

# PERSONAL MODUS OF FUTURE SPECIALISTS' SELF-REALIZATION

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## **Abstract**

The paper discusses the features of personal organization and mediation of self-realization with personal characteristics at different levels of the integral indicators of self-attitude. It was found out that the implementation of personal potential is possible only at adequate self-attitude, a level of aspiration and person's life perspective.

**Keywords:** *self-realization, self-attitude, level of aspiration, life perspective, self-organization.*

## **Introduction.**

The study of personal life courses indicates that the most important condition for personal development and self-fulfillment is person's life perspective as an image of a desirable and perceived possible future life. Life perspectives give to persons the abilities to organize their lives, to plan and implement them (Абульханова-Славская, 1991), namely, a subjective picture of a personal life course reflects the stages of social and individual development of a person (Ананьев, 2001), and finally, a specific feature of human life determination is the predestination of life events by the past and the future, so by the objectives and predictable results of life activities (Головаха & Кроник, 1984).

Person's life relationships determine the activity motivation and sense bearing content of personality characteristics. In subjectively transformed forms, life relationships exist as sense bearing structures of personality – meaning of life, values, motives and so on. Therefore, "motivation of human behavior is subjective determination of human behavior mediated by a process of world reflection..." (Леонтьев, 1993).

To sum up, personality psychology is faced with the task: to understand what is a subjective-personal plane of human activities, and what is included into biological and social functions of a person.

Re-orientation of deterministic relationships can occur when a person becomes a real actor capable to be self-developed and self-determined. In this case, the driving forces of personal development are located in his/her individuality, and external factors lose their programming role. Thus, a general pattern of psychological development of a personality as a subject is expressed in the strengthening of capacity for self-determination and in logical expansion of personal freedom from external and internal circumstances.

A person, as a holistic psychological system, is not in the opposition to the objective world, but in the union with it, with the world part that has importance, meaning, and value for the person. Thus, a personality of a student, who is integrated into the educational environment, the main value of which is, as it is known, self-development and self-realization, depends entirely on the values of his/her social community, which he/she identifies own personality with.

**The aim of the paper** is to substantiate and reveal possible variants of interaction of a holistic "personality" system with its other components: attitude toward others and self-estimation, a desire for self-fulfillment and factors that help to transit virtual states inherent in an integrated system "personality- social environment" into actual behavior.

**The object of the study** is personal self-realization as a phenomenon of self-organization and self-determination.

Given that one of the most important determinants of person's *self-development* and *self-fulfillment* is his/her *attitude towards him/herself* (self-attitude), it is natural to assume, that personal potential realization is possible only if self-attitude, a level of aspiration and human life perspective are adequate. Self-attitude is also a very important indicator of person's psychological well-being; and professional future that is represented as potentially possible one performs the functions of subjective regulation and influences life choices, actions and activities, a vector of personal and professional development.

The author fully shares the views of the representatives of Uznadze's school where person's attitude toward him/herself is defined as orientation formation. At this approach, a conceptual model of self-attitude as social attitude was mostly elaborated by Сарджвеладзе (1989), who introduced a concept of "self-attitude" into science as a special concept, classifying it as a subclass of social attitudes. Self-attitude means the relations of a person with a need to the situation of its fulfillment that is directed at him/herself (Сарджвеладзе, 1989).

Personal self-attitude is also understood as a complex cognitive-affective formation, the maturity of which is determined by the quality of mutual relationships and a degree of the coherence of its components. As a basic formation, personal self-attitude plays an important role in the system of self-regulation and self-determination. Self-attitude is closely related to other persons' characteristics, especially will. It influences the formation of content, structure and forms of appearance of all personal psychological characteristics (Столин, 1982).

In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century motivational concepts of Rotter (1982), Хекхаузен (2003), Atkinson, (1964), McClelland (Макклелланд, 2007) were developed, which are characterized by the recognition of the leading role of consciousness in the determination of human behaviour. Cognitive theories of motivation led to an introduction to scientific usage of new motivational concepts: social needs, life goals, cognitive factors, cognitive dissonance, values, expectations of success, fear of failure, and a level of aspiration.

