

СОЦІАЛЬНА ПСИХОЛОГІЯ; ПСИХОЛОГІЯ СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ РОБОТИ

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COACHING AS A MEAN OF SOCIAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGIES FOR LIFE SUCCESSFULNESS ACTIVATION AMONG INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS WITH LOW LEVEL OF LIFE SUCCESSFULNESS: POSSIBILITIES AND LIMITATIONS

The article is dedicated to the evaluation of the possibility of coaching cooperation application as a mean of social-psychological strategies for life successfulness activation by internally displaced persons with a low level of life successfulness. In this light the main goals of the article were stated as next: to investigate unsuccessful IDPs representations about life successfulness, to identify problems which they face in the context of unsuccessfulness and displacement, to understand how coaching could be applied in this case.

As a method of research, we used in-depth interviews sense analysis, scientific literature analysis and theoretical study.

As a result, we pointed out several groups of unsuccessful IDPs which include: unsuccessful group of respondents, successful despite the test result, group of "lost successfulness", group of "re-evaluation". Also, we gave a short characteristic for each group and provided evidence from the qualitative research. Among groups of unsuccessful IDPs' problems, we highlighted intrapersonal issues (including problems connected with personality peculiarities and difficulties connected with skills development) and interpersonal issues (connected with a lack or loss of communicative competence, absence of trust et cetera).

On the theoretical level, we considered various approaches to coaching as a method of support provision and explored the difference between coaching and other means of psychological support. Such investigation helped us to understand the possibilities and limitations of the method.

We concluded that despite a various representations about life successfulness among resettlers with a low level of life successfulness, one thing that arrests attention and is common for all groups of unsuccessful IDPs is the absence of social component in descriptions of life successfulness. This fact, along with scientific exploration of coaching, could be a matter of further research.

Coaching, on its turn, could be used as a mean of social-psychological strategies for life successfulness activation through dealing with intrapersonal and interpersonal issues.

Key words: *displacement, resettlers, methods of intervention, coaching, typology of IDPs problems.*

Problem setting. Life successfulness is one of the essential human aspirations. Almost all people have ever dreamed of success. Some of them achieved outstanding results and now try to maintain this state throughout their lives. Some people reached success but were not able to keep it. There is also a proportion of people who gave up at the beginning and never tried to change anything accepting their unsuccessfulness as something predetermined.

The obstacles that we face during our lifetime can dramatically influence our sense of successfulness and further attempts to achieve results in essential for us spheres of life. Nevertheless, the question of the

dependence between a person's unsuccessfulness and adverse life-changing events is still actual and will be like this over time.

In Ukraine, starting from Crimea occupation and military activities in the Donbas in 2014, many people continue to face social, political, economic and psychological hardships. Thus, the influence of the obstacles, like the loss of the work, property, lifestyle and sometimes friends and family members, on the sense of successfulness or unsuccessfulness remains open and needs intervention. The question of psychological support in overcoming the feeling of unsuccessfulness, reevaluation of situation, forming

positive representations about life and its possibilities and stirring resettlers into active attempts of their lives changing is vital for the specialists of helping professions.

Goal setting. The main aims of this article are concentrated around several points that could answer the question of the suitability of a coaching approach in solving the problems of unsuccessful IDPs and coaching using as a mean of social-psychological strategies for life successfulness activation. Thus, this material will be dedicated to:

- examination of unsuccessful IDPs representations about life successfulness;
- analysing the problems which unsuccessful resettlers face after forced displacement and how those problems influence their sense of successfulness;
- exploration of how coaching could be used in the activation of social-psychological strategies for life successfulness.

Theoretical background. Before we start to present the results of our research, it is essential to clear up some theoretical issues and notions which are important for a better understanding of the material.

First, one of the crucial concepts for our research is a concept of strategies for life successfulness. Under this notion, we understand a way of actors' construction of the own future through the series of conscious stages and steps directed on the realisation of life project through execution of life tasks in essential for person spheres of life taking into account possible challenges, obstacles, inconsistencies and ways of their overcoming. Social-psychological nature of those strategies lays in persons' ability to build social relations in such a way that they help to achieve results in important for person spheres of life (realisation of life project), to evaluate those results as significant and to feel satisfaction (have an emotional coloured state) because of this.

