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UKRAINIAN CONTEXT OF PRESERVING JOURNALISTS' MENTAL HEALTH: CHALLENGES OF FULL-SCALE WAR AND RESOURCES OF RESILIENCE

The purpose of the work is to conduct a comprehensive theoretical and methodological analysis of specific challenges to the mental health of Ukrainian journalists in conditions of full-scale war; to identify and systematize a multi-level system of psychological resilience resources, including individual, professional, social, cultural, and existential components. **Methodology.** The research is based on systemic and integrative approaches to studying individual mental health in extreme conditions, cultural-historical approach to understanding resilience mechanisms, and phenomenological approach to comprehending the subjective experience of journalists. The theoretical foundation includes concepts of stress resistance and psychological adaptation (Mykola Korolchuk, Valentyna Korolchuk), theory of psychological support for extreme profile specialists (Serhii Myronets), neurobiological approach to trauma (Bessel van der Kolk), concepts of media-psychological safety (Liubov Naidonova) and information-psychological security (Oleh Baryshpolets). Methods of theoretical generalization, systemic and comparative analysis, content analysis, and phenomenological description were used. **Scientific novelty** lies in the systematization of unique characteristics of the Ukrainian context of preserving journalists' mental health; identification of a specific configuration of stressors (primary, secondary, and visual traumatization, information overload, identity conflict); substantiation of a multi-level system of psychological resilience resources; development of practical recommendations taking into account the specifics of wartime. **Conclusions.** It has been established that the specificity of the Ukrainian context is determined by the scale, duration, and hybrid nature of the conflict, which makes traditional mechanisms of psychological recovery impossible. A unique configuration of challenges and powerful resilience resources at individual, professional, social, and cultural levels has been identified. It has been proven that traumatic experience can become a catalyst for post-traumatic growth. Preserving journalists' mental health acquires strategic significance for the information security of the state.

Keywords: *mental health, journalists, war, psychological trauma, resilience, professional stress, traumatization, post-traumatic growth, Ukraine.*

Problem statement. Preserving the mental health of journalists in conditions of armed conflicts constitutes one of the most acute problems of modern psychology of extreme activity and media psychology, which acquires special relevance in the context of Russia's full-scale military aggression against Ukraine. Since February 24, 2022, Ukrainian media workers have found themselves in unprecedented conditions of professional activity, when traditional boundaries between the combat zone and relatively safe rear areas have virtually disappeared due to missile strikes across the entire territory of the country, massive kamikaze drone attacks on civilian infrastructure, and constant air raid alerts. Journalists who previously specialized in culture, sports, economics, or social topics were forced to reorient themselves to covering military events, often without prior training for working in extreme conditions and with traumatic content.

The scale of the problem is confirmed by tragic statistics: According to the Institute of Mass Information, since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, 106 Ukrainian and foreign journalists have been killed (as of June 2025), of whom 15 media workers died while performing professional duties, 14 as civilian victims, and 84 as participants in combat operations [1]. These figures reflect only physical losses and do not account for the scale of psychological traumatization experienced by practically all media workers covering the war. Journalists document mass killings of civilians in Bucha, Irpin, Bakhmut; work at "impact" sites immediately after missile strikes; interview people who have lost loved ones or become victims of torture; review and verify videos of executions of Ukrainian prisoners of war; work for months in "breaking news" mode without the possibility of full rest and psychological recovery.

The problem of preserving journalists' mental health is closely related to solving important scientific and practical tasks of national and global scale. In the scientific dimension, it concerns fundamental questions of personality psychology: mechanisms of psychological adaptation to chronic

traumatic stress, specifics of professional burnout under existential threat, resources of resilience in the context of collective trauma, phenomena of post-traumatic growth in conditions of prolonged war. Research on the Ukrainian experience can significantly enrich world psychological science with unique data on the functioning of the psyche in extreme conditions of a large-scale conflict of the 21st century.

