УДК 364-4:[355.1-057.36-057.75+355.291.1-05]:366.632-021.321]:17](045) DOI https://doi.org/10.32782/3041-1351/2025-1-1

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FEATURES OF A SOCIAL WORKER'S COMMUNICATION WITH WAR VETERANS AND DEMOBILIZED PERSONS: ETHICAL ASPECT

Introduction. After completing their military duty, veterans return to their family, community, and the community they defended. Quite often, the process of adapting a person who has returned from the front to the conditions of civilian life is difficult and stressful. The mental health of defenders returning home from the front depends not only on the level of rehabilitation centers, but also on how they are treated in society. Since the inappropriate attitude towards veterans by society traumatizes them again. That is why creating a supportive, friendly, and understanding environment is one of the main challenges and tasks for Ukrainian society today.

The **purpose** of the study is to reveal the peculiarities of a social worker's communication with war veterans and demobilized persons.

In the process of research, the authors used the method of analysis of psychological and pedagogical sources on the problem under study, methods of comparison and generalization. Different approaches to defining the concept of «communication» in the works of scientists were considered; the components of communication (communicative, interactive, perceptual) were investigated.

A number of regulatory and legal documents were analyzed: the Law of Ukraine "On the Status of War Veterans, Guarantees of Their Social Protection"; Code of Ethics for Social Work Specialists of Ukraine, The International Declaration of Ethical Principles of Social Work, the International Ethical Standards for Social Workers, and other legislative acts that relate to the work of a social worker and regulate the provision of assistance to veterans and support for their adaptation to civilian life.

Conclusions. The main communication skills that a specialist must possess when working with war veterans and demobilized persons are described. The main requirements for a social worker are identified and recommendations for working with war veterans and demobilized persons are formulated.

Key words: social worker, war veteran, communication, ethics of communication with a veteran, code of ethics of a social worker.

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ОСОБЛИВОСТІ СПІЛКУВАННЯ СОЦІАЛЬНОГО ПРАЦІВНИКА З ВЕТЕРАНАМИ ВІЙНИ ТА ДЕМОБІЛІЗОВАНИМИ ОСОБАМИ: ЕТИЧНИЙ АСПЕКТ

Вступ. Після виконання військового обов'язку ветерани повертаються до своєї сім'ї, громади та спільноти, яку вони захищали. Досить часто процес адаптації людини, що повернулася з фронту, до умов цивільного життя є нелегким та стресовим. Психічне здоров'я захисників і захисниць, які повертаються з фронту додому, залежить не лише від рівня реабілітаційних центрів, а й від того, як до них ставляться в суспільстві, оскільки неналежне ставлення до ветеранів від суспільства травмує їх повторно. Саме тому створення підтримувального, дружнього та сприйнятливого середовища є одним з головних викликів і завдань для українського суспільства сьогодні.

Мета дослідження — розкрити особливості спілкування соціального працівника з ветеранами війни та демобілізованими особами.

У процесі дослідження автори використали метод аналізу психолого-педагогічних джерел із досліджуваної проблеми, методи порівняння та узагальнення. Розглянуто різні підходи до визначення поняття «спілкування» в працях науковців; досліджено складники спілкування (комунікативний, інтерактивний, перцептивний).

Проаналізовано низку нормативно-правових документів: Закон України «Про статус ветеранів війни, гарантії їх соціального захисту», Етичний кодекс спеціалістів із соціальної роботи України, Міжнародну Декларацію етичних принципів

соціальної роботи, Міжнародні етичні стандарти соціальних працівників, інші акти законодавства, які стосуються роботи соціального працівника й регулюють надання допомоги ветеранам та підтримку їх адаптації до цивільного життя.

Висновки. Схарактеризовано основні комунікативні вміння, якими повинен володіти фахівець, працюючи з ветеранами війни та демобілізованими особами. Виокремлено основні вимоги до соціального працівника та сформулювано рекомендації для роботи з ветеранами війни й демобілізованими особами.

Ключові слова: соціальний працівник, ветеран війни, спілкування, етика спілкування з ветераном, етичний кодекс соціального працівника.

Relevance of the problem. The return of veterans to civilian life is a complex and long-term process. Therefore, one of the main tasks of society is the reintegration of veterans through their adaptation to psychological and social changes.

Based on the Law of Ukraine «On the Status of War Veterans, Guarantees of Their Social Protection", war veterans are "persons who participated in the defense of the Motherland or in hostilities on the territory of other states, which include: participants in hostilities, persons with disabilities as a result of war, and participants in war" [11].

