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**CENTER FOR PSYCHOTRANING TECHNOLOGIES - THE
FUTURE HUB OF CONSOLIDATION FOR SCIENTIFIC AND
PRACTICAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE LEADING EXTREMAL
PSYCHOLOGISTS OF THE STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE OF
UKRAINE**

Over the past two decades the problems of ensuring the safety of the population and the country's territory in Ukraine have been sharply escalated due to the emerging growth of man-made and natural disasters, increasing the number of signs of terrorism as well as an expansion of the causes and possibilities of solving military conflicts in the world.

Emergencies of a natural origin caused by the phenomena and processes in nature that leads to natural disasters. Annually on Earth, there are more than 5 million fires, about 100 thousand thunderstorms, nearly 10 thousand floods, thousands of earthquakes, hurricanes, landslides, typhoons, hundreds of volcanic eruptions and tropical cyclones.

Consequently, during 2015, there were 148 emergencies in Ukraine. The most resonant of them for 2015-2017 were:

- An incident that occurred in the city of Mariupol in the Donetsk region, where on January 24, 2015, caused by the illegal paramilitary formations' bombardment of the residential housing complex «Oriental». As a result of - 30 civilian people killed, and more than 120 wounded. Around the same time 11 civilians were killed in the Luhansk region as a result of shelling of settlements;
- An incident in the Odessa region, where the ship «Ivolga» sank at a distance of about 350-400 m from the coastline in the sea, resulting in the death of 19 people, 22 people were rescued;
- A tragic episode in the Kyiv region, where six people died and 16 hospitalized as a result of a fire and following explosions at the «BRSM-NAFTA» company oil terminal. The material and technical means of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (further after - SESU) damaged for the amount of UAH 50 million;
- An accident in the city of Swatovo, Luhansk Oblast, where four people died and 20 injured as a result of a fire with subsequent detonation and spillage of ammunition fragments on the territory of the field warehouse of the missile-artillery armament of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine. The estimated amount of financial damages is over 145 million UAH;
- An awful misfortune near Voynichi village of Lubny district, where a frontal collision of the Mercedes Sprinter minibus and the DAF truck oc-

curred on the Kyiv-Kharkiv highway. As a result, eight people died, and five people (including two children) injured with injuries at different degrees of severity.

- A fire at the private house in Odesa region where six children died, and one person hurt;
- An accident in Brovary district resulted from a fire in the private two-story building of the temporary residence for the elderly when 17 people killed, 18 people rescued, five hospitalized;
- An explosion on the «Stepova» coal mine of the «Lvivvugil» State Company (horizon 550 m) on March 2, 2017, where eight miners died, and 14 injured. At the time of the blast, 172 miners worked underground.
- A fire with the following detonation of ammunition and the spill of explosive objects beyond the arsenal on March 23, 2017, in the city of Balaklia, Kharkiv region on the territory of the military arsenal of the Ministry of Defense. One person killed and three injured. Within the emergency territory, the gas supply was temporarily suspended, the work of potentially dangerous objects and the traffic on the Balaklia railway station were also temporarily suspended, the airspace in the radius of 40 km was closed. To eliminate the consequences of an emergency, 1091 specialists and 135 units were involved.
- A terrible incident that happened on September 15, 2017, in Odessa region - the Fire in the Children's health and fitness complex «Victoria», which killed three children and injured three children.
- A fire and explosions occurred in the Vinnytsia region on September 26, 2017, on the territory of the Ministry of Defense Armory near the town of Kalinovka. More than 30,000 civilians were temporarily evacuated.

It is unlikely that the number of accidents and disasters will decrease significantly in the future. Furthermore, in large-scale emergencies, the growth of victims' number (especially children) can be very significant. The sad statistics of crises occurred in Ukraine only during 2016 confirms this thesis: 242 casualties (including 40 children), 962 people were wounded (422 children accordingly).

In many cases, the life and health of the affected population depend on efficient and reliable actions of the SESU personnel. Remarkably, only in 2016, there was up to 6200 rescuers of SESU were involved in emergencies' search and rescue actions.

Nowadays in Ukraine, there are numerous modern methods of professional psychological training for rescuers of SESU, but most of them either have long been outdated and ineffective because of the weak material base or are entirely theoretical. It should also be highlighted that in contemporary Ukraine there are no specialized centers, where the SESU rescuers could practically work out the existing methods, including - and using modern psychotraining technologies.

