

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF PROVIDING PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSISTANCE FOR POLICE OFFICERS WHO USED FIREARMS TO ELIMINATE A PERSON CAUGHT WHILE COMMITTING SERIOUS OR VERY SERIOUS CRIME AND ATTEMPTED TO ESCAPE

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ABSTRACT

In the article the authors describe the peculiarities of providing professional psychological assistance for a police officer who used firearms during the detention of a person caught while committing serious or very serious crime and attempted to escape. It is noted that the fact of the use of firearms for eliminating of a person is a serious psychological test for the police. The authors stressed out the main tasks and rules for providing psychological help to the police. The emotional, cognitive, volitional and physiological conditions experienced by the police after the use of weapons, are classified and specified. There are described some features of providing of psychological help to a policeman who used firearms, in certain phases of the development of a negative mental state.

It was emphasized that psychological assistance, provided in time, to a policeman after using firearms to neutralize a person caught while committing serious or very serious crime and who tried to escape, will contribute to reduce the level of nervous-psychic tension, the state of mental depression and faster recovery from disability.

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The law enforcement activities of the units of the National Police of Ukraine are carried out as a rule under high nervous tension, psychological overloading and being in complicated, conflicting, unpredictable conditions. The presence of situations that create a potential threat to the lives of citizens and the police themselves requires from almost every one of them constant attention and readiness to act at any time even using firearms.

Police are authorized to use firearms while exercising their powers according to the Law of Ukraine «On the National Police» [1]. It is important that a policeman is legally authorized to use firearms solely for the purpose of causing the person such damage that is necessary and sufficient in a particular life situation. This means that you need to shoot to stop, not to kill. Police officers have the right to shoot without any warning only in case of extreme necessity, in particular when there is no

opportunity to prevent and there is no direct encroachment on human life. But whatever is the cruel crime committed by a person, first of all he/she is a human, and depriving her/his life, a police officer gets a serious moral injury with which he/she has to live further.

Thus, the fact of using by a policeman firearms to eliminate a person caught during serious or very serious crime and trying to escape is a serious psychological test for him/her. V.I. Malichevsky [2], considering some aspects of the psychology of the perception of the situation when firearms were used, indicates that this situation is a personal conflict for a law enforcement officer. Therefore, after using firearms by a policeman for defeat, psychological help has a great importance.

It should be noted that the fact of using firearms by a policeman to eliminate a person who was caught while committing serious or very serious crime and attempted to escape has its emotional experiences. In this aspect, an important role is played by: a) the age and background of work (it is known that low stress characterizes young workers), b) individual psychological features of the nature and properties of temperament; c) professional experience; d) professional guidance; e) circumstances of the use of weapons and others. A policeman who is not sure about the legitimacy of his actions is very worried about the consequences of the use of weapons and his/her future.

From many years of practical work experience we can state that the policeman who used the weapons to defeat, the following psychophysical states could appear [3]:

1) *emotional states:*

- anxiety for your future and the future of your family;
- fear of the legal consequences of his deed;
- feelings of guilt;
- excitement;
- irritability, anger;
- auto aggression, etc.;

2) *cognitive states:*

- a sense of social isolation (including from colleagues);
- obsessive references to the incident;
- obsessive thoughts of negative color;
- thoughts about their guilt;
- uncertainty about oneself and their actions;
- carelessness;
- difficult concentration of attention;
- inability to make decisions, etc.;

3) *physiological conditions:*

- decreased or increased appetite;
- insomnia or drowsiness;
- heartbeat;
- feeling of lack of air;
- inhibition or anxiety, etc.;

4) *volitional states:*

- a sense of impotence;
- a feeling of impossibility to do something;
- disorganization;
- limited ability to control their emotional and cognitive states, etc.

It should be emphasized that the psycho-physical condition of a policeman after the using firearms to neutralize a person who was caught while committing serious or very serious crime and who tried to escape largely depends on:

- a) legal assessment of the weapons' using;
- b) consequences of using the weapons (for example, the death of the person being prosecuted, the death or injury of an outsider);
- c) content of personal attitude to the fact of using the weapons;
- d) social attitude (colleagues, leaders, relatives and friends) to the fact of using the weapons.

Psychological help has a great importance for prevention the development of policeman's mental disorders, who used the firearm to eliminate. In our point of view the main tasks of psychological assistance to a policeman after using the firearms for eliminating, is to create conditions for:

- 1) "purification" of the psyche from traces of negative stress, from shock, from signs of maladaptation;
- 2) rationalization of the consequences and acceptance by the person of the fact of using the firearms;
- 3) recovery, correction, compensation of disturbed mental functions and conditions;

- 4) elimination of destructive and auto-aggressive behavior;
- 5) preservation of mental well-being;
- 6) restoration of work capacity;
- 7) adequate adaptation, etc.

Psychological assistance to a policeman should be carried out in conjunction with psychodiagnostic, psychoactive, prognostic, advisory activity of psychologists of the National Police of Ukraine.