Second, it is essential to understand what is coaching and what it represents as a clients' support and promotion practice.

It worth saying that there still is no universal definition of coaching. Thus, the understanding of the historical background and different viewpoints on coaching as a phenomenon, from our point of view, is important.

Coaching as a discipline appeared between the 1930s and the 1970s from sports coaching. Timothy Gallwey, who is considered as one of the coaching founders, during his work as tennis trainer at Harvard "started to develop a new way of coaching, which focused on enhancing the student's awareness of what was happening with the ball, the racket and the student's own body. He developed a series of questions and instructions to achieve this" [1, p. 294]. In 1974 the author published his first book from Inner

Game series "The Inner Game of Tennis" which "was immediate success and Gallwey went on to apply the same principles not only to other sports but to performance in the business world" [2, p. 41].

One more coaching pioneer John Whitmore whose "approach grew out of humanistic philosophy with its essentially optimistic view that mankind can be improved upon by focusing remedially not on what was wrong with it, but rather on its potential". He, like Gallwey, started to apply coaching on wider spheres "addressing whole systems such as families, schools, institutions and organisations. It also addresses what Whitmore calls "whole person development", which embraces the higher reaches of human aspiration, as well as spiritual development" [3, p. 75].

Merilyn Atkinson, a founder of Erickson College International – one of the most popular and worldwide coaching schools, based her approach on the ideas of Milton Erickson. The main principles of Milton Erickson state that: people are Okay (human beings everywhere are basically okay); people have real resources (they have many more resources than they know); every person has a positive intention (even if a positive intention is hidden, it can quickly be found); people do their best (they make their best choices each day with what they know about life so far); change is inevitable (no matter how difficult, we learn, we grow, and we change) [4].

Rampant development of coaching fell at the end of XX – beginning of XXI century. Over the past years, coaching as a method of intervention and discipline has increased significantly. Nowadays coaching is one of the fastest-growing professions the main goals of which are enhancing performance, development of leadership and personal skills, improvement of management practices, the advancement of life quality, psychological and subjective well-being, and general life experiences.

In the contemporary world, there are such definitions of coaching:

- "A Socratic-based future-focused dialogue between a facilitator (coach) and a participant (coachee), where the facilitator uses open questions, active listening, summaries and reflections which are aimed at stimulating the self-awareness and personal responsibility of the participant" [5];

- it is a step by step counselling into achieving their (coachees) end goal and unlocking hidden potential [6, p. 33];

- partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximise their personal and professional potential [7].

Thus, coaching as a method of intervention is based on cooperating dialogue between coach and coachee, focused on coachee's end goal and helping him to discover personal and professional potential, to enhance self-awareness and reflection and to achieve significant results.

As we can see from a short observation of coaching history and definitions, it emerged from sports coaching but was based on the principles of humanistic philosophy and psychology. In such case arises a logical question about similarities of coaching, psychological counselling and psychotherapy. Are those approaches to the human's support and development the same or there is a difference?

First of all, it worth saying that from a scientific point of view psychotherapy and psychological counselling, as a supporting practices, that appeared in the beginning of 20th century, have more evidence of their use effectiveness in different fields whereas coaching interventions, until recent times, "seldom receive scientific assessments" [8, p. 2]. However, the good news is that coaching research "has emerged over the past two decades from ad hoc, grassroots research to dynamic, serious academic study" [9, p. 27] and a lot of approaches of coaching effectiveness evaluation continue to appear and develop [10].

One more difference between the disciplines mentioned above is that coaching "aims to enhance well-being and performance in normal, non-clinical populations' personal life and work domains" [11, p. 54].

Coaching focuses on present and future, reasoning that it is impossible to change something in the past. In contrast, psychological counselling and psychotherapy could involve a form of personal history analysis, when clients go into their past, unravelling the problem. In such a case, repressed memories could be encountered, eliminated and treated.

Coaches do not give any advice, and their role is to be a catalyst and to bring a client to his own decisions through insightful questioning. Psychological counselling and psychotherapy, from one hand, could explain the reasons for the person's state, from another – it could provide a client with pathways out of the problem.

