

## The Concept of Self - Actualization in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

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**Abstract.** This article considers the theoretical aspects of the self-actualization of personality, as represented by domestic and foreign scientists: A. Maslow, K. Rogers, G. Alport, K. Horney, E. Fromm, F. Perles, D. Bigenthal, R. May, L. A. Korosteleva, and others. It is characterized by a rapid pace of chaotic social and economic changes, which mainly have the character of self-destruction and degradation at all levels of the social body, a lack of a clear understanding in all segments of society of the drivers and strategy for overcoming the crisis, the possible direction and pace of development of the country and individual regions.

**Keywords:** self-actualization, self-realization, need, motivation, metamotivation, development, psychological growth, self.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of self-actualization is a systemic element of the humanistic direction in psychology. Fundamental to the humanist direction is the idea that the conscious desire for the greatest possible disclosure of human potential and its realization in practical life activities for the benefit of society through self-actualization is a necessary factor for the full development of a person. An important contribution to the development of the theory of self-actualization belongs to both foreign scientists and domestic ones [8, 67].

The current situation over the past decade has been characterized by the rapid pace of chaotic social and economic changes, which are mainly self-destructive and degraded at all levels of the social body, the lack of a clear understanding in all sectors of society of the drivers and strategy for overcoming the crisis, the possible direction and pace of development of the country and individual regions. There is no clear prospect of the survival

of culture, science, health, family. The crisis inevitably affected the education system as a whole.

Today, it is no longer necessary to talk about the socio-economic crisis, but about the fundamental erosion of the cultural and semantic core that sealed our society earlier, as a result of which an ordinary person was left alone with the whole complex of life problems and he has nowhere and no one else to look for "salvation," except in his personal powers and abilities. This makes it relevant to return to the topic of self-actualization as a concept of human and social development, based on the idea of relying on self-development and self-organization, which involves the most effective use by a person of all his forces, abilities, skills and other resources (self) in his individually unique situation in order to achieve external and internal synergy [6, 37].

The return of interest in the theory of self-actualization in modern science is primarily

associated with the rethinking of previously accumulated experience and concepts in connection with the understanding of the information-probabilistic structure of life and all its laws. Man is considered by modern science as an "open system" that exchanges energy, matter and information with the environment, having a certain internal content, many internal states.

## **2. LITERARY REVIEW AND DISCUSSION**

The problem of personality self-actualization has not a large, but vivid history in psychology. This is a multifaceted and complex phenomenon that was first introduced into scientific circulation by K. Goldstein and studied in more detail by psychologists of the humanistic direction (A. Maslow, K. Rogers, etc.). In one form or another, she was studied in related and close to humanistic psychology areas - sociocultural psychoanalysis of K. Horney and E. Fromm, gestalttherapy of F. Perls, existential psychology of D. Bigenthal and R. May, philosophical works of M.K. Mamardashvili. At present, psychological aspects of personal growth and self-actualization are increasingly being considered (L.A. Korosteleva, E.E. Vakhromov, O.V. Nemirinsky, N.V. Kovaleva). The focus of humanistic psychology is on a person, an individual, considered as a carrier of unique characteristics that make him the highest value of Genesis. Man is eager for the future, for the free realization of his potentials (G. Alport), especially creative (A. Maslow), for which he needs to strengthen his faith in himself and in the possibility of achieving the "ideal Self" (K. Rogers). The most important role is given to the growth of the constructive beginning of the human Self, the integrity and the power of experience.

Self-actualization, according to Goldstein, is the main and essentially the only motive in human life. Self-actualization is an effort to meet needs. Need is a state of deficit that motivates a person to replenish, satisfy. «... Self-actualization

is a creative trend of human nature. It is the basis for the development and improvement of the body. Ignorance, striving for knowledge, feels the inner emptiness, experiences a feeling of his own insufficiency. Reading and learning satisfy the need for knowledge, and emptiness disappears. Thus, a new person arises, in which the doctrine took the place of ignorance. Desire has become a reality. Any need is a state of deficit that motivates a person to fill it. It's like a hole to fill. This is filling, or meeting the need, and there is self-actualization or self-realization "(K. Goldstein).

