

Features of Reflection of Persons With Mental and Behavioral Disorders Caused by Alcohol Consumption

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This article presents the results of an empirical study of the reflection features of people with alcohol dependence (F 10.2). As a method of studying the features of reflection of persons with mental and behavioral disorders caused by alcohol use, the cognitive-emotive test of Y. M. Orlov, S. N. Morozyuk was used. The study involved 56 respondents—men (33 people) and women (23 people) aged 25-50 years with mental and behavioral disorders caused by alcohol consumption.

Keywords: reflection, protective reflection, sanogenic reflection, alcohol, addiction

Introduction

Alcohol dependence is a fairly common disorder that is associated with the use of psychoactive substances by a person. According to the World Health Organization, more than 2.5 million people die every year in the world due to alcohol abuse. In the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10), alcoholism is listed as an “addiction syndrome” under the code (F 10.2) and is included in the heading “mental and behavioral disorders caused by alcohol consumption” (F 10).

Regular consumption of alcoholic beverages by a person provokes physical and mental dependence (Pavlyuchenkova, 2001). They become vital for him to relieve tension, stress, and fatigue, and improve his physical condition, which worsens due to withdrawal or prolonged abstinence from alcohol.

Alcohol dependence is formed gradually and progresses over and over again. With alcohol dependence, human behavior also changes. Alcohol blurs the boundaries of what is permissible, provoking a person to do things that he would never have done in a sober state.

Materials and Methods

In order to test our assumption, we conducted a survey of men and women using a cognitive-emotive text by Y. M. Orlov, S. N. Morozyuk. The study involved 56 respondents—men (33 people) and women (23 people) aged 25-50 years with mental and behavioral disorders caused by alcohol consumption.

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The empirical base of the study is the State Budgetary Healthcare Institution of the Moscow region “Psychiatric Hospital No. 5” in Khotkovo, Moscow region.

The results of the empirical study were processed using the statistical program “STATISTIKA 7.0” using the parametric statistical method of data processing for independent samples of the Student’s *T*-criterion.

Theory

The main sign of alcohol addiction is a growing need for alcohol during a period of stress or some negative event. A person resorts to the protective behavior of his personality in the form of avoiding a traumatic situation. And he himself, at the same time, finds an excuse for his addiction, motivating alcohol consumption with an increased level of tension (Vrublevsky, 2000; Ivanets, 2000).

The causes of alcoholism are divided into three main groups (Anokhina, 2000):

1. Biological;
2. Social;
3. Psychological.

To date, the most developed in science are studies aimed at identifying the biological factors of alcohol dependence. Among the physiological causes of alcoholism, it is customary to distinguish heredity. Thus, it has been proven that in families where parents suffer from alcoholism, there are four times more children prone to this type of addiction, compared with children raised by healthy parents. According to researchers, it’s all about metabolism. Alcohol breaks down the enzyme alcohol dehydrogenase. The speed of this process can be inherited. Another biological reason may be the weak production of dopamine, the hormone responsible for pleasure. Ethanol stimulates its production and it seems to people after drinking alcohol that they have found a sure and quick way to become happy.

A significant role in this is played by the genetic factor. Violation of certain genes that are involved in the metabolism of alcohol, reduces the body’s ability to compensate for damage, and this, in turn, not only increases the risk of alcoholism, but also contributes to the occurrence of diseases associated with this disorder.

Dependence is formed on substances that resemble the structure of the substance of the body, or to the means involved in metabolism. Taking such substances disrupts the work of natural enzymes, and a break in their use causes tension. To remove it, patients compensate for the lack of these same enzymes with a new dose of alcohol.

The primary attraction to alcohol is formed by a biological rhythm designed to help the body adapt to living conditions. Alcohol intake changes the metabolic rate and the rate of enzyme synthesis. They decrease, as a rule, under the influence of a prolonged binge, which neither the patient nor his relatives can stop.

Over time, a person’s loyalty to alcohol increases, and the doses taken increase. His absence makes a person nervous, gloomy, irritable. The patient ceases to control the volume of alcohol, he develops amnesia during intoxication, behavior changes, his psychoemotional state worsens.