In the practical dimension, preserving journalists' mental health has strategic significance for Ukraine's national security. Psychologically healthy, resilient journalists are capable of effectively performing critically important functions: informing society about the real state of affairs, which is necessary for making adequate decisions at all levels; documenting war crimes for future international justice; resisting massive Russian disinformation and propaganda; maintaining the nation's morale through coverage of examples of heroism and resilience; mobilizing international support by conveying the truth about the war to the global community. In contrast, psychologically exhausted, traumatized journalists may become vulnerable to manipulation, make mistakes in information verification, lose the ability to think critically, creating risks for the state's information security.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The theoretical and methodological foundations of the research are based on deep integration of domestic and foreign concepts of personality psychological resilience in extreme conditions of professional activity.

Mykola Korolchuk developed an integrative concept of stress resistance, which considers this phenomenon as a systemic characteristic of personality. According to his theory, stress resistance ensures optimal adaptation to extreme conditions through a complex interaction of five interconnected components [5,6,7,8].

The psychophysiological component of stress resistance determines the basic ability of the organism to withstand loads. For journalists, this manifests in the ability to function with disrupted sleep and eating patterns, endure prolonged periods of intensive work, and adapt to field conditions. Mykola Korolchuk established that psychophysiological resilience can be developed through systematic training.

The emotional component ensures the ability to regulate emotional states in stressful situations. For journalists, this is critically important when covering tragic events, when it is necessary to balance between professional detachment and human empathy. The cognitive component includes the ability to adequately assess stressful situations, analyze information in conditions of uncertainty, and make decisions with limited time. For journalists, this manifests in the ability to quickly orient themselves in a changing situation, critically analyze contradictory information, and recognize disinformation. Cognitive resilience can decrease under the influence of chronic stress, manifesting in concentration difficulties, memory deterioration, and decreased creativity.

The motivational-volitional component ensures the ability to maintain goal-directed activity despite obstacles. For journalists, this is expressed in readiness to continue work despite life threats, physical fatigue, and emotional exhaustion. Internal motivation plays a special role—awareness of the social significance of activity. For Ukrainian journalists, such motivation is often connected with patriotic feelings and awareness of the historical mission to document the truth about the war.

The behavioral component manifests in specific stress coping strategies. Problem-oriented strategies (aimed at solving the problem) and emotion-oriented strategies (aimed at regulating emotional state) are distinguished. For journalists, combined strategies that unite active solution of professional tasks with techniques of emotional self-regulation are effective.

Valentyna Korolchuk developed the theory of personality psychological adaptation to extreme conditions of activity. Her concept considers adaptation as an active process of personality interaction with the environment, aimed at achieving optimal correlation between environmental demands and personality capabilities [4]. Valentyna Korolchuk described in detail the stages of adaptation to extreme conditions, which reflect the experience of Ukrainian journalists since the beginning of the full-scale invasion.

The stage of primary mental tension was characterized in the first days and weeks of war by shock reactions, disorientation, acute anxiety. Journalists describe this period as "unreal," when usual professional skills temporarily lost effectiveness. Many could not write texts, forgot elementary skills, and experienced paralyzing fear.

The stage of acute mental reactions manifested in hypermobilization of resources, significant increase in working capacity, and sharpening of perception. Many journalists recall a period when they could work 18-20 hours a day, almost without feeling fatigue. However, such hypermobilization cannot continue long without negative consequences—this is "working on credit" that will have to be repaid.

The stage of final mental tension occurs with prolonged stay in extreme conditions and is characterized by gradual exhaustion of adaptive resources. For Ukrainian journalists, this stage manifests in chronic fatigue, emotional burnout, decreased motivation, psychosomatic disorders, and sleep

disturbances. Active psychological support measures are necessary to prevent the development of pathological conditions.

