

## Prosocial Behavior In People Over 60 Years Old As A Medical And Social Problem

Shamatava Nana Emzarovna<sup>1</sup>, Lusine S. Polonskaya<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Candidate Of Medical Sciences, N. A. Semashko Research Institute Of Public Health.

<sup>2</sup>candidate Of Medical Sciences, National Research Institute Of Public Health Named After N. A. Semashko

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**Annotation.** In modern conditions, when there is such a variety of forms of deviant behavior (self-destructive, delinquent, addictive, etc.), special attention of researchers is drawn to prosocial behavior. It is focused on helping others without extracting its own material benefits, so it is often identified with helping behavior.

The article discusses the issues of scientific research by Russian and foreign authors on an important medical and social problem - prosocial behavior. The features of social and psychological vulnerability of elderly people related to age-psychological, psycho-physiological and socio-economic reasons are revealed. The relevance of the problem of information and psychological security of the elderly in the modern world is reflected. In addition, the authors raised the issue of the motivational component of such a phenomenon as prosocial behavior.

**Keywords:** phenomenon, elderly people, prosocial behavior, information and psychological security.

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"The concept of prosocial (or assisting) behavior is widely used in modern world psychological science. It is worth noting that until recently this concept has not been used at all in domestic psychology. It is also absent in such a modern and authoritative Russian publication as the "Big Psychological Dictionary" edited by B. G. Meshcheryakov and V. P. Zinchenko. As for Western (American) textbooks on social psychology, the concept of "prosocial behavior" has been considered in them since the early 1980s as an antonym for the term "anti-social behavior."

In the broadest sense, prosocial behavior is usually understood as a set of certain individual's voluntary actions aimed at the benefit of another or some society as a whole (the opposite in meaning is behavior called anti-social) [9]. Prosocial behavior has long presented to sociologists who seek to understand why people are inclined to help others, which will cost them dearly, as a kind of challenge. In some cases, people even endanger their own lives in an effort to help others, including complete strangers. Psychologists talk about the existence of several reasons why people demonstrate prosocial behavior. In

many cases, this behavior is encouraged during childhood and adolescence: adults approve and reinforce the positive actions of children, whether it is simply sympathy for another or real help [14].

Evolutionary psychologists often condemn prosocial behavior, considering from the point of view of the natural selection principles. Obviously, by constantly putting himself at risk, a person is unlikely to be able to transfer his genes to the next generations. However, the idea of kinship selection suggests that by helping members of their family, a person contributes to the genus survival and the genes transfer to future generations. Researchers were able to provide evidence that people are more likely to help those with whom they are associated with blood bonds [7]. Prosocial behavior is often considered as forced - for a number of factors, including selfish considerations (increasing one's own self-esteem), mutual benefit (help can turn out to be useful for the performer himself) and more altruistic considerations (helping purely out of sympathy for another person) [8] "[Khlebov, Yu. M. Prosocial personality activity/Yu. M. Khlebov. - Text: direct//Young scientist. — 2020. — № 15 (305). - P. 275-276. - URL: <https://moluch.ru/archive/305/68791/> (case date: 10.12.2021)].

"The problem's relevance of research into the prosocial behavior of older people, considered as a resource for the stability of their information and psychological safety, is especially acute in modern socio-economic conditions, characterized by intensive informatization of public relations, a crisis in the value-normative system of modern society, which lead to social alienation of older people from socio-cultural and socio-economic social processes."

Older persons over 60 years of age are today the most vulnerable segments of the population, as their problems are caused by a number of age-psychological, psychophysiological and socio-economic deprivation. The level of information threats to the psychological well-being of people over 60 years of age should be assessed from the perspective of the socio-age norms of older people [13]. Age-related changes in the personality of an elderly person lead not only to psychophysiological transformations, but also to changes in the person's mental health associated with impaired cognitive functions and emotional-sensory perception of reality [4, p. 49]. In the socio-economic aspect, older people are doomed to a minimum of financial subsistence support, do not have demand as active social relations subjects, are alienated from cultural events and generally fall out of the socio-cultural and information spaces, which makes them emotionally vulnerable [4, p. 27].

The socio-psychological problems of older persons, which make them vulnerable to various types of manipulative influences, include:

- Inadequate perception of oneself as a person;
- experiencing a state of emotional distress;
- poor adaptation to rapidly changing socio-economic conditions;
- violation of the system of interpersonal and personal-group communications [10, p. 26].

The informatization processes of modern society, which contribute not only to the improvement of the public functioning and state institutions, have a huge impact on the life of older people, but also

become a means for the emergence of new information threats. The social vulnerability of older persons leads to a situation in which they often become fraudsters' victims, including through information and communication technologies. Insufficient awareness and ability to use modern information and communication technologies, low ability to assess the information reliability, uncritical attitude to officially declared information, trustworthiness and the need for communication, as well as limited opportunities to seek help, are the main reasons for the vulnerability of older people to information threats of modern society [2].

