

THE EXISTENCE OF LIFE AND DEATH FOR HIGHER EDUCATION APPLICANTS: RESULTS OF QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Aim. The purpose of the study is to determine the peculiarities of the existence of life and death of persons of youthful age during the crisis period of society, namely during the military actions in Ukraine.

Methods. The study was conducted by qualitative analysis of associative links to the word “life” and the word “death”. The subjects had to find at least five association

words for the word “life” and the word “death” and one image, picture or photo for the word “life” and the word “death”.

Results. The associative chain to the word “life” in the sample looks as follows: “joy” - “love” - “happiness” - “family” - “being” - “freedom” - “sun” - “health” - “peace”. In the images associated with the word “life”, the symbols of the sun, swing, balloons, butterfly, sea, man, nature, family, couple in love, friends, man, clock. The associative chain to the word “death” includes the following words: “end (finish)” - “pain” - “sadness” - “grief” - “war” - “fear” - “tears” - “darkness” - “tranquility” - “emptiness”).

Conclusions. On the basis of qualitative analysis, we believe that the existence of life of higher education applicants is based on positive emotional experiences and the presence of deep feelings, which is an indicator of satisfaction of life. The social sphere (family, friends) and the motivational sphere (success and achievement) are an important component of the existence of young people’s lives. The existence of the death of young people is focused on negative emotional experiences (sadness, fear, despair, disappointment), which are related to the losses and the reality of the war in which they are.

Keywords: existence, existence of life, existence of death, applicants for higher education, emotional experiences, existential experiences

INTRODUCTION

In philosophical and psychological concepts, the existence of life and death is considered as a fundamental problem that determines the meaning and value of human existence. Of course, the awareness and understanding of the facts of life and death gives rise to existential experiences of the individual.

Thus, within the framework of philosophical concepts, representatives of existential analysis believe that human is the only being who is aware of their mortality. This realisation dictates that his existence is limited and has an ultimate goal.

Jean-Paul Sartre is convinced that human life is existence, that is, it is freedom and responsibility, because a human creates his own being by choosing his goals and values. Death is inevitable, but it is not the final end. Death is only a transition to another state of being. Therefore, in his opinion, the meaning of life is to live it (Sartre, 1983).

Søren Kierkegaard holds a similar opinion, believing that a person’s life as his existence is filled with freedom and responsibility. A human creates his own being by choosing his goals and values. He notes that death is the tribute we pay for the opportunity to live. If we do not pay it, we cannot live. It is the awareness of death that makes the human being valuable and important (Kierkegaard, 2013).

In his scientific works, he defined two types of human existence: aesthetic and ethical. Aesthetic existence is characterised by the desire for pleasure and satisfaction. A hu-

man who lives an aesthetic existence does not think about the meaning of life and death. He lives in the present without thinking about the future.

Ethical existence is characterised by the desire for goodness and justice. A human who lives an ethical existence is aware of his responsibility before God and people. He looks for the meaning of life in moral values. In his opinion, aesthetic existence is inferior because it does not allow the human to find the meaning of life. Ethical existence is more fulfilling, but it also has its limitations. An ethical human can feel the fear of death because he is aware of his responsibility before God and people. Therefore, he claims that the only way to find the true meaning of life is through a religious existence. A religious person is aware of his sinfulness and imperfection. He seeks salvation in God (Kierkegaard, 2013).

Martin Heidegger emphasises that human life is existence, that is, openness to possibilities. Every person is constantly faced with a choice that determines his being. Death is the end of human life, but it is an opportunity for a new being (Heidegger, 1962). Oksana Sarabun notes that existence does not so much allow one to understand and learn about the world, but interprets it in the light of the inner individuality of one's own truth (Sarabun, 2012). Yuliya Kovalchuk emphasises the significant role of love as a person's path to his own individuality (Kovalchuk, 2017).