Serhii Myronets developed a comprehensive system of psychological support for extreme profile specialists. His definition of an extreme situation as a change in living conditions characterized by uncertainty, stressfulness, and life threat accurately describes the working conditions of journalists in combat zones [9]. Serhii Myronets identified specific psychological phenomena in extreme situations.

Tunnel perception—narrowing of the attention field to critically important stimuli—can help concentrate but simultaneously creates risk of ignoring important danger signals. Journalists describe moments when they were so focused on filming that they did not notice approaching shelling.

Distortion of temporal perception—a phenomenon when time can subjectively accelerate or slow down. Minutes under shelling can seem like hours, while hours of intensive work fly by unnoticed.

Dissociation as a psychological defense mechanism allows the journalist to emotionally distance themselves from traumatic events—a "splitting of consciousness," when a person observes themselves from the side. For journalists, this can be an adaptive mechanism, but with excessive use, it can lead to emotional numbness and loss of capacity for empathy.

Hypermobilization—a state of maximum concentration of all organism resources—ensures survival in critical situations, but its prolonged maintenance leads to exhaustion. It is important to learn techniques of "dosed mobilization"—the ability to activate resources at the necessary moment and reduce tension in periods of relative safety.

International experience of researching traumatization of war correspondents. Bessel van der Kolk's neurobiological approach provides critically important understanding of somatic aspects of journalists' traumatization. He showed that traumatic experience is "remembered" not only at the psychological but also at the bodily level through changes in the nervous system, hormonal balance, and muscle tone [2].

Bessel van der Kolk's concept of the "window of tolerance" explains mechanisms of emotional regulation disturbance during traumatization. In a normal state, a person functions within the optimal range of nervous system activation. Trauma narrows this "window," leading to oscillation between two extreme states.

The state of hyperarousal is characterized by increased anxiety, constant vigilance, irritability, sleep disturbances, and intrusive thoughts about danger. Journalists in this state may be excessively vigilant, constantly scan the environment for threats, feel physical tension, and suffer from headaches. They may work with increased intensity, but this is exhausting hyperactivity.

The state of hypoarousal manifests in emotional numbness, alienation, dissociation, and loss of interest in activity. Journalists may feel "disconnected" from reality, lose the capacity for empathy, and experience depersonalization or derealization. They may mechanically perform duties without emotional involvement, which reduces work quality.

Bessel van der Kolk emphasizes that traditional "talk" therapies may be insufficiently effective because traumatic memories are stored in implicit memory, inaccessible to conscious verbal processing. Trauma "gets stuck" in the body in the form of muscle tension, chronic pain, and breathing disturbances. He recommends using body-oriented approaches—yoga, breathing practices, dance-movement therapy, EMDR—which work directly with bodily manifestations of trauma.

Ukrainian context of media-psychological safety. Liubov Naidonova developed the concept of media-psychological safety of personality, which has critical significance for understanding the specifics of journalists' traumatization [10].

The concept of "media trauma" introduced by Liubov Naidonova reveals a specific aspect of professional risks of journalistic activity. Media trauma is defined as psychological trauma caused by mediated contact with traumatic events through media. For journalists, media traumatization has an active character—they do not simply consume traumatic content but actively search for it, analyze it in detail, process it, and disseminate it among a wide audience.

Oleh Baryshpolets focused research on the problem of information-psychological security of personality in conditions of information confrontation. He analyzes psychological mechanisms of creating, disseminating, and countering disinformation [3]. Oleh Baryshpolets considers information-psychological security of personality as a state of psyche protection from destructive informational influences. For journalists working in conditions of information warfare, the problem of preserving information-psychological security becomes critically important.

Identifying previously unsolved parts of the general problem. Despite significant scientific achievements in the field of psychology of extreme activity, psychology of trauma, and media psychology, a number of fundamental problems remain that require scientific comprehension.