Against the background of the absence of alcohol, the patient may develop alcoholic delirium (psychosis) on Day 3-5. It is accompanied by sleep disturbance, decreased appetite, tremor of the limbs, hallucinations.

No less severe type of alcoholic disease is delusional psychosis, which develops in people with borderline mental state. A vivid example can be the delirium of jealousy. Any event on the part of the spouse(s) is interpreted by the patient as adultery, no matter how absurd it may be. At the same time, in confirmation of the validity of

these studies, which attach importance to the biological factor in the development of alcohol dependence, there can also be reverse examples of the fact that some people, drinking a fair amount of alcohol and doing it regularly, do not fall under its influence and do not become addicted (Vrublevsky, 2000; Ivanets, 2000).

Among the social factors of the development of alcohol dependence are the environment, domestic disorder, when it is more interesting to drink than to live, a low level of cultural and moral development of a person, as well as traditions. For example, if no festive event takes place without alcohol, then from early childhood a loyal attitude towards him takes root in the child's mind. No less active participation in the distribution of alcohol is played by the media, laying in the heads of young people that all adults drink, and alcohol is fashionable and "cool". The situation in the world and in the country can also contribute to mass alcoholism, while the level of poverty may not play a significant role.

Without supplanting the role of the two previous factors in the development of alcohol addiction, biological and social, the leading cause in the triad is, in our opinion, the psychological factor. So numerous studies have found that not all children who are inherently predisposed to alcoholism become alcoholics. Depending on gender, age, and frequency of alcohol consumption, addiction manifests itself in different ways or does not manifest itself at all.

It has been scientifically proven that alcoholism is most associated with psychological causes, and it can be combated, including psychological techniques.

At the first stage of the formation of alcohol dependence, the emotional factor plays a key role. Alcohol creates a false sense of psychological comfort and self-confidence. Among the psychological factors provoking the use of alcohol: a feeling of loneliness, low self-esteem, self-doubt, dissatisfaction with life, depression.

Summarizing scientific data, we can say that often the main reason for the development of alcohol addiction is psychological distress of the individual, which is understood as psychological discomfort, experiencing internal conflict as a consequence of mismatch of expectations with the real course of events, feeling unhappy, flawed, helpless, lonely, abandoned, outcast, in which a person rejects himself, others, or the whole world.

In numerous studies carried out in line with the scientific school of Orlov Yu. M., Morozyuk S. N., it is proved that the psychological well-being of a person is determined by the style of her thinking, the quality of reflection, the everyday philosophy that has developed under their influence (Adamyan, 2012; Kananchuk, 2009; Marchukova, 2005; Orlov, 1999; Rudakov, 2009; Chernobrovkina, 1992).

Scientists at University College London have found that certain patterns of thinking (negative thoughts) can even provoke Alzheimer's disease (Alzheimer's, Dementia). Repetitive negative thinking destroys cognitive functions (memory deteriorates, critical thinking decreases, its prognostic function weakens). All of the above is a favorable ground for the development of alcohol dependence.

What, from this point of view, is the psychological mechanism of addiction formation?

Initially, psychological distress, possibly grief, or a chronic state of frustration caused by the dissatisfaction of basic needs and desires, creates conditions for the emergence of dependent behavior, the trigger of which may be the first pleasure received from an alcoholic drink, pleasant to the taste, relieving psychological stress, creating a state of freedom. The criticality of thinking towards oneself temporarily disappears, reflection as a social mirror falls silent. The following questions become irrelevant: "How do I look?", "How smart am I in the eyes of others?", "Am I behaving correctly?", etc. Past pleasures, invading our consciousness today, generate desires. "To arouse desire," says Orlov Y. M., "it is not necessary that this situation of the past be

repeated here and now. There are enough thoughts building this situation in your mind. Our imagination and thoughts are the 'buttons' that turn on desire in us." Therefore, the Eastern sage is right when he said: "Do not let thoughts revolve in the streams of sensual pleasures" (Dhammapada). However, a person is weak, and not everyone is able to become stronger than their feelings. "The weakness of a person is that he allows bad thoughts to take possession of himself. And the strength of a person is to become stronger than his feelings" (Og. Mandino). Needs and desires are expressed in thoughts and guide our behavior towards achieving satisfaction. The activity of thought can turn a natural need into a passion that captures a person of everything, absorbing his freedom, disorganizing life plans. It seems to a person that he is free, while he is zombified by desires, serves his pernicious passion.