Goldstein suggests that obstacles to self-actualization can arise only because the environment does not contain those objects and conditions that the body needs for self-actualization. A normal, healthy organism is one in which "the tendency to self-actualization acts from the inside and which overcomes the difficulties arising from collisions with the outside world, not on the basis of anxiety, but thanks to the joy of victory." This means that coming to an agreement with the environment in the first place consists in mastering it. And only if this is impossible, a person is forced to accept difficulties and adapt to the realities of the outside world. Self-actualization can have both positive and negative effects on the body. Achieving self-actualization does not mean the end of problems and difficulties, on the contrary, more complex problems can arise, relieving tension is a strong incentive only in diseased organisms. On the contrary, a healthy body is aimed primarily at "forming a certain level of tension, such as will make further ordered activity possible." Hence the conclusion that "the body's abilities determine its needs," and not vice versa. If the task is imposed on a person - his behavior becomes rigid and mechanistic [6, 60].

A. Maslow's theory on the self-actualization of personality is one of the keys in modern psychology. In the work "Motivation and Personality," a hierarchical theory of needs was formulated, building a pyramid with a base of basic

needs and a need for self-actualization at the top. From the point of view of A. Maslow, each person has an innate desire for self-actualization, and this desire for maximum disclosure of his abilities and deposits is the highest human need [3, 81].

The pursuit of higher goals indicates psychological health. A. Maslow believes that higher needs by nature are associated with greater satisfaction, so that metamotivation is an indicator that the individual has progressed for a defective level of functioning [4, 62].

A. Maslow emphasizes that psychological growth is carried out through self-actualization work. Self-actualization implies the duration, constant involvement in the work of growth and the development of abilities to the maximum possible, and not satisfaction with less of laziness or lack of self-confidence. Self-actualizing individuals are attracted by the most difficult and confusing problems that require maximum and most creative efforts. They strive to deal with certainty and ambiguity and prefer difficult tasks to easy solutions. The motivation for growth is relatively weak compared to physiological and safety needs, respect, etc. The process of self-actualization may be limited: the negative influence of past experience and the resulting habits that close us in unproductive behavior; social influences and group pressure, which often acts against our tastes and judgments; internal defenses that tear us away from ourselves.

In the latest work, "The Far Limits of the Human Psyche" (1971), he came to the conclusion that the theory of self-actualization can become the basis of the broadest program of the reorganization of man and the world. Maslow writes: "If education contributes to the self-actualization of man, then very soon we will observe the rise of a new type of civilization. People will become healthy and strong; they will become masters of their lives." [3, 7] The leading force in this transformation of civilization should be self-actualized people -

teachers, social teachers, social workers and psychologists - "older brothers" of humanity, taking responsibility for "another person as their younger brothers." Hence the implication that a person's self-actualization as a goal of his personal life must lead to the fact that the "attained" feels the obligation to engage in the struggle for the transformation of life in the interests of the fuller development of all living.

K. Rogers in his works points out that self-actualization contributes to the development of the individual in the direction of increasing complexity, self-sufficiency, maturity and competence. "In each of us there is a desire to become competent and capable as much as possible for us biologically." Self-actualization is the main motive of man, a fundamental aspect of human nature, prompting man to move towards greater congruence and more realistic functioning and is the main source of life. In addition, self-actualization is the desire to become yourself, true, authentic and holistic.

In the book "Introspection," Karen Horney writes about this phenomenon: "Each person naturally strives for self-realization and self-actualization: in each of us there is a desire for personality development, the desire to become a strong and integral person, in each of us the abilities and talents, usually inhibited by neurotic tendencies, doze."

The term "self-actualization" was also used by K. Jung and meant the ultimate goal of personal development, its achievement of unity based on the fullest differentiation and integration of its various sides. They are also close in content to the idea of self-actualization of the concept of "desire for superiority" and "creative Self" A. Adler.

