

**PSYCHOLOGICAL STATE OF UKRAINIANS DURING WAR**

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War is a tremendous trial for individuals and society, affecting not only physical survival but also mental health. Ukrainians face emotional and psychological challenges both in the combat zones and among civilians. War brings loss, fear for the future, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Despite these difficulties, war has also acted as a catalyst for the mobilization of internal resources among Ukrainians, demonstrating resilience, mutual support, and volunteerism. Psychological problems present a serious challenge, but they can also become an opportunity for development if proper assistance and support are provided.

War triggers a variety of emotional reactions, including fear, anxiety, anger, despair, apathy, and confusion, which can become chronic without proper psychological support. Uncertainty and the constant threat to life cause chronic anxiety. People often fear for their own safety and that of their loved ones, which may manifest physically through symptoms like rapid heartbeat or dizziness. War often triggers anger due to a loss of control and a sense of injustice. This can lead to emotional outbursts and conflicts with others. For many, war becomes a tragedy that leads to despair and a loss of faith in the future. This can result in depression and suicidal thoughts. Prolonged psychological strain often leads to apathy – an emotional burnout when individuals lose interest in life and their surroundings. The loss of routine and social stability causes confusion and a sense of disorientation.

Psychological stress can worsen relationships with family and friends, increasing isolation and social tension. Emotional reactions to war are normal in such conditions, but without adequate support, they can develop into serious problems, including PTSD. Combat, witnessing violence, or losing loved ones often leaves deep psychological scars. Many Ukrainians, particularly those directly involved in combat, develop PTSD. This manifests through intrusive memories, nightmares, intense emotional pain, and avoidance of places or situations that remind them of the trauma.

Despite the immense stress, war has also strengthened collective identity. Solidarity among Ukrainians during this time helps many find support and a sense of unity. Charity, volunteering, and participation in social initiatives contribute not only to helping others but also to reducing one's own sense of helplessness. Children are particularly vulnerable to the effects of war. Their psychological state depends on the ability of adults to provide at least minimal stability and a sense of security. Children may experience regression to earlier stages of development, fears, withdrawal, or, conversely, hyperactivity.

The need for psychological support during war is extremely high. Ukrainian psychologists, volunteers, and international organizations are actively working to create free support programs. Measures such as crisis counseling, group therapy, and stress and emotional burnout management training play an essential role in restoring mental health. War leaves a deep imprint on the psychological state of every individual. However, even in the most difficult circumstances, Ukrainians demonstrate endurance, mutual support, and a readiness to fight for their future. Timely access to psychological support and maintaining solidarity are key elements in overcoming the challenges brought about by war.