The personal level of mental reflection is represented by sense bearing formations that function as motivational and semantic determination of activity. Through his/her own activities a person integrates various aspects of the activity structure along its deployment. Personal activity is also the cause of the enrichment of motives, aims and means of activity.

Mutual influence of activity types of a person as a biological individual, a social individual and a personality were set out in the levelled concept of mental health proposed by Братусь (1981). According to this concept, sense bearing formations include sense forming motives, sense bearing attitudes and spontaneous personal sense bearing emotional pains. Therefore, personal self-identity through *self-organization* is possible only in the case when the main activities included into the life cycle are determined by sense forming motives, which makes life truly alive and creative. Otherwise, adaptation to the circumstances of life, under external motives and agents, make a person organize his/her activity in such a way that his/her life becomes impersonal, run on the path of *determinism*.

**Method.** To determine the role of students' personality structure for the development of their desire for self-fulfillment, the test-questionnaire on personality self-attitude of Stolin, & Pantulyeyev (cited in Пантилеев, 1993) was used as well as the self-actualization test (Фетискин, Козлов, & Мануйлов, 2005) of Shostrom (adapted by Aleshin, Gozman, Zahika & Kroza), the method "Lifestyle Index" (LI) of Kellermann, Plutchik, Purpose-in-Life Test (Практическая психодиагностика: методики и тесты, 2002), Crumbaugh & Maholick (adapted by Леонтьев, 1992).

The total number of subjects comprised 345 students of several universities of Kyiv.

**Results and Discussion.** Analyzing the indicators, the author has noted that the most of the students have typical average (50-74 points) and high levels (more than 74 points). The data are presented in the Table 1.

Although, the most of the studied students are characterized by high indicators of self-attitude in general, but the self-attitude structures are different with different expressiveness of its component, i.e. it is supported by different ratio of self-attitude indicators.

**Table 1.** Average indicators of students' self-attitude

	Self-attitude in general	Self-esteem	Self-sympathy	Expectations of positive attitude from others	Self-interest	Self-confidence	Expectations of others' attitude	Self-acceptance	Self-consistency	Self accusation	Self-interest	Self-understanding
$\bar{X}$	75,2	60,8	60,9	54,6	74,1	56,9	57,7	68,2	57,5	52,2	65,4	58,6
Md	80,0	66,5	69,6	53,0	82,3	65,6	59,2	68,3	60,4	48,2	70,0	68,6
Mo	85,0	58,6 <sup>a</sup>	70	72,3	92,3	65,6	80	70,6 <sup>a</sup>	60,3	27,6	80,0	43,3
$S_x$	19,9	25,3	23,4	28,2	26,1	26,2	27,2	25,5	23,3	27,4	27,8	25,8

Note  $\bar{X}$  – average value; Md – median; Mo – mode;  $S_x$  – standard deviation; a – there are several modes, the lowest one was shown

Values of “self-esteem” and “self-sympathy” indicators show the studied students' ability to control their own lives and to be self-consistent, students believe in their capabilities and skills, have positive self-estimation and approve themselves as a whole. However, the “expectations of positive attitudes from others” indicator has low values. According to the views of Столин (1983), in the normally functioning self-attitude system, lowering of any emotional component can be compensated by increasing of another component, so the self-attitude in general remains at a high level (Столин, 1983). Therefore, self-estimation is a reflection of the integration of a certain sense structure without conflicts. During adequate self-attitude formation, personal experience plays a dominant role in comparison with external assessment. However, high adequate external evaluation, in its turn, also has impact on self-estimation.

The students have a fairly high level of “self-interest”, which is a measure of interest in their own thoughts and feelings and confidence in the fact that they are interesting to others.

“Self-acceptance”, “self-consistence” and “self-understanding” are characterized by high values that can be considered as the indicators of personal maturity, ability to control own activities by themselves. However, there is also a significant number of people with low levels of self-attitude in general and of its components. This part of the tested people may have some difficulties with self-determination of own activities, with awareness of life prospects and of own capabilities.