First, there is no holistic analysis of specific challenges to journalists' mental health specifically in the Ukrainian context of full-scale war. The uniqueness of this context is determined by an unprecedented combination of factors: the scale of the conflict (combat actions and missile strikes across the entire territory of the country), duration (the fourth year of war without prospects for quick completion), hybrid character (combination of conventional combat actions, information warfare, cyberattacks, economic terrorism), totality of impact (practically all journalists regardless of specialization are forced to cover the war). Existing research is based on the experience of local conflicts or short-term crises, which does not allow extrapolating their conclusions to the Ukrainian context.

Second, the phenomenon of double traumatization of Ukrainian journalists, who experience war simultaneously in two capacities—as professionals documenting events and as citizens of a country that has suffered aggression—is insufficiently studied. Many journalists have personal experience of losing loved ones, forced displacement, being under shelling, and destruction of homes. This duality creates a unique psychological situation when professional activity constantly reactivates personal trauma, and personal trauma affects the ability to perform professional duties. The mechanisms of interaction between professional and personal traumatization, their synergistic impact on mental health, remain unstudied.

Third, there is a lack of comprehensive analysis of the system of psychological resilience resources specific to the Ukrainian context. Existing resilience models are developed mainly in individualistic Western cultures and do not account for collectivist values, historical memory of overcoming traumas (Holodomor, repressions, previous wars), peculiarities of national character, the role of patriotic uplift and national solidarity as resilience resources. Cultural mechanisms of resilience—Ukrainian humor as a method of psychological defense, traditions of mutual assistance, religiosity and spirituality—require scientific comprehension in the context of their role in preserving journalists' mental health.

The purpose of the article is to conduct a comprehensive theoretical and methodological analysis of specific challenges to the mental health of Ukrainian journalists in conditions of full-scale war; to identify and systematize a multi-level system of psychological resilience resources, including individual, professional, social, cultural, and existential components.

Scientific novelty lies in the systematization of unique characteristics of the Ukrainian context of preserving journalists' mental health in conditions of full-scale war; identification of a specific configuration of stressors, including primary traumatization through direct life threat, secondary traumatization through empathic experiencing of others' traumas, visual traumatization from working with graphic content, moral injury from inability to help, information overload, conflict of professional and civic identities; substantiation of a multi-level system of psychological resilience resources at individual, professional, social, and cultural levels; development of practical recommendations for preserving mental health taking into account the specifics of the Ukrainian wartime context.

Results. Specific challenges to the mental health of Ukrainian journalists. Comprehensive analysis revealed a unique configuration of challenges to the mental health of Ukrainian journalists, formed by the combination of universal factors of professional stress of war correspondents and specific characteristics of the Ukrainian context of full-scale war.

Primary traumatization of Ukrainian journalists has an unprecedented character in scale, intensity, and duration. The specificity of primary traumatization lies in several aspects. First, this is direct work under shelling. Journalists go to shelling sites immediately after strikes when there is high risk of repeated attacks. Each trip can be the last, which creates constant tension.

Second, work in frontline territories and the line of contact. War correspondents work in conditions of active combat operations, accompany military units. They are under constant threat of artillery shelling and drone attacks. The specificity of modern war creates a situation when there are no completely safe places even in the rear.

Third, work in newly liberated territories carries specific risks. Journalists are among the first to reach liberated territories where a large number of mines remain. They document evidence of war crimes, mass burials, and consequences of torture. The risk of being blown up is combined with psychological shock from what is seen.

Psychophysiological mechanisms of reaction to direct danger have a specific character. Activation of the sympathetic nervous system leads to release of adrenaline and cortisol. In the short term, this helps survive. Journalists describe a state of "combat trance" when fear recedes and extraordinary clarity of thinking appears.

However, chronic activation of the stress system has destructive consequences. Constantly elevated cortisol levels lead to suppression of the immune system, disruption of hippocampus function, and

neurotransmitter imbalance. Journalists suffer from chronic fatigue, sleep disturbances, headaches, and cardiovascular diseases.