In psychological concepts, the existence of life and death is considered as a fundamental problem that has an impact on the mental health of an individual. Most psychologists believe that awareness of death is a necessary condition for a full life. A person who is aware of his mortality, appreciates life and tries to live it to the fullest.

Viktor Frankl, a representative of the existential direction in psychology, believed that death is inevitable, but it is not the end of human being. He claims that a person has freedom of choice, even in the most difficult conditions. This freedom is the basis of the meaning of life. He singled out three ways by which a human can find and fill the meaning of his own existence – creativity, experience and attitude (Frankl, 2016). The meaning of life is individual for each person, but it can be found only in oneself, one's own values and goals. Summarising the psychological aspects of understanding the existence of life, one can emphasise such aspects as freedom and responsibility, the awareness of death as a reason to understand and realise the meaning of life, its value, to understand the value of one's own "I" and other people.

In the process of realisation of self-knowledge and formation of the value context of the life path, the awareness of one's own existence occurs in the youth. When reflecting on one's own existence, there is an integration of knowledge and ideas about oneself that are already in the subject's experience. Experiencing the existence of life by young people against the background of the impact of crisis events is also associated with the peculiarities of the formation of a personality in youth, namely the development of self-determination, the formation of a life perspective, the resolution of value-meaning contradictions, the discovery of one's own "I", awareness of one's own individuality, construction of life plans (Katolyk, 2022).

According to Tetyana Svatenkova, these processes are accompanied by deep experiences of the existence of life and death and are a manifestation of the transition to adulthood. It is at this age that young people begin to think about such existential problems as death, the meaning of life, freedom of choice, responsibility. Svatenkova notes that an important existential experience in youth is the experience of a dissociated feeling of loneliness. This feeling is connected with young people's awareness of their uniqueness and irreplaceability. It can be accompanied by a feeling of detachment from other people, the world and oneself (Svatenkova, 2013). In this age period, the awareness of mortality and limited time of life is also heightened and can be accompanied by experiences of fear, anxiety and meaninglessness.

METHODS

In order to study the existence of life and death in youth and the existential experiences they cause, we asked the subjects to complete the following tasks:

- Write at least five association words to the word "life";
- Write at least five association words to the word "death";
- Find a picture, image or photo associated with the word "life";
- Find a picture, image or photo associated with the word "death".

These tasks are based on Carl Gustav Jung's associative test, which allows exploration of the unconscious mental life with the help of associations. Associations, symbols and images contain a significant amount of important information about the mental life of an individual and the unconscious contents of the psyche (Jung, 2010).

Jung believes that the ability of the psyche to create images gives the individual the opportunity to experience reality, since the individual lives in the world of images. According to his theory, the image category is directly related to the concept of archetype and reflects the mental reality of the individual (Jung, 2018).

An image is a mental representation of something that is not physically present at the moment. Images can be visual, auditory, gustatory, olfactory or tactile. They may be related to specific memories, experiences or emotions (Jung, 2004). So, he notes that Association is a connection between two or more images. Associations can be formed for a variety of reasons, such as shared experience, similarity, or contrast. Associations can be positive, negative or neutral (Jung, 2010). He emphasises the close connection of archetypes, the collective unconscious and symbols. Symbols act as a means of expressing unconscious thoughts and feelings and carry important information about the mental life of an individual. Snizhana Dimitrova emphasises that a symbol contains an image, but does not reduce to it because it implies the presence of a meaning merged with the image, but not identical to it (Dimitrova, 2023). William Stewart points out that a symbol is always an unconscious personification of something not directly related to it, a way of penetrating the unconscious and an expression of an individual's internal conflict (Stewart, 2007).

The task of finding pictures, photos and images symbolising “life” and “death” make it possible to combine the external and internal worlds of the individual in images and certain symbols and trace the unconscious aspects of the subject’s psyche. Thanks to the analysis of colours, symbols, features of images, the subjects can project impulses blocked by consciousness, and we can interpret them accordingly through the psychological understanding of their content.