Practicing outdated training methods leads to an increase in the number of injuries during the performance of official duties, as well as in mortality among rescuers.

Ignorance and inability to cope with an emotional or psychological stress, which necessarily follows the rescuer activity, leads to a decrease in the level of moral and psychological state of specialists of SESU, which also affects their physical condition. This problem, in turn, is one of the main reasons for the high turnover of personnel within SESU, the sharp increase in harmful habits and various occupational diseases, as well as a large number of suicides among professionals.

Only high-qualified rescue specialists, equipped with the latest technologies and necessary skills can respond to an emergency efficiently. Studying tactics of search and rescue actions, as well as working out different situations during the training directed at preparation, support and recovery period of specialists, can significantly reduce the risk for occupational safety of the personnel of the SESU and increase their confidence in own forces, as well as the effectiveness of actions with similar actions in the real conditions. Reducing the time of adaptation of the SESU specialist to the impact of threatening factors increases the speed of activities while simultaneously improving the effectiveness of rescuers, reduces the level of injuries, that, ultimately, enhances the efficiency of a fulfillment of official duties.

To solve this problem, the researchers of the Research Laboratory of Extreme and Crisis Psychology (National University of Civil Protection of Ukraine, Kharkiv, Ukraine) investigated the experience of foreign training centers for rescuers. The Laboratory is staffed with a highly qualified staff holding Ph.D.s' in Psychology, academic degrees, and diplomas of trainers-psychologists of different areas. In 2007, as a part of the Research Laboratory for Extreme and Crisis Psychology, a department for the implementation of psychotraining technologies was created. Since then, during the years 2007-2017, the scientists of the mentioned department were working on the development and implementation of modern psychotraining technologies in the professional activities of «extreme» psychologists of Ukraine.

Nowadays the following author's psycho-training programs were developed and validated:

1. Socio-psychological training «Survive and Save», designed to restore the psychological stability of the rescuers of the SESU after fulfilling their assigned tasks for the elimination of emergencies (development, validating and implementation since 2007).

2. Socio-psychological training «Strength of the Spirit», intended for the development of individual professional communication of specialists of the emergency-dispatching service of emergency call «112» (development, validating, and implementation since 2008).

3. Socio-psychological training «Successful Leader», designated for the

development of professionally important qualities of the SESU personnel, who hold managing positions (development, validating and implementation - 2009).

4. Socio-psychological training «The Professional», intended to enhance the communicative competence of the personnel of staffing and service departments of the SESU (development, validating and implementation since 2010).

5. Socio-psychological training «Psychology and Safety of Euro-2012», designed to train practical psychologists SESU, National Guard and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine for the European Football Championship in 2012 (development, validating and implementation during 2011-2012).

6. Socio-psychological training «Antistress Training», dedicated to the restoring of psychological stability of psychologists of the SESU, which was lost during the providing of emergency psychological assistance to victims of an emergency situation (development, validating and implementation from 2013).

7. Socio-psychological training «Healing from the Grief», designed to work with a person who lost a loved one. The program is aimed at developing self-regulation skills, methods of mutual assistance, as well as positive attitude towards oneself (development, validating and implementation from 2014).

8. Socio-psychological training «First Psychological Assistance» is intended for acting with the affected area of an emergency (development, validating and implementation from 2015)

9. Socio-psychological training «Through the Experience to the Growth», specially designed to reduce the traumatization of the rescuers of the SESU who performed the tasks of liquidation of the consequences of the emergencies in eastern Ukraine (development, validating and implementation from 2016).

All of the above-mentioned Trainings were designed and performed by our scientists at the places of dislocation of specialists of risk-taking professions. But today we understand that future training needs a new approach.

To develop, validate and implement the modern psychotraining technologies in the system of training, support and restoration period of the specialists of the SESU for ensuring the effectiveness and reliability of the personnel we decided to create the Center for Psychotraining Technologies of the National University of Civil Protection of Ukraine. This Center will become a hub for consolidating the scientific and practical achievements of the leading extremal psychologists of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine. There, under the guidance of Ukrainian trainers in a close to the real conditions, the rescuers will be able to study personal security measures in practice, conduct physical, psychological and emotional training. Creation of such Center and holding of international rescue activities on its basis (exercises, trainings, scientific experiments, etc.) will facilitate the exchange of experience between Ukrainian rescuers and their colleagues from foreign countries and will serve as a reliable basis for strengthening international relations as well as strengthening human rights protection in Ukraine.