A specific problem is the necessity to suppress natural self-preservation reactions. The survival instinct demands fleeing from danger, but the journalist must remain in place and document events. This creates a deep internal conflict. Suppression of natural reactions leads to accumulation of "frozen" energy in the body, manifesting in muscle tension and psychosomatic disorders.

The phenomenon of "journalistic courage" often masks deep fear. Journalists may demonstrate fearlessness and joke in dangerous situations. This can be an adaptive mechanism but can also be a manifestation of dissociation. The problem is that suppressed emotions accumulate and may manifest later in the form of panic attacks or emotional breakdowns.

An important aspect is unpredictability. Journalists cannot accurately predict when and where the next shelling will occur. This creates a state of constant hypervigilance that exhausts psychological resources.

Secondary traumatization of Ukrainian journalists has a particularly intensive character due to the scale of human suffering they document. Every day, journalists communicate with people who have experienced terrible traumas. The necessity to deeply immerse themselves in these stories creates conditions for intensive secondary traumatization.

The mechanism of empathic resonance leads to the journalist at the neurophysiological level "mirroring" the emotional states of interlocutors. Mirror neurons are activated when observing emotions in others. For journalists, this means that their brain literally experiences trauma together with the interlocutor.

Particularly traumatic are interviews with children who have suffered from war. Children often cannot verbalize their experiences. Journalists describe particularly difficult emotional reactions: feelings of helplessness, anger, and deep sadness.

Work with victims of sexual violence creates specific challenges. Journalists must create a safe space for narration, show maximum delicacy, but maintain professional distance. They become witnesses to deep human degradation, which can undermine basic trust in humanity.

A specific aspect is work with relatives of the deceased. Journalists are often present at moments of body identification and at funerals. They become witnesses to the most intimate moments of human pain. Repeated exposure to others' grief can lead to "compassion fatigue."

The phenomenon of "collecting traumas" is observed in journalists who specialize in covering war crimes. They collect testimonies and create databases of crimes. Each new story is added to previous ones, creating a cumulative effect.

The professional necessity to establish emotional contact with traumatized people creates a paradoxical situation. The better the journalist is as an interviewer, the more they risk their own mental health. The ability to "open" people is based on empathy, but it is empathy that makes the journalist vulnerable to secondary traumatization.

Visual traumatization of Ukrainian journalists has reached unprecedented scales due to the necessity to document visual evidence of war crimes. Photographs and videos from mass burial sites, documentation of consequences of missile strikes, images of tortured bodies—all this creates powerful traumatic stress.

Neuropsychological mechanisms of visual traumatization are connected with peculiarities of visual information processing by the brain. Visual images are processed faster than verbal information and have direct access to emotional centers of the brain. The amygdala reacts to threatening visual stimuli in fractions of a second, launching a cascade of physiological reactions.

The specificity of journalistic work requires not simply seeing traumatic images but studying them in detail. Verification of visual content involves careful analysis of details. Journalists may spend hours working with photographs of bodies, studying wounds to determine the type of weapon. This detailed work deepens the traumatic impact, as images are literally "burned" into memory.

The phenomenon of "intrusive visual flashbacks" is particularly characteristic of journalists working with graphic content. Traumatic images spontaneously arise in consciousness at the most unexpected moments. These flashbacks can be so vivid that the person seems to be again in the traumatic situation. Journalists describe how they cannot get rid of images of dead children or mutilated bodies.

Particularly traumatic is video content that combines visual images with sound. Journalists are forced to watch videos of executions, torture, and shelling. Cries of pain and horror, children's crying—these sounds can be even more traumatic than visual images. Journalists report that even months later, they hear these sounds in their imagination.

Professional deformation of perception develops as a consequence of constant work with traumatic visual content. Journalists may begin to perceive horrific images as "normal," losing the capacity for emotional response. This is a defense mechanism, but it has serious consequences—emotional detachment not only in professional but also in personal life.