Describing the data in Table 2, the author has noted, that approximately 60% of the subjects have a high level of self-attitude in general. Average self-attitude in general is characteristic for 30% (on average), indicating a relatively high level of self-esteem and self-interest, satisfaction with their own “Self”, and ability to learn and master their profession. Somewhat lower level of self-sympathy, especially for the first-year students, may be a result

of increased levels of anxiety and self-doubt that can be explained by adaptation to training. In general, only the indicator of self-interest and expectations of others' attitudes vary significantly with time ( $p < 0,001$ ).

**Table 2.** Expressiveness of student's self-attitude (%) at different academic years

Level	Year	Self-attitude in general	Self-esteem	Self-sympathy	Expectations of positive attitude from others	Self-interest
high	I	57	42	29	14	35
	IV,V	67	44	38	14	54
average	I	29	29	25	32	29
	IV,V	21	25	33	40	19
low	I	14	29	46	54	36
	IV,V	12	31	29	46	27

A tendency can be viewed for self-attitude: the following indicators of self-attitude are lower: "expectations of others' attitude", "self-understanding" and "expectations of positive attitude from others".

Analyzing the relationship between indicators of self-attitude, we found out the following:

- Self-attitude in general has a high inverse correlation with attitude to the future (-0.90), to group-mates (-0.68);
- Self-esteem correlates with attitude to the future (-0.76), to senior people (-0.64), to group-mates (-0.67);
- Self-sympathy correlates with attitude toward group-mates (-0.74), with a feeling of guilt (-0.76);
- Self-interest correlates with attitude to the future ( -0.81), to group-mates (-0.65);
- Self-acceptance is related with attitude to the future (-0.89), to sexual relationships (-0.80), to mother (-0.82);
- Self-consistency correlates with attitudes towards persons of the opposite sex (-0.62);
- Self-accusation is related with the attitude to him/herself (0.82), with attitude to subordinates (0.63 , to senior people (0.62), to the past (0.70 ), to own family (0.63), with a feeling of guilt (0.86);
- Self-interest correlates with the attitude to the future ( -0.92 ), to group-mates (-0.92);
- Self-understanding correlates with attitude to own father (-0.65), to the future (-0.71), to own family (-0.76), to group-mates (-0.76).

Thus, the attitude to the future and to group-mates has the greatest influence in the overall structure of self-attitude, which is, obviously, characteristic to the period of students' life.

Self-attitude, as a sense bearing formation, has an eternal importance for a person. Every change in it is related to interpersonal conflicts, accompanied by an experience of menace of destruction to self-identity. Therefore, it is actively protected and maintained by the person.

The study of psychological nature of self-attitude protection, the identification of factors contributing to its style, of personal resources that allow overcoming of protective behavior is a prerequisite for the study of patterns of becoming of a mature personality, who is capable of self-realization.

The proposed technique "Lifestyle Index" (LI) of Kellermann & Plutchik (Практическая психодиагностика: методики и тесты, 2002) allowed us to identify psychological defence mechanisms for self-attitude that affect adaptation strategies, interpersonal relationships, level

of demands, life perspectives, goals, etc. Dominant lifestyle identification also contributes to identification of personality traits that are formed under influence of the defined mechanisms.

Expressiveness of psychological defence mechanisms (PDM) of the students is shown in Table 3. Indicators are considered as unexpressed if their values are less than 40, and they are quite expressed if their values are higher than 50.

**Table 3.** Average indicators of psychological defence mechanisms (%) for the students

	Denial	Repression	Regression	Compensation	Projection	Substitution	Sour grapes mechanism	Reaction formation
$\bar{X}$	74,3	63,1	58,9	68,5	59,7	51,5	54,2	60,5
Md	64	53	41	52	52	49	59	46
Mo	70 <sup>a</sup>	63	50	58	60	67	59	51
$S_x$	23,2	26,3	23,7	18,5	32,6	24,8	25,7	26,5

The above data show that prevailing PDM differ markedly for the selected groups. Students are characterized by broad spectrum protection mechanisms: “denial of reality”, “repression”, “projection”, which are “primitive” defences, and “compensation” and “sour grapes mechanism”, which are “mature”, constructive mechanisms to protect individual self-attitude.

For further analysis, the studied sample was split into three groups in terms of expressiveness of the integral indicators of self-attitude.

