Festivals “Life Ecology, The Territory of Love, Happiness and Health”
As Educational Technologies in the Area of Practical Psychology

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Keywords: Festival of Practical Psychology, Personal Resources, Development and Educational Practices, Relations and Communications

Abstract. The article analyzes the practice of conducting psychological Festivals and Forums. It is shown that this format is the most relevant way (according to the nowadays challenges) for specialists to communicate with each other and with people interested in self-development and health improvement. The article shows the consonance of modern psychological Festivals to the ideas and formats of the Movement for the Development of Human Potential. The main topics and directions of the Russian Festivals are analyzed, a rating of reasons for visiting the Festivals is given, the specifics of the Rostov Festival "Ecology of Life - the Territory of Love, Happiness, and Health" are described.

1. Introduction

The main features of modernity, which our leading psychologists have noted at the largest forums of recent years (A.A. Asmolov, B.V. Bratus, N.V. Grishina, D.A. Leontiev, V.A. Petrovsky, M.M. Reshetnikov, etc.) are as follows:

- All of humanity today exists in the conditions of the so-called transitive reality—constantly changing, fluid, extremely difficult to perceive, heterogeneous, indefinite, with increasing extremeness.

- Under the conditions of such a reality, the number of mentally unhealthy and socially-psychologically disadvantaged people who can’t cope, who respond to the challenges of the world by simplifying their own personalities (to primitive aggressive or physiologically-consumer levels); or decreasing their own psychological status: neurosis, depression, suicide, burnout, etc. The situation is aggravated by the fact that an unhealthy person who is depressed or a potential suicide may be the subject of high technology (operator of a nuclear power plant, ballistic missile launch, air traffic controller, military) and gain access to the decision of the fate of thousands and millions of people [1].

- The search for answers to the challenges of our time leads psychologists to actualize the discussion of the soul and spiritual problems, to expand the existential direction of psychology, which is becoming an approach that influences all psychological science and practice. The challenges of our time make us talk about responsibility, the search for meaning, freedom; the existential worldview is consonant with modern reality and becomes the most accurate, the most adequate in the understanding of the world around us. [2]

- In the conditions of a hardly predictable world, the ability of pre-adaptability (A. Asmolov) or over-adaptability (V. Petrovsky) of a person becomes his hope, his ability to survive and withstand the challenges of the era.

Unfortunately, the problem of psychological and psychotherapeutic assistance to people in Russia has not yet been resolved. With all the wealth of effective experience gained by professional psychologists, there are great difficulties in broadcasting it not only to young specialists, but also to all people interested in self-development practices. The most important format for the transfer of such experience is the conducting of events and activities that broadcast modern knowledge and methods of practical
psychology, popularizing psychological counseling and psychotherapy. Such a format is the conducting of Festivals, Decades, Forums, and Congresses on practical psychology [3].

2. Festival of Practical Psychology As Innovative Educational Practice

“For the world is in a bad state, but everything will become still worse unless each of us does his best,” says V. Frankl [4], and therefore many psychologists work tirelessly on the problem of human well-being. In solving this problem, a huge role is played by a set of abilities to maintain and develop one's own psychological health, which determines the state of a person's entire holistic health, its traditionally distinguished physical, social and spiritual levels. Individual therapy is not accessible to everyone, The opportunities to master effective technologies of self-development, self-improvement of self-regulation are even less accessible. Therefore, it is difficult to overestimate the potential of such massive ways of quality training, teaching people through a system of psychological Forums and Festivals, during which a powerful space is created for communication between people, often belonging to different generations and professions, for their meetings with masters of modern psychological directions, for mutual understanding, support and transformation.

What is the Festival of Practical Psychology? Based on the definition in the dictionaries, one can formulate: “festival” is a mass celebration, display and review of the best achievements of psychology, all its directions, models and modalities. Festivals are a unique example of multilevel communication, which opens up opportunities for effective intercultural communication, which promotes understanding between people as representatives of different cultures (social, professional, age, ethnic, etc.) [5].

The festival plays a role of a mass areal celebration in modern world culture. This format today literally captured the entire civilized world [5]. Today in Russia thousands of festivals of various genres are held annually, at which each participant of the festival is integrated and differentiated with others in the processes of numerous interactions in which information is transferred or exchanged and thereby accumulates and transmits social experience. According to P.V. Nikolaeva, the festival acts as a universal form of "the global cultural process, a way of reflecting culture in its diversity and a means of generating a new culture that can meet the needs of the hyper-community" [5].

The history of the festival movement, starting from the forms of communication of one cultural community with a certain thematic focus and limited creativity, leads to global cultural integration. Festivals are becoming an important means of organizing leisure activities for self-development; presenting the opportunity to be not only a spectator, but also a participant in the active creative interaction of all those gathered.

