

SUCCESS STORIES OF IDPS AS A RESOURCE OF ADAPTATION AND INSPIRATION FOR OTHER COMMUNITY MEMBERS

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Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are one of the most vulnerable groups of people who are affected by the events on the East. Those people were forced to move from their homes, to change the usual environment and to adopt for the new circumstances.

Most of them lost a lot: property, job, hopes for the better future and even loved ones. They appeared in unknown places confused, frustrated, without any thoughts or plan of further actions.

Of course, media influences IDPs a lot. Unfortunately, this influence is not positive in the majority of cases, because the scenes of destroyed houses, deaths and other pictures of war make people feel frightened, stressed and frustrated.

N. Cherepovska highlights two possible influences of destructive informational media content:

- media informational stress which forward appearance of new trauma – media trauma.
- media informational distress which can be the source of repeated traumatization [6, p. 496].

As O. Pletka mentions in her thesis, viewing of video content which relates to the war events can lead to repeated traumatization. Reactions of the viewers in such cases are grounded not on the real danger, but on the beliefs about it. Person experiences events about which there is only mosaic information. Logical connections between the parts are created by the limbic system. Such missing connections and parts are replaced by fantastic illusive neoformations which are

taken by conscious as realistic [4]. Now we can imagine how primary traumatic experience is filling up by the new layers because of consuming media content from the frontline.

Psychologists and other helping professionals are concerned over such outcomes of the influence of destructive media content and now there are a lot of recommendations how to reduce these negative consequences.

But what if there is an opportunity to use media content in a positive way?

L. Naydonova notices some positive aspects of media influences. For example, media can be used for:

- communication;
- relaxation;
- education;
- incitement;
- experiments with identification, etc. [3, pp. 215-218].

In our Ph.D. research, we define several social psychological strategies of life successfulness, one of them is actions by the example of someone else. This strategy reflects person's intention to replicate the successful actions of another person to achieve results.

In such case, the media expansion of success stories of IDPs' can be a good opportunity for other IDPs to try their forces in success achieving. How can it work?

First of all, it worth saying that because of stress the biggest part of people who were internally displaced are just waiting for finishing the military conflict and getting back home. They don't take an active position to improve their living conditions, they don't take interest in changing something and they don't use those opportunities that are given by government and non-governmental welfare funds. But familiarization with success stories of other IDPs can help to change the focus

from waiting for the better times to the active move toward changes and achievements.

Secondly, such stories can help to reevaluate a previous life experience. From one hand, it can be a trigger for posttraumatic growth which “is characterized by post-event adaptation that exceeds pre-event levels” [1]. If a person sees an example where someone was able to overcome obstacles despite life circumstances and to achieve success, it could be a good start to think about his or her own previous life and abilities to achieve good results as well. When we see others good results it can be an excellent inspiration for us, because if someone can do it I also can do it.

From the other hand, it worth saying that initial challenge to core beliefs and the subsequent experience of posttraumatic growth is preceded by appropriate cognitive work [2]. There are two types of repeated thinking about the event (also known as rumination): deliberate rumination and intrusive rumination. “Persons engaging in event-related deliberate rumination intentionally think about the event and its aftermath whereas persons engaging in event-related intrusive rumination experience thoughts and images about the event that occur automatically” [2]. Deliberate thinking is focused on the understanding of the experience, finding meaning and producing related life narrative, what can be more conducive to growth than intrusive rumination.

Abovementioned cognitive work leads to the revision of existent values, review of life path and current achievements. Good examples of success achievement of others, to our point of view, can significantly speed up the moving from cognitive work to some actions toward new achievements. This help people to take risk and responsibility for probable consequences [5].

Thirdly, changing the focus and getting the inspiration lead to researching of one’s own needs. A person understands that some changes are needed, that there

are positive results of others with the same social status and begins to look for the spheres where he or she can realize one's potential.

The feeling of a community also is a powerful positive outcome of the media expansion of IDPs' success stories. When you associate yourself with some community, it gives you a great support. It strengthens your intentions and your ability to achieve results because you feel that you are not alone, that around there are a lot of people just like you.

Based on the positive experience of others, a person can create own strategy of success achieving. He or she can reflect some elements of the successful strategy and to develop his or her own elements. In such case, success story can be like an example of the efficient actions.

Next very important stage of achieving success by the example of someone else is taking first steps. This phase can be very difficult because there can be inconveniences between the picture in our head and reality, we can face different obstacles and another unexpectedness. But when we understand that someone before us have already done something that fact can keep us moving forward and try again.

One more sphere where success stories could be helpful is an evaluation of one's own actions. It is obvious that we do not always achieve expected results. Sometimes it is very hard to understand our mistakes because we are in the process or because we don't have enough time for analysis and reflection. In such cases, comparison of our actions and the actions of those who have already achieved good results can have an effect of a cold shower, when we see the situation from the other angle and start to understand our gaps and the reasons of our failures.

The most effective media resources for expansion of success stories of IDPs' and experience exchange, to our point of view, can be:

- interviews of different types: written, audio and video;
- articles and publications in online and off-line sources;

- forums and conferences;
- special community meetings.

Thus, we can see that influence of media on IDPs can have not only negative but a positive effect as well. Success stories of internally displaced persons can be a wonderful source of inspiration, evaluation and push for active actions for other members of the community. Of course, such actions need a high level of media literacy and critical thinking. The person should be able to distinguish true story from false one. He or she also should be able to evaluate one's own situation before the strategy implementation and forecast possible outcomes of own actions.

Resources

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