Analysis of correlations between dominant psychological defence mechanisms and self-attitude indicators at different levels shows the different types of personal integration.

If self-attitude has high levels of indicators, there are only few significant relationships with psychological defence mechanisms, and the correlation is mainly the inverse one. In particular, self-esteem correlates ( $p < 0,001$ ) with regression (-0,25); expectation of positive attitude from others (0,22) and self-interest (-0,25), self-acceptance correlate with denial (0,23). Thus, in this case, self-attitude does not require special support.

If self-attitude has average expressiveness of indicators, such a level is associated with a significantly greater number of psychological defence mechanisms. Self-esteem is associated with regression (-0,26,  $p < 0,001$ ); self-sympathy correlates with a wide range of defence mechanisms: regression (-0,21,  $p < 0,05$ ), substitution (-0,32,  $p < 0,001$ ), sour grapes mechanism (-0,22,  $p < 0,05$ ), reaction formation (0,26,  $p < 0,001$ ); expectation of positive attitudes from others correlates with compensation (-0,29,  $p < 0,001$ ), projection (-0,21,  $p < 0,05$ ), substitution (-0,27,  $p < 0,001$ ), sour grapes mechanism (-0,22,  $p < 0,05$ ); self-interest is related with repression (-0,26,  $p < 0,001$ ), regression (-0,29,  $p < 0,001$ ), substitution (-0,26,  $p < 0,001$ ); self-consistency (self-guidance) is related with regression (-0,41,  $p < 0,001$ ) and sour grapes mechanism (0,26,  $p < 0,001$ ); self-accusation has positive correlation with compensation (0,4,  $p < 0,001$ ) and substitution (0,26,  $p < 0,001$ ); and also self-understanding correlates with compensation (-0,37,  $p < 0,001$ ).

A low level of self-attitude is supported with such protection mechanisms ( $p < 0,001$ ): self-esteem is related with regression (-0,76) and substitution (-0,32); expectations of positive attitudes from others correlate with compensation (-0,29) and substitution (-0,32); self-interest correlates with compensation (0,33) and sour grapes mechanism (0,32); it should be noted

that the activation of these mechanisms is important for the increase of self-interest; self-consistency correlates with regression (-0.49) and substitution (-0.5); self-accusation correlates with denial (0.32), repression (0.53), substitution (0.36); self-understanding is related with regression (-0.51), projection (0.35) and reaction formations (-0.29). Thus, we can see that the “contribution” into the *low level of self-attitude* is made mainly by regression, repression, projection, reaction formation, which can cause simplified behavior patterns, reducing of an aspiration level, of goals, persistence, and indifference emergence. Compensation and sour grapes mechanism, as it was found out, has positive importance for *self-attitude increase*.

Given that the positive person’s attitude to him/herself is understood as a condition that contributes to self-realization; negative one is a condition that prevents self-fulfillment; and conflictive self-attitude can both facilitate and hinder self-realization (Степин & Аршинов, 1994), we analyzed the correlations of self-attitude indicators with the indexes of the self-actualization test.

At a high level of self-attitude, its indicators, such as self-esteem, self-sympathy, self-acceptance are positively related at significant levels (at  $p < 0,001$ ) with the next scales of the self-actualization test:

- “competence over time” (the ability to perceive life holistically): coefficients are 0.28, 0.24, 0.37;
- “support” (0.25) (indicates the relative independence of people with high levels of self-attitude during their actions, desire to be guided by own life goals and principles);
- “value orientations” (0.28, 0.34) (the studied students share values specific to the personality who is being self-actualized);
- “sensitivity to oneself” (0.26) (determines the extent of awareness and reflection of own needs and feelings);
- “aggression acceptance” (0.28) and “sociability” (0.28) (factors mean a person’s ability to accept own irritability, anger and aggression as normal expressions of human nature and describe an ability to quickly establish contacts with other people).