Gradually, the desire to get out of a negative emotional state begins to subdue a person, takes control of his behavior and thinking, which, due to its weakness and pathogenicity, is unable to resist a strong attraction. A person directs all his abilities, intelligence, and experience to achieve satisfaction. At the next stage, the psychological desire to avoid negative experiences is joined by the physiological need for alcohol, which blocks other life manifestations, except those related to this satisfaction. A strong passion, dominating the soul, brings devastation to its other areas. And then we talk about alcohol addiction as a disease that is difficult to treat.

Is there a means to interrupt such a pernicious attraction? The answer is in the description of the mechanism of desire. Thinking as a cause of psychological distress, as an actualizer of desires, can also become a means of controlling them, destroying harmful passion, if it is aimed at understanding the causes and factors that trigger alcoholic behavior. As Y. M. Orlov said, "The power of thought is obvious. It creates reality."

The mechanism that develops sanogenic (healing) thinking can be a special personal reflection (sanogenic), which allows the subject to objectify his thinking as a process that leads either to suffering or to a constructive solution of the problem.

Reflection is a mechanism that allows the subject to rise above the situation, not to be in the experience, but above it.

Since our respondents were people with mental and behavioral disorders caused by alcohol consumption, their reflection, as we believed, has its own specific features that do not allow them to break out of the circle of alcohol addiction on their own.

Results

Figure 1 shows the results of our study.