Methods. For data collection, we used a method of in-depth interviews. Participants of our study were internally displaced persons (IDP) with a low level of life successfulness from Crimea and Donbas. The evaluation of life successfulness level was made on the previous stage of our research with the help of a questionnaire created by us. Participants of our inquiry were found among students and professors of Universities, who moved from Donbas, clients of charity foundations and NGOs, online within special groups for IDPs and among personal contacts and connections.

A total amount of 12 participants with a low level of life successfulness were engaged in individual interviews for this part of the research. All the interviews were held at a suitable for interviewees time both personally and on Skype. Interviews lasted

from 30 minutes to 1,5 an hour; the average time was about 45 minutes. Our guide was semi-structured, and we used open-ended questions. The answers for the next questions were used for analysis in this article: (a) *What does life successfulness mean for you?* (b) *What indicators help you to understand that you or someone else is successful?* (c) *Do you consider yourself as a successful person?* (d) *What points out that you are successful/unsuccessful?* (e) *What are the reasons for your successfulness/unsuccessfulness?* (f) *What do you feel when you consider yourself as successful/unsuccessful?* (g) *What difficulties do you face?* (h) *How those difficulties influence your successfulness/unsuccessfulness?*

Also, we analyzed IDPs answers connected with social-psychological strategies for life successfulness.

All the interviews were recorded and then transcribed verbatim. After that, we did an analytical work which is considered as a "<...> the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of collected data" [12, p. 237]. Based on this analysis, we defined central representations of unsuccessful IDPs about life successfulness, made a list of difficulties which unsuccessful IDPs face, tried to make a classification of unsuccessful IDPs and typology of obstacles which unsuccessful resettlers usually face. At the same time, we tried to understand the applicability of coaching in a resolution of different types of unsuccessful IDPs' problems and made the scientific literature study and analysis.

Basic Material. Analysing respondents' interviews and their understanding of life successfulness in particularly, we defined several groups of unsuccessful IDPs depending on their own evaluation of their successfulness/unsuccessfulness now and before forced displacement, test results and their attitude to the future. Let us look precisely to each of the group and try to typify them.

Unsuccessful group of respondents is characterised by the presence of a sense of unsuccessfulness both before and after forced displacement. Sometimes the situation becomes worse after displacement and sense of unsuccessfulness is intensified with anxiety, fear and other negative feelings. Often representations of life successfulness among representatives of this group are vogue and limited by striving to achieve some material goods. Sometimes those people even do not have any examples of success in their environment and are inclined to behave not like an actor, but as an object, expecting that someone else will change their lives. However, there is a psychological barrier to ask for any help.

Informant 2:

– *Oh <...> I don't even know what to say. I want more because what I have is not a success. And <...> what do I want <...>? I don't have successful people in my circle of contacts. If parents are successful, they can promote their child. It's important.*

– *More is expected from social workers. They could help more.*

– *A community can promote (their members) further and higher on.*

– *Everything went wrong a long time ago. And what do I feel? I feel nothing. It is sad. If to think about this for a long time, I do not want to live.*

– *Absence of money is keeping from an attempt to achieve something.*

Informant 12:

– *I didn't have anything before (displacement) <...> I never had a sense of my own place <...>*

– *I'm not successful. I'm full of complexes and self-distrust. <...> in my understanding of the world, successfulness will be my characteristic only in case of my ability to let me buy my own living space or at least a part of it. <...> Till the moment when I'm able to survive myself without any help – it is not successfulness.*

– *<...> anything that somehow could be called successfulness is a matter of a lottery to my point of view.*

– *(After displacement) I lost an illusion of safety. <...> nothing can help me <...> I don't trust anyone, and I'm waiting for a catch, I have a concern to talk to people.*

Successful despite the test results. This group is characterised by respondents' tendency to evaluate their successfulness opposite to the questionnaire results. According to the test, the level of life successfulness of those participants was low. However, during the interview, they said that they are successful or do not consider themselves as unsuccessful. Such behaviour to our point of view is based on denying of problems existence or decreasing problems seriousness from one hand or fear of success and disclaiming of its significance from another hand. As for the life successfulness representations, they are concentrated around money, which is in the first place.