At an average level of self-attitude, indicators are related in the next form:

- as in the previous case, self-esteem and self-sympathy are positively related (0.44, 0.5) with competence over time; but in this case, the latter indicator correlates with the expectations of positive attitudes from others (0.26), i.e. external evaluations of others are important to maintain an adequate level of self-esteem; in addition, competence over time correlates negatively (-0.34) with self-accusation;
- self-acceptance has positive relations (0.26) with the “support” scale;
- self-esteem and self-acceptance are related positively (0.28, 0.35) with value orientations, so the studied students also share the values of self-development;
- self-sympathy and self-acceptance correlate positively (0.23) with the flexibility of behavior, which is related negatively (-0.27) with self-attitude in general;
- self-acceptance correlates strongly enough (0.49) with spontaneity, which can lead to not fully considerate behavior;
- self-interest correlates with ideas about human nature (0,25);
- aggression acceptance correlates with self-sympathy (-0.23) and self-accusation (0.32); sociability correlates with self-sympathy (-0.24), which may contribute to the work of compensatory mechanisms and feelings of guilt, it is evidenced by the explanation of correlation between creativity and expectations of positive attitude (-0.2) and self-accusation (0.27).

At a low level of self-attitude, the following correlations were found out:

- competence over time with self-sympathy (0.22) and expectation of positive attitude (0.32);

- support with self-esteem (-0.42) and self-interests (-0.23);
- value orientations with self-esteem (0.31), expectation of positive attitude (0.35) ;
- sensitivity towards oneself with self-sympathy (-0.28), expectation of positive attitude (0.4), self-acceptance (-0.35) ;
- ideas on the human nature with self-acceptance (-0.45);
- synergy, which means person's ability of holistic perception of the world, with self-esteem (0.29), self-consistency (0.23), self-accusation (-0.42);
- cognitive needs with the expectation of positive attitudes from others (0.43), self-acceptance (0.24), self-understanding (0.28);
- creativity with self-esteem (0.41), expectation of positive attitudes from others (0.24), self-understanding (0.35).

Thus, it is clear that the person's internal resources, values of self-fulfillment, optimal interpersonal interaction, holistic self-perception and perception of integrity of own life course, capacity for reflection and synergy are really important for maintaining of a high level of self-attitude.

The addition of the self-attitude development analysis with the principles of holism and self-organization allow us to make the conclusion not only on the importance of an active personal position, but also on the necessity to unite person's individual peculiarities with norms and values accepted in the society.

Analysis of differences of purposes-in-life (PIL) for different self-attitude levels shows that, at high integral assessment of self-attitude, there are significant positive correlations ( $p < 0,001$ ) with all scales of the PIL test. In particular, high levels of self-esteem and self-confidence correlate with the presence of long-term life goals (0.35), emotional richness of life processes (0.34), sufficient freedom of choice to build own life in accordance with own goals and ideas about its senses (0.25), the belief that a person can control own life and he/she is free to make decisions and implement them (0.35). At a low integral assessment of self-attitude, there is rather strong positive relationship between the indicators of all purposes-in-life test scales and scales of self-esteem and expectations of positive attitudes from other. Given the low values of the latter scales, it means, respectively, the absence or low levels of purposes-in-life orientations.

Thus, a comparative analysis of the study data with the method of Stolin & Pantyl'yev indicates that the system of person's ideas about him/herself tend implicitly to maintaining of the integrity and harmony, which is confirmed by many scientists, especially Erickson (cited in Пантiлеев, 1993). Therefore, as it was shown above, at high levels of self-attitude, there are quite close and stable relationships between individual parameters of person's attitude system, its wholeness and completeness, which are united adequately with a higher degree of self-awareness and desire to plan for the future, with purposes for the future, ability to determine the path of self-development. At low levels of awareness and differentiation of ideas about themselves, a tendency exists to low self-esteem, to self-accusation, inconsistent planning and uncertainty regarding the future.

**Conclusions.** The obtained results allow us to determine several features of mediation between self-determining processes and personal characteristics.

1. A negative self-attitude and high-level of expectations of positive attitudes from others together with negativism towards others, which manifests itself in psychological defence mechanisms such as projection, denial or reaction formations, leads to several options, depending on the severity of characteristics:
  - a) Students with high self-accusation, which perceive and present themselves as doomed to suffer and believe in own helplessness and inability to confront the circumstances, have low self-efficiency, resulting in pessimistic and uncertain future perception leading to feeling of life pointlessness.

