detach from the thoughts about the subject that causes stress and fear. Among the activities that can be practiced are:

- Reading books;
- Art activities;
- Favorite series;
- Practicing a hobby;
- Practicing a self-cultivation. Numerous (paid and free) courses in various fields are available on the Internet .
- Learning, seeing it as a tool that will occupy the mind and prevent thinking about the threat, and increasing knowledge and qualifications will also raise self-confidence and skills.

➢ **Psychological support**

The figure of the psychologist is one of the most important and key in the emergence of a crisis situation, since he can best create an environment for protection and help that the person needs.

Psychological support during a crisis helps to mobilize all internal and external resources of the individual. The process is delicate and very important, as each failure is perceived much more anxiously, and this in turn intensifies the negative experiences. Psychological intervention, through therapy, helps to direct in the right way the need to react to the experience, which is embedded in each of us.

The person who is under great stress and anxiety as a result of the crisis has difficulties making adequate decisions, because his inner world is distorted as a result of strong emotions such as anger, fear, confusion, helplessness, as well as due to various behavioral manifestations such as outbursts, crying, panic, social isolation and others. Difficulty in formulating thoughts and desires and expressing them is not uncommon. Namely, here the psychologist's intervention can contribute to stabilization of resistance and faster adaptation to the situation on the part of the person.

The main contribution of psychological counseling in a crisis situation can be presented in the following several dimensions of personality:

- To bring about a behavioral change in the personality;
- To support decision-making;
- To increase the person's ability to deal with specific situations or situations causing anxiety and panic;
- To increase personal effectiveness.

Conclusion

The world and life around us develops dynamically, therefore the crisis must be perceived as a accompanying element of reality, which leads to change and transformation. Perceiving the crisis as directly related to our daily life allows the person to adapt to it much faster. At the same time, a person must adjust his consciousness that in a crisis situation he must as quickly as possible free himself from anxiety and fear, which are negative feelings and interfere with his pragmatic assessment and creating objective decisions. Personal control over behavior, gathering objective and reliable information, critical thinking, structuring everyday life, clearly set goals, as well as practicing activities that are beloved and important to a person can help him much more easily cope with the negative effects of the storm crisis. Of course, if necessary, it is important to seek help from a specialist who, through the applied therapeutic procedures, will assist in regaining the personality's resilience.