In the modern version of the concept of self-actualization, the "self" of a person is considered as his system of ideas about his potential, the concept of the "ideal Self." The concept of "ideal self" acts as one of the "organizers" of human activity,

motivating him to develop realistic life plans. In the process of self-actualization, a person, achieving success and failing in the implementation of life plans, constantly makes adjustments to the "concept of self," including the "ideal self," the picture of the world and life plans. This process allows him to form a concept of the past in which there is no need to deny failures and misses, which allows him to get rid of the consequences of mental trauma and the development of neurotic trends.

### **3. MATERIALS AND RESULTS.**

While in the case of human development in the years of first maturity, self-actualization can be considered to occur mainly in educational activities taking place in the educational space, the self-actualization of an adult is carried out mainly in the process of his professional and socially significant activities. A person, faced with certain problems that are a challenge for him as a subject and personality, accepting challenges and adequately solving problems, is improved, develops, deliberately chooses for himself even more difficult, but corresponding to the available "self" (his potential and level of competence) problems. Without accepting challenges, refusing to solve problems or choosing those for which it does not have the necessary resources, it suffers losses, goes through crises, can degrade [10, 46].

The choice in the direction of self-actualization, the work on itself with the goal of its own development and growth should be carried out by the person in each situation of choice. The refusal of efforts to fully realize their potential, according to the authors of the concept, is fraught with the emergence in a person of psychopathology or even metapatology (the term A. Maslow). A. Maslow and K. Rogers believed that the rejection of self-development inevitably leads a person to nervous, mental disorders, fraught with "coagulation" forever of those abilities that are not used, do not develop.

Sociologically, it can be assumed that the lack of opportunities for the self-actualization of citizens in a region or country leads to the marginalization of the population, an increase in anti-social, destructive trends. The involvement in the processes of involution and degradation of large groups of people, individual regions and countries today is one of the main threats to human civilization as a whole [9, 24].

The result of self-actualization is always a complex, multidimensional, essential change, affecting not only the sphere of the human psyche. The implementation of self-actualization allows a person to show in behavior, communication, interaction with other people qualities (knowledge, skills, competence) that meet the increasingly high standards set for him by a hierarchically organized multilevel system of human models as an individual, personality, subject, personality.

The metatheology of self-actualization suggests the need to redesign the social system, and above all the educational system, in a direction that will maximize the focus of civilization on the development of the personal potential of each individual. The theory of self-actualization, which is systemically important for humanistic psychology, is based on existentialism, intuitism and phenomenology in philosophy and the "experimental" paradigm in methodology. Theories of human development, growth and competence are developed in all schools and areas of psychology [7,9]. In general terms, self-actualization is the process and result of the most complete manifestation by a person of his abilities, the development of deposits and the realization of the full potential of his personality.

Studying the process of developing the self-actualization of young people in the educational space is necessary, given that the intellectual and cultural future of our country depends on them. Recently, not only the number of universities has increased, but also the share of students among

youth has increased. In 10-20 years, current students will determine the priorities for the development of culture, and at the same time they will largely rely on the values that they have developed in their student years. Analyzing the difficulties young people face in trying to realize their potential can help create a more enabling socio-psychological environment for young people's personal growth.

For society, an important result of the self-actualization of a person is the acquisition and improvement of his level of competence - a specific ability that allows him to effectively solve typical problems, tasks arising in real situations of everyday life, industrial and social activities. Increasing competency allows a person to model and evaluate the effects of his actions in an increasingly time frame, to make a transition from an external assessment orientation and to strengthen behavior to the development of "internal standards" for assessing himself, his life plans, problem situations and other people, which allows a person to develop a support for self-reinforcement. This is especially important when the life plan is implemented in an environment of uncertainty or fierce competition.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Thus, the development of personality self-actualization (personal growth) is a long and difficult process. An important psychological and pedagogical task is the development and upbringing of a person capable of active activity aimed at developing himself, through a systematic change in ideas about himself and the world, life plan, with the aim of fully revealing and realizing his potential in the interests of himself and society. This activity is carried out through the realization of conscious choices in favor of development and growth in each life situation and actions based on this choice.

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