Communicating with veterans is not only a social interaction, but also a specific ethical process that requires a deep understanding of the psychosocial, emotional, and psychological aspects of these individuals' experiences.

Analysis of previous research and publications. The issue of communication with veterans as a research problem is relevant in the scientific works of Ukrainian scientists. In particular, the issue of how to organize communication with those who are not nearby is covered in the work of A. Semenov, I. Symonovsky and others. "How are you, beloved?" [21]. The rules for conducting a conversation with people who have had a traumatic experience: how to establish contact, how and what to talk about, how to react are found in the work "How are you, brother? How are you, sister?" [19]. Ways to facilitate veterans' adaptation to civilian life are revealed in the collective work "How are you, veteran?", which highlights the issues of "how to restore contact, start friendly communication, and restore a sense of belonging and unity in relations with veterans" [20].

How to avoid escalating conflicts, the need for sensitive communication with veterans, understanding and skills listen is presented in the work of A. Dyakovych, O. Fitkal [3].

The purpose of the article: to highlight the features of ethical communication between social workers and war veterans.

Presentation of the main material. The ability to establish relationships with people and find an individual approach is the key to the life and professional success of every person. Effective communication involves not only understanding the information conveyed by the interlocutor, but also the ability to perceive his emotions.

Let us consider in more detail how the concept of "communication" is viewed in the scientific literature.

Communication (from Latin communication—message, transmission) acts as "a complex, multifaceted process of establishing and developing contacts between people, which is generated by the needs for joint activity; it includes the exchange of information, the development of a single strategy of interaction, the perception and understanding of the partner in communication" [13, p. 127].

V. Moskalenko considers communication as "a communicative type of activity that expresses the practical activity of the subject" [10].

S. Goncharenko understands "sociability" as "a personality trait, its ability to communicate with other people, sociability..., is not innate, but is formed in the process of a person's life and activity in a social group" [2, p. 174].

In the philosophical dictionary, communication is "...processes of exchanging activities, their products, information, experience, and skills" [17].

Communication includes three components: communicative (information exchange); interactive (interaction of communication partners); and perceptual (understanding of a person by a person, reflection in communication). [16].

In their professional activities, social workers are guided by the "Ethical Code of Social Work Professionals", namely: "demonstrate respect and a friendly attitude towards all people and respect the beliefs of their clients, their values, culture, goals, needs, preferences, relationships and connections with other people; protect and support their dignity, take into account individuality, interests and social needs on the basis of building tolerant relationships with them; guarantee clients direct participation in the decision-making process on the basis of providing full information about a specific client in a specific situation; guarantee protection for their clients for the purpose of their safety, as well as the safety of their social environment" [5].

The list of professional and personal qualities of a social worker is recorded in fundamental documents, namely: the International Declaration of Ethical Principles of Social Work, the International Ethical Standards of Social Workers, the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers of the USA, and the Code of Ethics of Social Work Specialists of Ukraine.

If we talk about the main important communication skills, then a specialist must be able to:

- "organize and manage the communication process in any form acceptable to the client;
 - formulate your thoughts using speech etiquette;
- practice non-verbal communication, constantly providing feedback;
- master the technique of speech, be able to use rhetorical techniques and figures;
- be able to analyze conflicts, crisis situations, confrontations and resolve them;
- understand the client, his needs, feelings and thoughts based on knowledge of the patterns of the social group to which he belongs;
- be able to use speech to carry out psychotherapy in communication, relieve stress, adapt the client to

appropriate conditions, and correct his behavior and assessments" [1, p. 404].

The character traits, dynamics and specificity of interpersonal relationships between a veteran and a social worker, as well as the personal traits of a social worker, are crucial for the effectiveness and efficiency of socio-psychological assistance. A key point in the process of interaction between a veteran and a specialist is the establishment of contact and trust through communication.

We agree with V. Malimon's opinion that the communicative culture of a specialist should be "characterized by the level of mastery of professional communication, which is determined by the professional orientation, system of professional knowledge, skills and professionally significant personal qualities" [8].

When communicating with veterans, the following points should be observed: 1) a human-centered approach; 2) dignity and respect for the person; 3) observance of personal boundaries during communication [4].