It should be emphasized that while providing psychological assistance to a policeman who has used firearms to eliminate a criminal, a psychologist should adhere to the following rules of work, namely:

- demonstrate confidence that he is able to help;
- do not invite a policeman to a conversation through a third party;
- do not impose psychological help;
- search for "trust keys";
- to show caution, empathy, attentiveness, patience, tolerance;
- show a desire to help;
- express respect for the person's outlook;
- helping not to hurt;
- listen, hear and heard;
- watch, see and saw;
- to receive information about the emotional state of a policeman from several sources (from colleagues on work, wife, leader);
- implicitly monitoring the behavior of the police officer;
- adhere to the principles of activity (scientific, objectivity, complexity, legality, voluntariness, ethics, responsibility, impartiality, confidentiality, etc.).
- while having a conversation between a psychologist and a police officer, it is not possible to record, interrupt it, watch a clock, engage in any kind of side-affairs (it should be shown that there is nothing more important than this conversation now for a psychologist);
- police officer must be immediately send to the Psychiatric Center for certain signs of a mental disorder, etc.

The main conditions for the implementation of psychological assistance to a policeman after using firearms to the elimination of an offender are:

- 1) voluntary participation of an employee;
- 2) motivational interest in working with a psychologist;
- 3) independence of a policeman in the choice of methods of psychological assistance, etc.

The offering by a psychologist to a policeman, one or another method of psychological help, depends on such factors, namely:

- the fact of the lawfulness or unlawful use of weapons;
- consequences of the use of weapons;
- the psycho-emotional state of a policeman after the use of weapons;
- personal features of the character and emotional and will qualities of the police;
- confidence of the police in the expediency of psychological assistance;
- trusting relationships with a psychologist;
- psychological competence of the police officer;
- degree of a policeman's correction;
- phases of development of a negative emotional state of a person, etc.

It should be noted that there are some phases of the development of the negative mental states of a policeman who used weapons during detention of a person caught while committing serious or very serious crime and attempted to escape, namely, this phase [3]:

- 1) anxiety from awareness of what happened and fear for the future;
- 2) accumulation and enrichment of negative emotions;
- 3) emotional explosion (crisis);
- 4) exhaustion, gradual recovery and full recovery.

It should be emphasized that it is desirable to provide psychological assistance to a policeman immediately after using the weapons. In the first phase of the development of a negative mental state – anxiety, from awareness of what happened and fear for the future, the systematized rationalization of what happened and suggestive methods could help to a person. The psychologist can offer the police to undergo auto training, relaxation, breathing exercises, training exercises ("Confidence", "Peace", "Removing anxiety"), etc.

The second phase of the development of a negative mental state of a person - the accumulation and enrichment of negative emotions. It depends on the amount and quantity of the accumulated negative emotions. According to the dynamics it can be gradual or prolonged, fast or slow. The mental state of a person depends on her/his emotional state, on her/his emotional perception, on the depth of her/his emotional experience, on the degree of personal significance of the event and on the content of what the individual invests in what has happened.

Psychologist providing psychological counseling should emphasize to the person that it is not necessary to combine all negative phenomena in one, vital events that it is necessary to distinguish clearly emotions that arise from what has happened, from emotions arisen from other grounds. The policeman must: a) make an adequate separation of his/her own emotional experiences; b) try not to accumulate negative emotions, but to rationalize them; c) not to repulse negative emotions, but to allow them to survive. The peculiarity of the service in power structures is such that often even when there are strong fillings, the police do not seek help at specialists. Of course, this may be a sign of a sufficiently developed self-help skills, but most of all this is evidence that most of the policemen are under the influence of stigmatization of society's thoughts that they have no problems, including any traumatic experiences. Even if difficulties suddenly arose, they try to hide them, in order to avoid condemnation from colleagues, bosses and for the sake of preserving their official authority.

If in due time it does not help, the policeman who used the firearm to eliminate, then in consequence of the surplus of the accumulated negative emotional experiences, an emotional explosion may occur. Depending on the characteristics of the character and the properties of the person's temperament, a negative emotional explosion may be directed against:

- a) other people (impulsive aggressive actions, negativism, reaction of hostility, irritation, manifestations of fury, anger);
- b) self (self-accusation, auto aggression, suicide attempt);
- c) objects and subjects of the material world (a person can destroy, crush, loose, damage what happens to her/his hands).

In this phase, negative emotional experiences are accompanied by severe mental pain overcrowding the person and preventing rational thinking. During this period, psychological assistance to the policeman should be aimed at alleviating the negative emotional state and mitigating his emotional experiences. If a person in this phase is not provided with psychological help, then she/he may have a mental illness. In this phase, physical exercises will help to a policeman (running, boxing, fast moving ...), water procedures, breathing exercises, writing "angry postcards", etc.

In the last phase of the development of a negative mental state - the exhaustion and the gradual restoration of a policeman who used weapons to eliminate the perpetrator, psychological assistance should be supportive.

Thus, psychological assistance provided in time to a policeman after using firearms to neutralize a person who was caught while committing serious or very serious crime and who tried to escape, would reduce his level of nervous-psychoic tension, the state of mental depression and more rapid recovery from disability.

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