- b) Students with high self-consistency, manifested in the desire to control circumstances through self-guideline, that provides a sense of security, are characterized by perceptions of conflict ideas about themselves, manifested in a severe need of protection and assistance from others.
  - c) Students with low self-esteem, self-acceptance, self-understanding, and high levels of self-sympathy and self-guideline tend to deny the reality, which is characterized by pronounced negativism, hostility in relations with others and the consumer, pragmatic, selfish behavior strategies.
2. If positive self-attitude is combined with self-respect, self-acceptance, self-interest, self-guideline and self-confidence, there is a positive self-concept of personality, characterized by high flexibility and adaptability. Students of this type perceive optimistically their future; they are characterized by optimal coordination between real and ideal conceptions on themselves, which promotes self-development and self-realization. They perceive their future optimistically and associate it with the success in school and successful careers.
  3. It is possible to distinguish two levels in the personality holistic self-development, which in turn mediate personal motivational strategies, self-organization for learning and self-realization.

The first level is mediated by value and individual translators; the influence of stabilization tendencies in this case is focused on personal fulfillment, on a vision of the own life sense in self-development, on the awareness of own identity, uniqueness and value to others.

The second level is aimed at a subjective sense of person's psychological well-being and at the support of mental health; it activates synergistic potential, associated with the general laws of psychological life.

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The paper discusses the features of personal organization and mediation of self-realization with personal characteristics at different levels of the integral indicators of self-attitude. It was found out that implementation of personal potential is possible only at adequate self-attitude, a level of aspiration and person's life perspective.

A person, as a holistic psychological system, is not in opposition to the objective world, but in union with it, with the world part that has importance, meaning, and value for the person. Thus, a personality of a student, who is integrated into the educational environment, the main value of which is, as it is known, self-development and self-realization, depends entirely on the values of his/her social community, which he/she identifies own personality with.

**The aim of the paper** is to substantiate and reveal possible variants of the interaction of a holistic "personality" system with its other components: attitude toward others and self-estimation, a desire for self-fulfillment and factors that help to transit virtual states inherent in an integrated system "personality- social environment" into actual behavior.

**The object of the study** is personal self-realization as a phenomenon of self-organization and self-determination.

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The total number of the participants comprised 345 students of several universities of Kyiv.

After the research the main conclusions were carried out: the obtained results allow us to determine several features of mediation between self-determining processes and personal characteristics.

1. A negative self-attitude and high-level of expectations of positive attitudes from others together with negativism towards others, which manifests itself in psychological defense mechanisms such as projection, denial or reaction formations, leads to several options, depending on the severity of characteristics:
  - a) Students with high self-accusation, which perceive and present themselves as doomed to suffer and believe in own helplessness and inability to confront the circumstances, have low self-efficiency, resulting in pessimistic and uncertain future perception leading to feeling of life pointlessness.
  - b) Students with high self-consistency, manifested in the desire to control circumstances through self-guideline, that provides a sense of security, are characterized by perceptions of conflict ideas about themselves, manifested in a severe need of protection and assistance from others.
  - c) Students with low self-esteem, self-acceptance, self-understanding, and high levels of self-sympathy and self-guideline tend to deny the reality, which is characterized by pronounced negativism, hostility in relations with others and the consumer, pragmatic, selfish behavior strategies.
2. If positive self-attitude is combined with self-respect, self-acceptance, self-interest, self-guideline and self-confidence, there is a positive self-concept of personality, characterized

by high flexibility and adaptability. Students of this type perceive optimistically their future; they are characterized by optimal coordination between real and ideal conceptions on themselves, which promotes self-development and self-realization. They perceive their future optimistically and associate it with the success in school and successful careers.

3. It is possible to distinguish two levels in the personality holistic self-development, which in turn mediate personal motivational strategies, self-organization for learning and self-realization.

The first level is mediated by value and individual translators; the influence of stabilization tendencies in this case is focused on personal fulfillment, on a vision of the own life sense in self-development, on the awareness of own identity, uniqueness and value to others.

The second level is aimed at a subjective sense of person's psychological well-being and at the support of mental health; it activates synergistic potential, associated with the general laws of psychological life.