Constructive communication with veterans requires certain special knowledge. In order for communication with a veteran not to cause discomfort, anxiety or negative emotions in the social worker, it is important to know about ethical communication, to understand the rules of interaction with a person who has combat experience. When providing services, the specialist must take into account the following points:

- "what feelings and needs may veterans have when returning to civilian life;
 - what questions and topics should not be initiated;
- how to create conditions favorable for reintegration in the family;
- the importance of adhering to the rules of business communication with veterans for employees of institutions" [9].

If we talk about the first conversation with veterans, the specialist needs to:

- speak without judgment;
- call things by their proper names;
- maintain confidentiality;
- respect the client's personal boundaries;
- use "I communication" [22].

In order to overcome communication barriers, it is advisable for a specialist to use effective listening techniques (attention, reflective, non-reflective and non-verbal listening, memory) [6].

In his work, a social worker should take into account the following recommendations:

- "listen actively when veterans talk about their experiences related to the military or other things in their lives;
- be open and honest if you are not familiar with all the military professions, job descriptions, and acronyms.
 If veterans use jargon, ask them to explain.
- paraphrase and repeat what someone said to make sure you understood correctly;
- maintain a moderate level of voice volume. Avoid an angry, threatening, or derogatory tone of voice;
 - avoid judgments or insults;

- be consistent. Don't pressure the person to share their experiences or ask them to tell you what they experienced" [14].

Veterans may have a strong reaction to minimal disappointments in everyday life, to conflicts or manifestations of unfriendliness. They may find it difficult to concentrate and remember new things. They may also feel awkward and uncomfortable in communication. Therefore, you should not create additional tension – communicate with veterans in a familiar way, be friendly. Also, the social worker should remember that there are a number of topics that are sensitive for the veteran (politics, war, issues of justice-injustice, feelings of guilt, etc.). Therefore, discussions on such topics should be avoided. Safe topics for communication will be issues related to food, hobbies, everyday life, the past before the war [15].

A specialist should not use the phrase "I understand you" if he or she has not had combat experience. It is better to use sentences that indicate the importance of the problem (for example, "I am very sorry to hear that", "This is a really difficult situation" etc.).

Traumatic memories can also trigger phrases related to memories of death ("Have you killed anyone? What did you feel when you killed?", "How many people have you killed?", "Did any of your loved ones die?", etc.) [7].

To improve communication with a veteran, it is necessary to be an active party in the conversation, to show initiative when the interlocutor is having difficulty; to focus on how the veteran is coping now and how he will cope in the future. To this end, the social worker should use phrases such as: "I am here and I am ready to support", "Do I understand correctly that...?", "I want to understand what is happening to you and how to help you" [18].

Also, a specialist who provides social services needs to understand certain features of communication not only with war veterans, but also with their family members. For these people, it is important to regularly feel support from the outside, from loved ones, they "need attention, are sensitive to disrespect, and can find it difficult even in simple situations that no one would call exceptional in peacetime" [18]. In this regard, the social worker must provide services that will be focused on the veteran's family.

In accordance with the order of the Cabinet of Ministers "On approval of methodological recommendations for the provision of administrative services to war veterans and persons subject to the Law of Ukraine "On the status of war veterans, guarantees of their social protection"", A social worker can provide services to veterans' family members through counseling, information support, conducting information and communication campaigns, etc. [12].

Conclusions and prospects for further research. A social worker who communicates with veterans must take into account several important aspects to ensure effective and sensitive interaction. Namely: understanding the war veteran's experience; an individual approach to each case when working with a

veteran; the ability to show empathy and support; active listening to understand the needs of the individual. Also an important point in communicating with veterans is maintaining confidentiality.

We agree with Oleksandr Chamorsov's thesis that a specialist "in order to communicate with others, one must be ready to accept their pain, suffering, and the injustice they face. This requires resources and internal support. This is also the result of working on oneself" [18].

For this purpose, a social worker must undergo special training, training programs and obtain appropriate knowledge and skills that will relate to psychological support, adaptation, assistance to veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder, etc. The specialist

must be familiar with the legal aspects that concern veterans, in particular regarding social guarantees, medical care, pensions and compensations, access to rehabilitation and social services. The social worker must also be familiar with veterans' support programs and help them find the necessary resources (medical services, legal advice, financial assistance, etc.). Thus, this will make it possible not to communicate under the influence of myths and stereotypes about veterans, avoid sensitive topics and not ask incorrect questions. And for veterans, communication with specialists who have such knowledge significantly reduces the stress of the situation, contributes to obtaining a positive experience of reintegration into society.

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