An important aspect of visual traumatization is the necessity to create visual content for the audience. Journalists must select images for publication, edit them, and create video sequences. This creates additional moral burden—the necessity to balance between showing the truth and the risk of traumatizing the audience.

The phenomenon of "forced normalization of horror" manifests in the necessity to speak professionally and restrainedly about things that are absolutely unacceptable. The journalist must calmly talk about mass killings, using neutral vocabulary. This creates dissonance between internal outrage and external restraint.

Information overload of Ukrainian journalists has reached critical scales. They work with unprecedented volumes of information: official reports, social networks, videos from event sites, eyewitness testimonies, international news. The necessity to constantly monitor, analyze, and verify this information creates colossal cognitive load.

The phenomenon of "information intoxication" manifests in inability to effectively process information due to its excessive quantity. The brain, overloaded with stimuli, begins to work in simplification mode, which can lead to assessment errors and concentration difficulties. Journalists describe a state of "information fog."

The necessity for rapid verification in conditions of active disinformation creates additional load. Each message requires verification through several sources and analysis for manipulation. Enemy propaganda uses sophisticated disinformation techniques: deepfakes, manipulated photos and videos. Recognizing these manipulations requires constant vigilance.

Cognitive dissonance arises from the necessity to simultaneously work with contradictory information. Different sources may present radically different versions of events, and the journalist must try to establish the truth in conditions of information chaos.

Multitasking has become the norm for wartime journalists. They simultaneously write material, monitor news feeds, respond to messages, conduct interviews, and edit video. Research shows that multitasking reduces work efficiency by 40% and increases stress levels.

The syndrome of "constant urgency" is characterized by the necessity to work in deadline mode every day. News about war does not wait. Journalists work in "breaking news" mode for months, leading to chronic stress and exhaustion. The impossibility of planning work destroys normal biorhythms.

Ukrainian journalists experience deep internal conflict between professional identity, which demands objectivity, and civic identity as a Ukrainian in a country fighting for its survival.

At the cognitive level, the conflict manifests in the necessity to simultaneously hold two contradictory positions. As a journalist, a person must critically analyze all information. As a citizen of Ukraine, they are naturally inclined to trust their government and army. This cognitive duality requires constant mental effort.

At the emotional level, the conflict is expressed in the necessity to restrain natural emotional reactions. The journalist may feel anger toward the aggressor, but professional ethics demands restraint. This creates a situation of "emotional dissociation."

At the behavioral level, the conflict manifests in the complexity of decision-making. Should information about problems in the army be published? Should the government be criticized for mistakes? Each such decision requires complex balancing between professional and civic considerations.

The duration of the war creates a situation of cumulative stress accumulation without possibility of full recovery. The war, now in its third year, demands functioning in constant psychological marathon mode.

Phases of stress reaction in journalists overlap one another. Not having recovered from one stressful episode, they face a new one. This cycle repeats day after day.

Chronic fatigue syndrome in journalists has a specific character. This is not simply physical fatigue but deep psychophysiological exhaustion. Symptoms include constant fatigue that does not pass after rest; concentration and memory difficulties; muscle pain; sleep disturbances; and decreased immunity.

The phenomenon of "delayed grief" is characteristic of journalists who do not have time to fully experience losses. They may lose colleagues, friends, and relatives, but the necessity to continue working does not allow going through the normal grieving process. Grief is "frozen," accumulates, and may "explode" at the most unexpected moment.

Resources of psychological resilience of Ukrainian journalists. National solidarity has become a powerful resource of psychological resilience for Ukrainian journalists. Awareness of being part of a people united in the face of threat provides deep meaning to professional activity and helps overcome traumatic experience.

The phenomenon of "collective efficacy"—belief in the Ukrainian nation's ability to overcome the aggressor—supports individual motivation of journalists. They see examples of heroism and mutual assistance. Every story about volunteers, doctors, and teachers—all this feeds belief in victory and provides strength to continue work.

