

## **Personal and situational conditions of coping flexibility in the Polish sample**

The modern times abound in numerous of diverse stressful situations which require flexibility and the ability to adapt to changing conditions, considering not only one's own capabilities but also the situational properties and accompanying social circumstances. The growing pace of life causes that Polish society, have to face unpleasant consequences of stress related with both psychological and health sphere. These may include burnout syndrome, observed in representatives of various professions and a growing number of people suffering from lifestyle diseases including cardiovascular diseases, cancer and alcohol addiction. The fundamental purpose of the project is conducting a research for conditions of coping flexibility in different situations of life.

Coping flexibility is defined as an ability to give up ineffective coping strategies and to develop and implement alternative strategies. From that point of view flexible coping is considered as a process, where a person evaluates own means of coping (so called evaluation coping) to subsequently develop and implement strategies which will prove the most efficient (so called adaptive coping). The innovative character of the study is based on the elucidation both of the concept and the measuring method. They assume a conscious alternation of the coping strategies involved because of the lack of effectivity of coping methods used so far.

The project is a continuation of previous studies conducted in this field. The study is planned to be carried out among three groups of people afflicted with various types of stressors: 1) among healthy adolescents and healthy adults at different life stages, 2) among people suffering from illnesses and 3) among nurses and firefighters. In each group the rule of factors facilitating and/or exacerbating coping flexibility will be assessed. Temperamental factors will be taken into account, as well as personality properties and personal resources such as resiliency and spirituality. Furthermore, the significance of experiencing stress will also be examined, which can decide of one's ability to use own potentials in flexible coping. What is more, because research suggested that people from individualistic cultures show less flexibility, emphasize adaptability and omit evaluation coping, the study will also investigate the modifying role of individualistic and collectivistic orientation.

Coping is a positive factor, leading to personal growth, development and encouragement of taking new endeavors, thus the concept of coping flexibility appears to be valuable. The results of this study will contribute to a greater knowledge on the conditions of coping flexibility in the face of numerous life situations, particularly in terms of chronic stress resulting from the burdens of everyday life, work and sickness. In the future, they might constitute a ground to help develop more adequate models of psychological support and educational programs targeting the improvement of coping flexibility among different age, occupational and clinical groups.