Informant 6:

– *<...> I consider myself as an entirely successful person. Conceptually I don't think that I'm an unfulfilled person. Certain changes, which I didn't forecast, had occurred. I didn't plan them; I was not ready for them. That is why now I'm in a kind of abstract situation, in a kind of vacuum <...> I don't even know how to describe it. It is not that I don't know how to do something, I don't understand why it doesn't work.*

– *(Life successfulness) it is when you have particular possibilities and social status. When financial well-being let you concentrate on psychological growth, spiritual growth.*

Informant 7:

– *Surely, I'm satisfied with my life <...> Successful <...> (I consider myself) for 60%*

– *(Life successfulness is) <...> money, first of all. If you don't need anything, you can consider yourself as successful. There is a short answer.*

– *I had a lot of acquaintances. Some of them were rich, some of them were poor, and I noticed such a tendency that those who are richer they are less happy. They are always in a hurry, especially if they are the right people and don't take alcohol and don't smoke. They always look unsatisfied.*

– *<...> I don't take everything seriously. It is a minus from one hand. But I like this. Why should I take everything seriously?*

Lost successfulness. This group of resettlers is characterised by a low level of life successfulness within the questionnaire result and evaluation during interviews. However, they report a high level of life successfulness before forced displacement. Life successfulness representations in this group of IDPs are more extensive than in previous groups. They include different life spheres and are enriched with such concepts as satisfaction, happiness, well-being and et cetera. At the same time, such situations are weighed down with respondents' inability to overcome it, their regret about losses and sometimes despondency and depressive mood as a result of forced displacement. Some of the respondents' tried to establish their business or to find a new relationship but didn't succeed. Some of them were able to reconstruct some of the important spheres of life (for example, career), but lost another essential part (for example, relationship with partner or close relatives). As a result, their life successfulness is evaluated as low and incomplete. There also were cases of deep psychological traumas, which made any attempts to succeed impossible.

Informant 4:

– *There were different periods in my life. There were successful periods, this period I consider as unsuccessful.*

– *There are some spheres of life which are not in the desired state. Maybe the most significant part of essential for me to life spheres is out of my expectations.*

– *(Life successfulness) <...> it is when a person realised him or herself in those spheres where he/she wanted to be realised.*

– *(Indicators of life successfulness could be) person's emotional state. If a person is in harmony with him/herself, he/she feels good <...>*

Informant 9:

– *<...> before this moment, I consider myself as successful, I had a career growth, and I felt my professional realisation. I was delighted with everything, and I saw a perspective of development. I was satisfied with my salary <...> and I saw that I could get more. And now, of course, I don't see this.*

Informant 10:

– *For me (life successfulness) is my realisation as a mother, wife, a professional and wise connection of all those components in one.*

– *Before those events (war), I considered myself a very successful person. My career developed in*

that sphere where I work – education. I achieved certain heights on my way, but then I was forced suddenly to change everything. Now I don't think that I'm successful enough.

– I'm successful because I got a job offer. My employer highly evaluated my professional skills. I got a position that is not higher than what I had before, but at the same time, it is not worse. From this point of view, I'm successful. I was able to take my children from that part where is war, to take them out of the war. And this, I also consider my success.

– But it is tough for me to safe relations with my husband. He stayed there. And this is part of unsuccessfulness.

Informant 11:

– For me, life successfulness means self-realisation. It's family well-being, the health of my close people. That is.

– (I don't consider myself as successful) because very often I would like to close myself, I feel fear. I don't know what is connected with when you are 43. Maybe it is a question of displacement. I understand that my life is divided into two parts. I feel tremendously uncomfortable.

– Before displacement, I didn't feel, I knew that I'm a successful person. In other words, everything that I had achieved until that age was what I always wanted. In my plans, I knew what would be tomorrow, in a year or two. I was going to get married. I had a job, a good job which I dreamt. We made an apartment renovation, and I was going to start travelling <...> And then everything finished.

“**Re-evaluation**” group is characterised by respondent's striving for improvement. As for life successfulness representations among the members of this group, they are not always clear and extensive. Furthermore, sometimes limiting beliefs can occur, sometimes respondents face anxiety or problems with goal setting. However, what unites all those people is they believe that this situation is temporary and that they can change something. In most situations, displacement is considered as a chance to re-evaluate their lives, to choose new directions and to start from the beginning.

