

## Preface

The third issue of *Annales Psychologica* is fully devoted to the subject of health and illness, as well as to disability. The presented collection of both theoretical and empirical papers is the result of a long international and intercollegiate cooperation between research workers of the Faculty of Psychology of the Cracow Pedagogical University and invited guests from Polish and foreign scientific and clinical centers.

The issue has been divided into three corresponding and complementary thematic sections.

Section I is devoted to the psychological aspects of the development of the disabled and somatically ill. It contains eight articles presenting theoretical analyses and empirical studies regarding two distinctive areas. The first area concerns the family and social context of the child's development process. The emotional situation of infants deprived of parental care and the possibility of their stimulation and reduction of emotional disorders through protective and didactic actions is analyzed in depth. The development of disabled children in the context of establishing interpersonal family relations, as well as the problems of marginalization of families with disabled children and of formation of social attitudes towards the disabled are other topics discussed in this section.

**Liuda Radzevičienė** presents an experiment conducted in infant homes of Lithuania, aimed at changing the emotional status of infants and developing a new one in educational processes. The longitudinal observation of infants' emotional reactions was done while educational conditions were controlled. The results of this very interesting and important research show that significant changes in emotional development appear after a pedagogical experiment, however, even at such early age the educational content must differ according to the psychical development of children.

**Grzegorz Iniewicz** analyzes the phenomenon of attachment and building relations between parents and children in 'hard parenthood' families experiencing the child's intellectual disability. Basing on the results of various researches, the author concludes that mental impairment may be a risk factor for bonding disorders, yet it is not their direct cause, and that difficult behavior of retarded children may be a sign of attachment issues rather than disturbance.

**Adam Mikrut** analyzes the adverse influence of factors related to the process of upbringing a mentally impaired child on its functioning. The author presents the negative influence of such factors as opposed to parental care, love and acceptance enabling the child's optimum development. Among the factors that obstruct building an attitude of acceptance toward one's own child are temperamental and social variables and social processes of stigmatization and exclusion. Moreover, the author discusses the conditioning of emotional distance towards one's disabled child and describes methods used by parents to increase their domination. He also tries to explain widely the connection between parental aggression and psycho-social functioning of mildly intellectually disabled children, which brings very important practical conclusions.

The next article, by **Janusz Mastalski**, is also related to the social field of interest. The author discusses marginalization of the disabled and their families from the historical perspective, focusing on its three types: stereotypes, toxic social attitudes and auto-marginalization. He emphasizes that marginalization is not a condition, but a process in which two groups participate – the defavorized group and its social surroundings. The strategy of self-hindrane employed by the families of disabled children hampers their being accepted by the society. The author stipulates for psycho-educational actions being taken in order to improve the quality of life of families with disabled children.

The article by **Piotr Majewicz** presents a survey on young people's hierarchy of values, which may help predict their attitudes towards the disabled, basing on the assumption that cognitive processes and personality are the main causes of attitudes. The presented research results indicate that secondary school students in general declare rather positive attitudes towards persons with disabilities. The vital values are the only ones affecting the differentiation of the youth's attitudes towards the disabled. High position of vital values in the hierarchy favors the development of less positive attitudes.

The second thematic area of the first section focuses on psychological problems of the somatically ill. The authors of the presented papers analyze psychological aspects of functioning of persons with both congenital and acquired morbid conditions that require surgical or pharmacological interventions.

The phenomenon of attachment is also in the field of interest of **Joanna Kossewska**, however, in specific health circumstances. She presents the process of attachment development and other aspects of psycho-social functioning of a child with Treacher Collins Syndrome, which is a rare craniofacial malformation. The

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author analyzes specific conditions related to the upbringing of a child with TCS that influence parental stress.

The article by **Anna Starowicz, Katarzyna Prochwicz and Bogusława Płonka** analyzes other specific health circumstances, namely diabetes mellitus. The authors present their research, carried out in a group of adult patients with type 1 diabetes. A survey was conducted to find out how health locus of control, which is characteristic of patients with diabetes, influences the degree of adherence to medical recommendations as well as the result of glucose metabolic control. The results, which have very important practical implications, have shown that the degree to which a patient follows a diabetic specialist's recommendations in order to keep proper blood glucose level depends, to a large extent, on his/her way of thinking about the disease. It was also confirmed that subjective belief in the possibility of controlling it plays a crucial role in the patient's active pro-health activity.

The last article included in the first section, written by **Barbara Towpasz**, presents the psycho-social functioning of women that underwent breast amputation. The author analyzes the influence of bodily changes, experienced above all as the loss of femininity, on personal identity. The potential impact of the post-mastectomy stress on the psyche may vary from the breakdown of adaptive mechanisms to the growth of one's abilities or the meaning of life, as well as reintegration and construction of new dimensions of femininity. These should be followed by the process of creative rehabilitation.

Section II includes four papers analyzing various forms of therapy used in psychosomatic illnesses, presented in the context of adaptation. The meaning of health promotion in the educational system as a form of psychological help, drama therapy, and an interesting Japan-derived form of therapy have been widely discussed. The therapeutic thread continues in the area of psychotherapy for asthmatic patients.