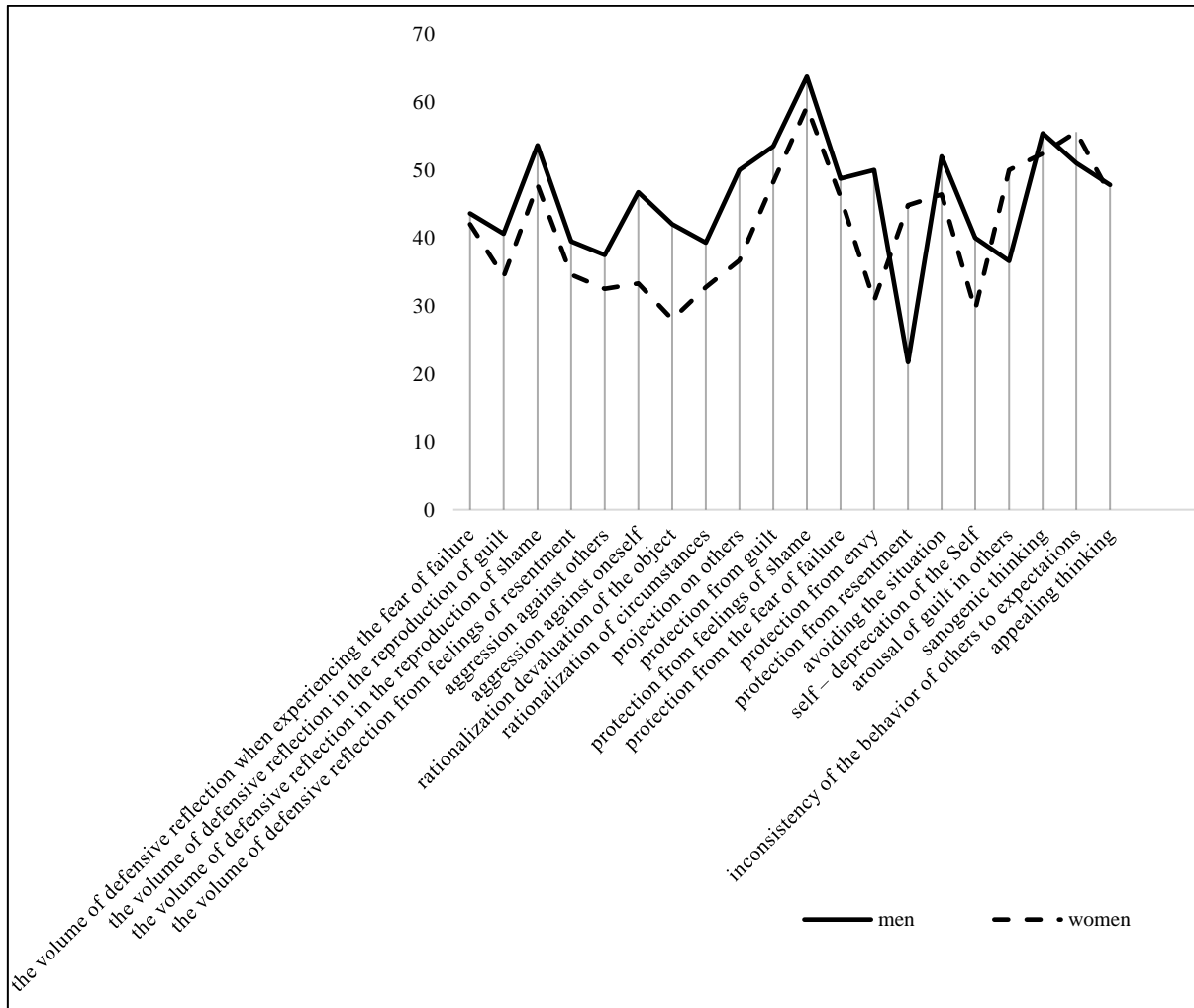


Figure 1. Profile of protective reflection of persons with mental and behavioural disorders caused by alcohol consumption.

Discussion

The most pronounced features of protective reflection in alcoholics, regardless of gender, are: the indicator of protective reflection from a sense of shame and the indicator of protection from shame. This indicates that in ontogenesis the socialization of personality was carried out with the help of the social tyranny of shame. If a person has enough psychophysiological and personal resources, she will be able to squeeze herself into the “procrustean bed” of social expectations, there will be no breakdown of social adaptation, if not, then escape into illness, neurosis, rebellion in the form of antisocial behavior, including alcohol.

How is a person with alcohol addiction protected from psychological suffering? As our data show, he leaves the situation that traumatizes his personality into an “alcoholic virtual reality”. He really is more interested in drinking than living. Of all the indicators of protective behavior, this indicator is the most pronounced (see Figure 1). Shame as a non-personalized ruler of a person’s behavior and feelings under the influence of alcohol falls silent, conscience as an ethical category of shame manifestation atrophies. Perhaps, of all personal qualities, conscientiousness is the most vulnerable part of an alcoholic’s soul. With the atrophy of conscience, the inability to evaluate his behavior from the point of view of morality and ethics, the disintegration of his personality begins.

Conclusions

Thus, our hypothesis confirmed that the reflection of persons with mental and behavioral disorders caused by alcohol consumption has its own specific features:

1. The most pronounced features of protective reflection of alcoholics, regardless of gender, are: an indicator of protective reflection from a sense of shame and an indicator of protection from shame in the form of withdrawal from a traumatic personality situation into alcoholic behavior.

2. Pathogenic thinking as a cause of suffering from excessive shame and psychological distress of the individual as a whole can, in the course of therapy, become a means of controlling both desires and the destruction of harmful passion if it acquires the properties of sanogenicity (constructiveness), i.e. it will be directed to awareness of the causes of psychological distress and factors triggering alcoholic behavior. It is necessary to help a person with alcohol addiction with the help of thinking to become stronger than their feelings. For “The power of thought is obvious. She creates reality” And what this reality will be depends on the person himself, motivated to positively change himself and his life. In this we see the way of psychological therapy and the solution to the problem of alcohol addiction. Despite the fact that the consultative practice of working on the technology of SGM (sanogenic thinking) and SGR (sanogenic reflection) with people with alcohol dependence demonstrates positive results, we are aware that this positive experience requires fundamental theoretical justification and experimental verification with a representative sample.

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