Informant 1:

– For me successfulness, first of all, is about self-reliance. <...> when you are calm enough when you don't get nervous. <...> Um <...> successfulness is when you know your goals, where you go <...> you can analyse your promotion <...> you have some social environment where it is pleasant to be. And work, which satisfies you.

– No. Not yet (answer to the question about evaluation as a successful person).

– Then I had a kind of euphoria, that it is a chance to go to the capital city and conquer it. (It was thoughts) that my life will change dramatically if I change my place.

Informant 3:

– Life successfulness for me is when a person feels him/herself totally independent from circumstances and other people. At the same time, he/she is happy because of making what he/she wants, and he/she has everything they wish.

– (Also) <...> any relationship with people, who can support and help you. And then <...> hobby. I think that hobby is essential for a person's development and rest. And maybe <...> good job.

– I don't complain about my life <...> But objectively, I understand that I don't realise my potential.

– (When I changed place) <...> I felt happiness and relief that at once, I escaped from where I was.

Informant 5:

– Successful <...> No. I'm more on my way to consider myself as successful. But not now.

– For me (life successfulness) when you are satisfied. When you don't feel uncomfortable with what you do every day. Because of this, you can feel successful and happy.

Informant 8:

– According to the tests and subjectively, I don't feel successful. But at the same time, I move in the right direction <...> After the displacement, my life became more interesting. And I started to live.

– For me (life successfulness) is a possibility to work where you want with whom you want and to earn enough money for life <...>. It is essential to feel comfortable and to have time for the rest and communication. Those are criteria of life successfulness forme.

If to talk about coaching application in different groups of unsuccessful IDPs, it needs to be emphasized coachees' readiness for changes and taking responsibility for the results. Readiness is considered as “combination of motivation and ability to change” and is “seen as a prerequisite for effective engagement in the development process” [13]. Responsibility in this case is considered as person's intention to take ownership and accountability to take the necessary actions to change. When person take responsibility for thoughts and actions, a commitment to them rises and so does performance [14]. In such a case the most fruitful cooperation between coach and coachee could be in the group of those who are reevaluate their experience. In other cases, potential clients should realise their problems, get ready for change and development and take responsibility for making first actions. It is essential to pay special attention to the cases from a group of “lost successfulness” which relate to psychological traumatisation. To our point of view coaching in such case will not be an effective method, because the primary goal of intervention at this point is to deal with a traumatic experience, which could be represented by a broad spectrum of different disorders [15]. As we already know, coaching deals with non-clinical

issues from one hand, from another – it is focused on present and future and does not have suitable instruments for working with trauma.

As for the problems which unsuccessful IDPs have, they could be divided into two big groups:

1. Intrapersonal:

– **connected with personality:** a presence of complexes and limiting beliefs; a lack of self-trust; a low level of self-esteem; an unawareness about personal needs and interests; a lack of self-understanding; pessimism; an inflexibility; a lack of motivation, responsibility, will and commitment; striving to escape difficulties and to give up.

– **connected with the development of skills:** an absence of goals and vision of the future; alack of planning and time-management skills; an inability to keep focus and to achieve results; an inability to overcome obstacles and difficulties; a lack of strategic thinking; an underestimation or an overestimation of one's resources (time, efforts, abilities).

2. Interpersonal:

– a loss of communication (disruption of connections with the habitual environment); a lack of communication skills; a psychological barriers connected with communication (for example, inability to ask for help); a lack of experience in forming new social environment; a lack of support; a lack of interest in other people or distrust.

From the first glance on the definition of social-psychological strategies for life successfulness, it would seem that solving interpersonal problems, connected with an inability to set communications and lack of social skills, can bring good results and lead to an improvement in social-psychological strategies for life successfulness utilisation. But if look at the problem precisely we can see that a lot of depends on personality. If a person has a low level of self-trust or self-esteem, it will be demonstrated in the environment, and such a person will not be precepted as a full and interesting communication partner. At the same time, the presence of limiting beliefs about oneself, personal abilities, skills and ways of communication will keep a person from developing efficient social connections. The absence of one's future vision, inability to set goals, maintain focus, achieve results and ask for help could nullify the presence of useful connections in a person's environment. Thus, it is better to start from solving personal issues, developing at the same time interpersonal and communication skills.