Festival events, providing the opportunity for interaction and facilitation for professionals in many areas, have a huge range of cultural, recreational, sports, educational, and communication methods, and thus turn out to be a powerful sociocultural environment for education and upbringing [6]. Festivals allow you to overcome the framework of being: space, time and ego in the processes of co-creation and mutual inspiration of the participants and thereby go beyond the known and mastered.

It can be assumed that the holding of the very popular Forums and Festivals of Practical Psychology today originates from the early events for Human Potential. The project "Movement for the Development of Human Potential" arose in ancient times and began to manifest itself even in times of shamanism; in religious and spiritual practices, art, science, invention, counterculture, depth psychology, modern transpersonal psychology [7]. This movement is based on ideas about the realization of transpersonal possibilities, going beyond oneself, which is the essence of the human in man, as existentialists claim.

The movement for the development of human potential was fueled by 19th-century romanticism, the ideas of "Something Bigger" by the founder of modern psychology, W. James; it incorporates the ideas of Sri Aurobindo about the divine potential of man that can be brought into everyday life; Gurdjieff's ideas that the only worthy goal of a person is awakening for higher levels of consciousness by the method of
self-development. The essence of this movement, according to V. Kozlov, is the pursuit of practical, creative, reality-forming thinking [7]. The Jung Individuation process as an independent movement of the individual towards integrity, greater freedom, the concept of psychosynthesis by Roberto Assagioli is also consonant with the ideas of the movement for the development of human potential.

The existential approach becomes a part and force of the Movement for the Development of Human Potential, and humanistic psychology is thought to be its methodological and conceptual basis [7]. A. Maslow, C. Rogers, R. May, G. Allport become the founders of the ideology. They become a powerful force in the movement for the development of human potential. Maslow formulates goals, describes the mechanisms and stages of the process of personal growth, and develops a theory of self-actualization. The movement of human potential is reinforced by the emergence in the 1960s, practice of training social and life skills. K. Levin's T-groups and his discovery of group dynamics also played a role, allowing us to study the management mechanisms of training groups.

Ken Wilber and R. Walsh create the foundations for combining various transformational practices, showing their common nature and mechanisms of influence on the spectrum of consciousness. Mindell's procedural approach demonstrates the deep connection of art, psychotherapy and spiritual practices. According to V. Kozlov: “The movement for the development of human potential is aimed at the comprehensive development of the individual, the disclosure of all creative forces and abilities, the formation of spiritual culture. This is an eternal journey in search of one’s essence, in one’s search for oneself, ascent to the fullness of one’s own reality ... ”[7].

In Russia, according to the leader of the PPL-Russia V. Makarov, since the beginning of the nineties, one can find in the field of practical psychology five types of activity of professionals who have different understandings of the essence and purpose of psychotherapy and received their psychological education at different times when Russians became acquainted with Western psychotherapy [8]. Chronologically, the last, fifth group of specialist psychotherapists began to form with the beginning of the implementation of educational projects of the European Certificate of Psychotherapist in Russia. In 2007, the European Psychotherapy Association approved the modalities of psychotherapy (31 in total), which have since served as a thematic reference point for the organizers of Russian Festivals and Forums; in the areas of these modalities, the Organizing Committee of the South Russian Forum of Practical Psychology organizes a master class program.

A brief analysis of Russian Festivals allows us to characterize them as follows. Duration of Festivals, Forums, Decades varies from 2 to 10 days.

Formats of festivals: lectures, master classes, trainings, practical seminars, workshops, creative meetings, exchange of experience, communication space; usually offered from 20 to 60 - 70 types of programs, the number of participants varies from 40 to 1500 people. Types of Festivals: Forums (for example, the South Russian Forum of Practical Psychology, annually held in Rostov-on-Don); Congresses (for example, congresses of psychological help, which are held annually in various cities of Russia); Decades for psychotherapy (for example, the Krasnoyarsk Winter Decade on the Yenisei - 2019 "New Psychotherapy - New Life!"); Festivals of Psychology and Spiritual Practices (annual “Transformation” Festival in Lago-Naki); Festivals of practices of self-knowledge and self-development (Festival "Awakening of Life", Moscow, 2019), etc.

An example of highly developed Festival practice is the 41st International Festival of Practical Psychology, Spiritual Practices, Innovative Art Forms “Tavale Festival”, which offers 500 workshops in 2019, as well as concerts, fire shows, exhibitions, creative laboratories, - spiritual practices from different ethnic traditions, transformational games, innovative forms of art, business training, yoga, massages, breathing practices, mystery performances, ethnic music, drum jams, fire theaters, hand-made fairs, installations, exhibitions, vegetarian and national culinary. This festival is sponsored by UNESCO.
An analysis of the topics of the workshops and trainings of Festivals of recent years shows the priority of areas that are in demand to overcome the most common problems of a person, his age crises or self-development crises:

- How to be happy (prosperous, successful) - this topic is leading in the names of workshops that offer a solution to the issue in the context of a variety of modalities and approaches;
- Male and female trainings; problems in the sexual and family sphere;
- Crises and conflicts as a time of finding resources;
- Numerous types of art therapy: drawings, neurography, Metaphoric Associative Cards, musical, sand, mandalas, photography, etc.;
- The problems of youth, beauty and health;
- Body-oriented psychology; bioenergy practices and yoga;
- Supervision, training in specific techniques, self-regulation, etc.
- Relations and communications; family relationships;
- Coaching, influence and management;
- Problems in the relationship of a person with money;
- Existential Psychology and Logo-therapy,
- Trance and meditation; work with trauma and panic attacks;
- Love and betrayal; health and disease;

A short list of topics allows you to see that the main layers of a person’s existence, all levels of his health and well-being are affected: physical, mental, social and spiritual, and a high interest of visitors to these topics suggests that people are looking for tools for their development, actively expanding the vision and understanding of their problems and opportunities.

In our opinion, we can distinguish several basic trends characterizing the dynamics of the Festival of psychological movement at the present stage:

- Progressive growth of number of participants and the expansion of the types of programs, as well as formats of ongoing activities;
- Constant emergence of new exotic modalities and practices that have been little studied by academic research methods (for example, neurography, "existential" fencing, intermodal art therapy, etc.)
- Increase in the representation of body-oriented, art-therapeutic and musical-therapeutic methods of practical psychology;
- Great interest in conducting psychological meetings and various formats in nature.

The growing interest in the Festivals of Practical Psychology and the skills of its organizers can be illustrated by the following statistics:

Table 1. Statistics of the Southern All-Russian Forums of Practical Psychology (Rostov-on-Don).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forum</th>
<th>Visitors</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Practical psychologists</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Content and organization assessment (by 5b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>4.2 /5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>4.3 /4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>4.5 /4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>1300</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>4.8 /4.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rating of the main reasons for visiting Festivals (according to a survey of participants of the Forums and Festivals in Rostov-on-Don over the past 3 years):

1. Meeting with the "master" of the direction;
2. Acquaintance with the interesting field of psychology;
3. Personal growth and desire for self-development;
4. Professional development;
5. Communication with like-minded people;

In anonymous questionnaires with guest reviews of the Festivals, the most frequent wishes to the organizers are: thanks for their work; wishes to hold Festivals more often and in a larger format, requests for an increase in the number of workshops, thanks to the volunteers of the Festivals and organizers for their goodwill and creation of an amazing atmosphere.

Lyakh I.V. and Efimova Yu.B. (2016) provide data on the diagnosis of the effectiveness and psychological safety of psychological festivals [3]. In particular, the authors record the improvement of the psychoemotional state according to the methodology of A. Wessman and D. Ricks “Self-assessment of emotional states” among 84% - 90% of their participants and come to the conclusion that psychological Festivals are an effective form of transmitting professional experience, popularizing psychological knowledge and intensification of psychological assistance to the population. In their opinion, Festivals that are of great interest to various contingents of listeners, convincingly demonstrate the effectiveness and psychological safety of using this format of knowledge and technology transfer through professional interdisciplinary communications.

The authors of this article as organizers of the project “Ecology of Life - the Territory of Health, Love and Happiness” note that the format of the event allows the participants to combine cognitive, emotional and behavioral forms of work; the content of the most types of programs is aimed at the development of universal human competencies and skills in dealing with one's own life, personality, and health; and the general space of the event, the possibility of informal round-the-clock communication allow participants to combine the body and consciousness, consciousness and soul, moving towards the integrity that characterizes people who are self-actualizing, fulfilled, healthy. One of the features of our project is the possibility of the combined work of different age and professional contingents: for example, at the last Festival in Divnomorsk (2019) students of different faculties of Southern Federal University worked on the programs of the Festival—athletes, journalists, physicists, mathematicians and psychologists; Not only professional psychologists, but also students and volunteers from among the guests of the Festival were engaged in the children's group, and the children themselves (from preschool children to older teens) had the opportunity to attend all types of master classes.

3. Summary

Thus, the Festivals of Practical Psychology become a modern instrument for translating innovative intensive development practices that can be used for managing one’s health, personality, body and, in general, one’s life project. Thus, festivals respond to the main challenges of the era:
- The challenges of transitive reality—by development and strengthening of multilevel adaptation resources;
- The challenge of deteriorating psychological health—by development of competencies in maintaining and strengthening their health using popular techniques—from self-regulation and yoga - to landscape self-therapy and the use of body resources;
- The challenge of existential and spiritual transformations of the personality—by development of understanding and awareness of these layers of their own existence;
- The challenges of the lack of adaptability—by development of creativity, activity, courage to master the unknown in all areas of personal life and health.
Acknowledgement

This research was possible thanks to the assistance of the organizers and participants of the festivals.

References