Hence, the problem of information and psychological security of people over 60 years old arises. Emphasizing the important role of information in the information formation and psychological security of the older people's personality, it is necessary to disclose the key concept of information security in this aspect. A.A. Chebotareva writes that information security is "such a state of an object in which the state of the information environment in which it is located allows it to maintain the possibility and ability to make and implement decisions in accordance with its goals aimed at progressive development" [12, p. 133]. Information and psychological security of the person can be achieved both as a result of conducting "measures aimed at protecting the object from destructive impact, and by strengthening immunity and developing the object's ability to evade destructive information impact" [12, p. 133].

In this regard, the problem of studying socio-psychological factors that ensure the information and psychological security of the personality of an elderly person in the destructive influence conditions of the modern society information environment becomes relevant. As a resource for the stability of information and psychological security of a person over 60 years old, we consider its prosocial behavior, which requires considering its essence and structure.

The prosocial behavior is defined as the behavior focused on the society's benefit and the help to people which includes the positive ideas of the personality of itself connected with abilities to solidarity and sympathy, to manifestation of empathy, to permission of difficult life situations. The prosocial behavior of the individual is based on humanistic life values that determine strategies for interaction with the world related to the implementation of altruistic, socially significant activities.

Traditionally, in the practice of providing social and psychological assistance to older persons, the guardianship of assisting activities is dominant, which makes it possible to feel competent people, take into account their need and ensure the improvement of their living conditions. Prosocial behaviour towards older persons has various manifestation forms, such as emotional support, material assistance, information assistance, assistance provided by others [5].

Currently, socio-psychological and psychological-pedagogical technologies for helping older people, which are implemented using active, subjective forms and methods of work, are gaining wide popularity. Carrying out socio-psychological and psychological and pedagogical activities, which are based on the values of prosocial behavior, create conditions for the self-realization of the personality of an elderly person, for realizing the value of their life path, for understanding the information threats of the modern world. Through the implementation of socio-psychological technologies, an elderly person is

able to gain "an interaction space, and his subjectivity, realized in social action, allows an elderly person to feel his social significance and gain new social roles" [3, p. 5], which ultimately serves to increase his level of information and psychological security. Ensuring the information and psychological safety of older persons involves, in turn, facilitating them:

in the development of electronic digital and information-communication technologies;

- to raise awareness of potential threats and opportunities for the realization of their rights through the use of information and telecommunications technologies [1].

It is also very important that the questions of motivation of prosocial behavior, as an internal component, are not fully studied. Many authors distinguish various motives of this phenomenon: this is the desire to self-realize, and in its pure form selfish motives, and receiving positive emotions, as well as receiving socialization of oneself in society.

According to M.I. Loginov (2021), the following conclusions can be drawn from the analysis:

"- in psychological science there is no consensus on understanding the essence of prosocial behavior. According to one view, the immediate result is important (for example, the provision of assistance), and the motives that cause this behavior can be of any nature.

According to the second position, motives

this type of conduct should be altruistic only:

- several ways of enhancing the individual's prosocial behaviour can be identified: the skills development in the provision of assistance, the accumulation of experience in prosocial behaviour; reliance on personal and social norms, emotional sphere and previous experiences; the possible positive consequences awareness; a show of appreciation by the host, its openness to assistance;

- There are several models of prosocial behaviour, which can be based on moral standards, an idea of the consequences of one's own action, emotional experiences, competencies necessary to provide assistance of a certain type, etc.;

- Prosocial behaviour can be considered both at the intra-personal level and at the interpersonal and group levels;

- One of the special types of prosocial behaviour is cooperation, its distinctive feature is the equality and interdependence of the parties engaging in the provision of assistance;

- The prosocial behaviour is determined by a number of conditions, in particular, the type of behaviour depends on the personality of the aid subject, on his previous experience, the situation of assistance, the recipient's characteristics, the possible consequences of the action and inaction, etc.

- Three main groups of motivators of prosocial behaviour can be distinguished: needs and instincts; values; emotions and personality settings;

- having analyzed various definitions, by prosocial behavior we propose to mean a complex organized polymotivated form of activity aimed at assisting an individual, group or society and due to the influence of situational and subjective factors "[Logvinova M. I. Prosocial behavior: socio-psychological

analysis/M. I. Logvinova//Scientific notes. Electronic scientific journal of Kursk State University. 2021. No 1 (57)].

"It is also worth quoting another author (Berestyuk T.B.), who claims that" socio-psychological, psychological, pedagogical and information-communicative technologies, which are based on the values of prosocial behavior, act as a powerful resource for the stability of information-psychological security of the person over 60 years old. Socio-psychological and psychological-pedagogical technologies based on humanistic values, which underlie the prosocial behavior of the individual, allow creating conditions for the formation of the necessary socio-psychological and information-communicative competencies of the personality of older people, provide support in complex life situations, provide an older person with a conscious self-realization space in socially oriented activities "[Berestock, T.B. Prosocial behavior as a powerful resource for the stability of information and psychological security of the person over 60 years old/T.B. Berestock//National Health. - NO. 3 - 2021 P. 31-34].

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