Patriotic uplift transforms traumatic experience into heroic narrative. Journalists feel themselves not as victims of circumstances but as active participants in historical struggle for freedom. This reinterpretation of role helps find meaning in suffering. They realize that their work is a contribution to victory, a form of resistance to aggression.

Social recognition of the importance of journalistic work supports professional self-esteem. Ukrainian society highly values the work of journalists who risk their lives. Words of gratitude from readers, understanding of mission importance, respect for the profession—all this creates powerful social support.

Awareness of professional mission transforms for Ukrainian journalists into concrete life meaning that helps overcome traumatic experience. The concept of "bearing witness" acquires special significance in the context of documenting war crimes.

Journalists see themselves as the "voice of the voiceless"—those who died and cannot tell their story; those who are in occupied territories. This role provides deep meaning to professional activity, transforming it into a sacred mission of memory preservation.

Historical responsibility becomes a powerful motivational factor. Journalists understand that they are creating the first draft of history, documenting events that will be studied by future generations. Their materials will become evidence in international courts. This awareness helps find strength to continue work even in the most difficult moments.

Professional mastery as a source of self-efficacy allows journalists to feel control over at least one aspect of life. The ability to create quality material despite shelling; conduct an interview that will touch millions of hearts—all this supports professional self-esteem. Journalists control how they cover the war.

Creative self-realization remains possible even in extreme conditions. War has paradoxically expanded the creative horizons of many journalists, forcing them to master new formats and experiment with material presentation. Multimedia projects, podcasts, documentary films—journalists use the entire arsenal of modern media. Creativity becomes not only a professional tool but also a method of psychological sublimation of traumatic experience.

International recognition of Ukrainian journalism strengthens the sense of work significance. Numerous international awards, invitations to international conferences, publications in leading world media—all this confirms high professional level and helps overcome the feeling of isolation.

Ukrainian journalists have created a unique mutual support system that has become a critically important resource for preserving mental health.

Informal support networks arose spontaneously in the first days of war. Chats in messengers where journalists share not only professional information but also emotional experiences; joint dinners after difficult days—all this creates a sense of community. The ability to tell a colleague "I'm scared" without fear of judgment is extremely important for emotional regulation.

Professional solidarity manifests in readiness to practically help each other. Journalists share contacts, information, equipment; substitute for colleagues who need rest; help with evacuation. This practical help creates a sense of security.

Peer support programs organized by professional associations provide structured support. Experienced journalists who have undergone special training act as "peer consultants" for colleagues. They can provide emotional support and share stress coping strategies. The advantage of peer support is that support is provided by a person who understands the specifics of work from their own experience.

Collective rituals of mourning and honoring the memory of deceased colleagues help experience losses. Joint memorials, moments of silence—all this allows collectively living through grief, which facilitates the individual grieving process.

Exchange of trauma overcoming experience helps develop effective coping strategies. Journalists share what helps them cope. This collective experience becomes a valuable resource for the entire community.

Deeply rooted mechanisms of trauma overcoming in Ukrainian culture have been activated in war conditions, providing journalists with additional resilience resources. Historical memory of survival creates a cultural narrative of resilience.

Historical parallels with previous trials—Holodomor, repressions, World War II—allow contextualizing contemporary experience. Journalists can rely on examples of ancestors' resilience, realizing themselves as part of a long history of survival.

Ukrainian humor as a psychological defense mechanism helps reduce emotional tension. The ability to joke even in the most tragic situations is a method of psychological survival. Memes about "cotton," jokes about "gesture of goodwill"—all this helps distance from traumatic reality.

Traditions of mutual assistance and community self-organization create a powerful support system. The volunteer movement that has encompassed the entire country; neighborhood mutual assistance; community initiatives—all this creates the feeling that you are not alone.

Ukrainian journalists have developed a wide spectrum of adaptive stress coping strategies that help preserve mental health in conditions of chronic traumatic impact.