Section II is opened by the article by **Helena Wrona-Polańska**, which makes an excellent introduction to problems of health approached from the holistic and functional perspective. The author presents the evolution of views on health from the ancient times, through the second healthcare revolution, to the model established by the third healthcare revolution. This historical description serves as a basis for further reflections devoted to health promotion treated as a form of psychological help, which may be realized in various ways, i.e. in the family, within the educational system or in the local community. Health promotion within the educational system requires constant cooperation between parents and teachers, and the future-focused education of teachers through raising their professional competence to the level beyond the traditional model of teacher's work.

**Milan Valenta** presents an interesting way of exploiting drama techniques in therapy and education. The author analyzes the history of drama from the Paleolithic age till the present, and gives a short introduction to the most common paratheatrical systems in the Czech Republic and in the world, such as *participation theatre*, *psychodrama*, *sociodrama*, *psychogymnastics* and *theatre therapy*. The historical

introduction and the description of main techniques used in therapy and education enables the author to present his work experience with the disabled and chronic patients. Bohnice Theatre Company, led by Martin Učík, an actor and director who works with chronic patients of the psychiatric clinic, can boast of the best achievements. For the indisposed patients suffering from psychotic disorders, the Theatre Company functions as an opposite to the non-structured, and thus anxiety-inducing reality in which the patients live. The theatre leads them through the experience towards the realization of a fixed structure; moreover, it is important for their re-socialization, since it may adjust self-confidence and communication abilities.

**Wojciech Czajkowski** presents the main guidelines of a psychotherapy designed by Shomo Morita, used in Japan. With reference to the diversity of Eastern and Western cultural experience, the author emphasizes the specific character of this method. Morita's therapy is designed for patients showing the symptoms known as *shinkeishitsu*, which means neurotic disorders embedded in fear because of excessive sensitivity, perfectionism, dogmatism, excessive self-concentration, circumstantiality and mood-influenced style of life. The author presents philosophical and cultural roots of this therapy, analyzes psycho-pathological mechanisms of the *shinkeishitsu* syndrome, the consequential therapeutic guidelines and the structure of therapeutic procedure itself.

The last article in section II, written by **Agnieszka Czuszkiewicz** and **Dorota Walinowska-Parda**, presents – basing on professional literature – the theoretical background and examples of the psychotherapy techniques used with patients suffering from bronchial asthma. The authors discuss three distinct theoretical approaches: psychoanalytic, system and cognitive-behavioral. They also present therapy methods stemming from these approaches. Clinical experience gained during their work with asthmatic patients leads the authors to the conclusion that from the vast theoretical output it is necessary to choose such treatment methods that will allow, in the best possible way, to satisfy the patient's individual needs.

Section III contains papers devoted to educational practice concerning the disabled, presented from the perspective of human rights and specific developmental needs related to the type and level of disability. Presentation of the four articles by foreign authors reveals the peculiarity of experiences resulting from the cultural context and their similarity in the uniting Europe.

The article by **Jan Michalik** and **Darina Horáková** discusses the metasystematic level of realization of human rights of the disabled persons in the Czech Republic. The authors analyze state possibilities and limitations in the field of respecting the rights of the disabled, referring to appropriate legal acts and analyzing financial means assigned for the elimination of architectonic barriers. They also present the process of change in social attitudes towards the disabled, initiated with the occurrence of legal possibility of creating non-governmental organizations. The authors emphasize that the actions taken are insufficient to eliminate the discrimination of the disabled

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persons, since for the proper integration and normalization of their lives it is necessary that they themselves should be ready to join in a partner relation.

According to the modern model of disability, stemming from human rights, it is understood as a common experience of a human being incorporated in a human life. Disability coexists with ageing, which implies the necessity of preparing staff for work with this group of patients. Therefore, **Oldřich Müller** presents a new specialization, opened recently in the Olomouc University, that prepares specialists for satisfying various specific needs of elderly people. Referring to legal principles, the author presents the structure of such studies, which definitely will interest our Readers, due to the progressing ageing of European societies and the necessity to prepare appropriately qualified staff in other countries.

The analysis and effects of an educational process are also the subject of **Ingrida Baranauskienė's** article. The author analyzes vocational training of Lithuanian students with mild disability and, based on the empirical studies, states that students of special schools in general share positive attitudes towards their professional education and preparation for independent life. She advocates for the emancipatory and participatory approach towards the development of the vocational education and adaptation of the disabled individuals in the Lithuanian society.

The last article by **Milon Potmesil** deals with the possibility of the integrative education of Czech students with hearing impairment in ordinary preschool settings. The children's level of communication skills seems to be the most problematic domain. The consideration of the most effective communication is based on the author's research, which was focused on Total Communication usage at special schools for the hearing impaired.

Offering this publication to our Readers, we hope that they will find interesting the presented studies describing the psychology of health and illness, disability, and various forms of psychological help, from health promotion to specific psychotherapy techniques. If this reading matter boosts their personal reflections, turns out to be helpful in solving various theoretical and practical problems, or becomes useful for educators, psychologists, sociologists and the students of these subjects, the Authors of the above shall feel gratified.

Editors

Helena Wrona-Polańska, Joanna Kossewska