As for the coaching, it could be applied to both groups of problems, but only in non-clinical cases and upon the condition of a person's readiness to change and to take responsibility. Dealing with the issues on both intrapersonal and interpersonal levels, coaching cooperation will help a client to analyse and understand typical behaviour patterns, to develop reflection ability, to invent and implement

new behavioural strategies, to overcome limiting believes and to look at oneself from the other angle.

Conclusions and further research. As it could be seen from our study, there are different representations about life successfulness among IDPs with a low level of life successfulness. Some of them are more extended and include various components (essential spheres of life, satisfaction, happiness et cetera), some of them are limited by material component; some are very vogue and abstract. Nevertheless, the significant peculiarity for all of them is the absence of social aspect, when a person considers him/herself successful in case of his/her usefulness to society and other people. Unsuccessful concept of life successfulness is concentrated around self and closest social environment. It could be explained by the fact that a lot of unsuccessful people are thinking about survival due to the lack of money. However, among participants of this research were people who did not have such problems. Moreover, some of them even reported improvement of this sphere (respondents from "reevaluation" group). From there, a question of the social aspect in representations about life successfulness of unsuccessful IDPs could be a matter of further research.

Problems which unsuccessful resettlers face could be both intrapersonal and interpersonal. Intrapersonal issues in their turn could be connected with personality peculiarities and lack of skills. Further research in this field could be dedicated to the investigation of influence on different groups of problems and connection of this influence results with the level of life successfulness.

As for coaching as a mean of activation of social-psychological strategies for life successfulness, it can be concluded that it could deal with a wide variety of intrapersonal and interpersonal problems. Still, there are limitations of this approach utilisation in clinical cases and in situations when a potential client is not ready for taking responsibility and actions.

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Боровинська І. Є. Коучинг як засіб активації соціально-психологічних стратегій життєвої успішності серед внутрішньо переміщених осіб із низьким рівнем життєвої успішності: можливості й обмеження

Стаття присвячена оцінці можливості застосування коучингової взаємодії як засобу активації соціально-психологічних стратегій життєвої успішності серед внутрішньо переміщених осіб із низьким рівнем життєвої успішності. Для досягнення мети необхідно було виконати такі завдання: дослідити уявленню неуспішних переселенців про життєву успішність; зрозуміти проблеми, з якими стикаються внутрішньо переміщені особи, у контексті неуспішності та вимушеного переїзду; зрозуміти, як коучинг може бути застосований за таких умов.

Як джерело для дослідження ми використовували глибинні інтерв'ю, детальний розгляд яких дозволив виокремити основні смисли для подальшої інтерпретації, систематизації та виділення категорій. Також було застосовано аналіз наукової літератури та теоретичне дослідження матеріалів.

У результаті ми визначили кілька груп неуспішних внутрішньо переміщених осіб, до яких належать: група «неуспішних»; група «успішних», незважаючи на результати тестування; група «втраченої успішності»; група «переоцінки». Також ми надали коротку характеристику кожній із виділених груп, навели приклади з якісного дослідження. Серед проблем, з якими стикаються неуспішні внутрішньо переміщені особи, ми виділили внутрішньоособистісні (зокрема, проблеми, пов'язані з особливостями особистості, та проблеми, пов'язані з розвитком навичок) та міжособистісні (пов'язані з недостатністю або втраченою комунікативних навичок, відсутністю довіри тощо).

На теоретичному рівні ми розглянули різні підходи до коучингу як методу надання підтримки, дослідили різницю між коучингом та іншими методами психологічної допомоги. Таке вивчення допомогло нам зрозуміти можливості й обмеження методу під час роботи з активацією соціально-психологічних стратегій життєвої успішності у групі неуспішних переселенців.

У висновках ми зазначили, що, незважаючи на різні уявлення про життєву успішність серед внутрішньо переміщених осіб із низьким рівнем життєвої успішності, єдине, що привертає увагу і є загальним для всіх груп неуспішних внутрішньо переміщених осіб, – це відсутність соціального складника в описах життєвої успішності. Цей факт може стати предметом для подальших досліджень.

Коучинг, у свою чергу, може бути застосований як засіб активації соціально-психологічних стратегій життєвої успішності через роботу з інтраперсональними й інтерперсональними проблемами.

Ключові слова: переселення, переселенці, методи інтервенції, коучинг, типологія проблем ВПО.