Structuring the work process has become a key stress management strategy. Journalists establish clear boundaries of working time; create rituals of beginning and ending the workday; plan mandatory breaks. Structure provides a sense of control and predictability in the chaotic environment of war.

The technique of "dosed exposure" to traumatic content helps prevent overload. Journalists have learned to limit time working with difficult material—no more than two hours in a row with video, mandatory break after difficult interviews, alternation of traumatic topics with more neutral ones.

Physical activity is used as a method of discharge of accumulated stress energy. Running, yoga, dancing, boxing—any form of movement helps "release" frozen traumatic energy in the body. Many journalists discovered sports specifically during the war, finding in it an effective method of emotional state regulation.

Mindfulness techniques help remain in the present moment without getting stuck in traumatic memories. Meditation, breathing practices—these techniques can be practiced even in field conditions, and they help reduce stress levels.

Creative expression becomes a method of processing traumatic experience. Journalists write personal diaries, create photo projects, make documentary films as a way of comprehending their own experience. Creativity allows transforming the chaos of trauma into structured narrative.

Despite all the pain, many Ukrainian journalists experience deep positive transformations that can be characterized as post-traumatic growth.

Deepening of empathy and capacity for compassion makes journalists more sensitive storytellers of human stories. Own experience of suffering opens deeper understanding of others' pain. Journalists learn to balance between professional distance and human closeness, creating materials that touch hearts without exploiting suffering.

Rethinking of life priorities leads to more authentic life. Confrontation with death and suffering forces reevaluation of what is truly important. Many journalists refuse the pursuit of career and money in favor of more meaningful work; pay more attention to relationships with loved ones; find balance between work and personal life.

Strengthening of personal resilience manifests in deep internal confidence in one's ability to overcome any challenges. Journalists who have gone through the extreme experience of war acquire special psychological strength. They know they can cope with anything.

Conclusions. Comprehensive analysis of the Ukrainian context of preserving journalists' mental health in conditions of full-scale war revealed an unprecedented combination of challenges and resources.

It has been established that the specificity of the Ukrainian context is determined by several key factors. First, the scale of the conflict makes traditional mechanisms of psychological recovery through rotation and distancing impossible. Second, the duration of the war creates a situation of chronic traumatization without prospects for quick completion. Third, the hybrid nature of the conflict creates multiple stressors of different nature that synergistically affect the psychological state of journalists.

A specific configuration of challenges to the mental health of Ukrainian journalists has been identified, which includes: primary traumatization through direct life threat; secondary traumatization through empathic experiencing of others' traumas; visual traumatization from working with graphic content; moral injury; information overload and cognitive exhaustion; conflict between professional identity and civic identity.

At the same time, the research revealed powerful psychological resilience resources. These resources function at different levels: individual, professional, social, cultural, and existential.

A particularly important conclusion is that the traumatic experience of war can become not only a source of psychological problems but also a catalyst for personal and professional growth. Many journalists demonstrate signs of post-traumatic growth: deepening of empathy, expansion of professional competencies, rethinking of life priorities, spiritual development, strengthening of personal resilience.

Preserving journalists' mental health in war conditions goes beyond an individual problem and acquires strategic significance for ensuring the state's information security and the functioning of democratic institutions. Psychologically healthy, resilient journalists are capable of effectively performing their critical role in society.

Prospects for further research are connected with the necessity of empirical verification of identified patterns, longitudinal monitoring of the psychological state of the journalistic community, development and assessment of effectiveness of specialized interventions, and study of long-term consequences of war traumatization.

The Ukrainian experience of preserving journalists' mental health in conditions of full-scale war has important significance not only for Ukraine but for the entire international journalistic community. Lessons learned from this tragic experience can help better prepare journalists for work in future conflicts, develop more effective psychological support systems, and preserve the mental health of those who risk themselves for the sake of society's right to know the truth.

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