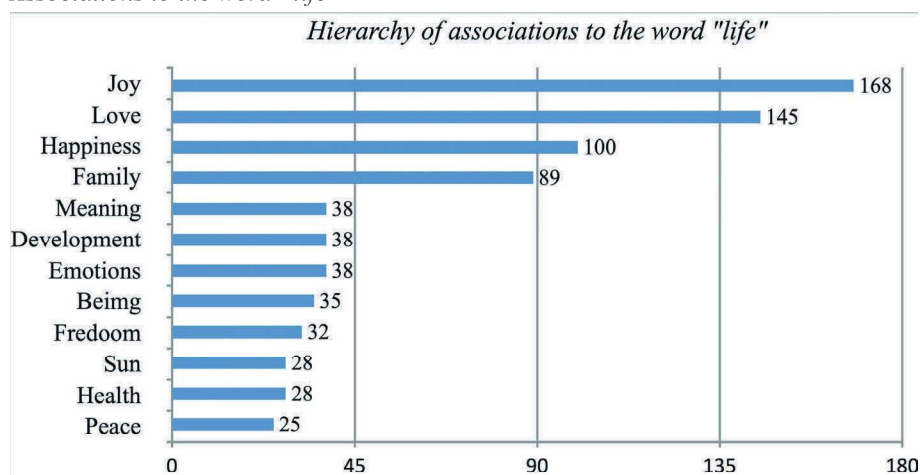
RESULTS

An empirical study was conducted to investigate the peculiarities of the existence of life and existential experiences, in which applicants for higher education from institutions with specific study conditions (Lviv State University of Internal Affairs, Odesa State University of Internal Affairs, National Academy of Internal Affairs) took part. All subjects are studying in the I-V courses of the above-mentioned institutions, majoring in “Law” and “Psychology”, the total number of subjects is 376.

Qualitative analysis of the respondents’ answers to the task of finding associations to the word “life” made it possible to single out the hierarchy of the most frequent choices of association words. The figure shows the most frequent associations of higher education applicants to the word “life” (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Associations to the word “life”



Source. Own research.

They are grouped by frequency, from most common to least common. It should be noted that the most common associations to the word “life” are the reflection of the personality being filled with positive emotions and experience. Thanks to the associative

filling of the word “life” with such an emotional context, it is possible to conclude the need or presence of the aforementioned emotional experiences in life and the experience of life satisfaction. The internal state of the subjects, in whom there is a dominant triad of emotions and feelings, indicates love for life, an awareness of its value and a desire to enjoy it. The ability to give and receive love, the presence of loved ones makes it possible to feel the fullness of life and experience emotions of a positive modality.

The next most frequent associations are “family”, “meaning” and “development”. These associations are related to a deeper understanding of life, and not just emotional and sensory perception. They reflect the existence of life through the prism of the presence of close people, one’s personal development and awareness of the deep meanings of one’s existence.

The rank positions of the “family” association indicate that the parental family for a young person and potentially creating one’s own family are an important terminal values of the individual in youth. It is thanks to the family that a person feels support, love and understanding, satisfies his needs for security and social support.

It is worth noting that the rank positions of the associations “meaning”, “development” and “freedom” reflect the existential fullness of life, awareness of the value of one’s own existence, the search for internal deep meanings and the construction of a value framework as well as the determination of a personal vector for changes and transformations.

The presence of “emotion” associations indicates an individual’s internal need for a rich, bright and interesting life. It is emotions that often give meaning to life, diversify it, make it multifaceted and exciting. The association with the word “being” indicates unity with all living things, that is, the presence of vital energy and awareness of the reality of existence.

Paying attention to the “sun” association, we emphasise that its symbolic meaning is related to the source of energy, light and warmth. The sun is an association connected with warmth, light and life. The sun is an important symbol of life because it is the source of energy and warmth. Therefore, the presence of a frequent choice of this particular association indicates an awareness of the value of life and its energy, which fills the individual’s existence with meaning.

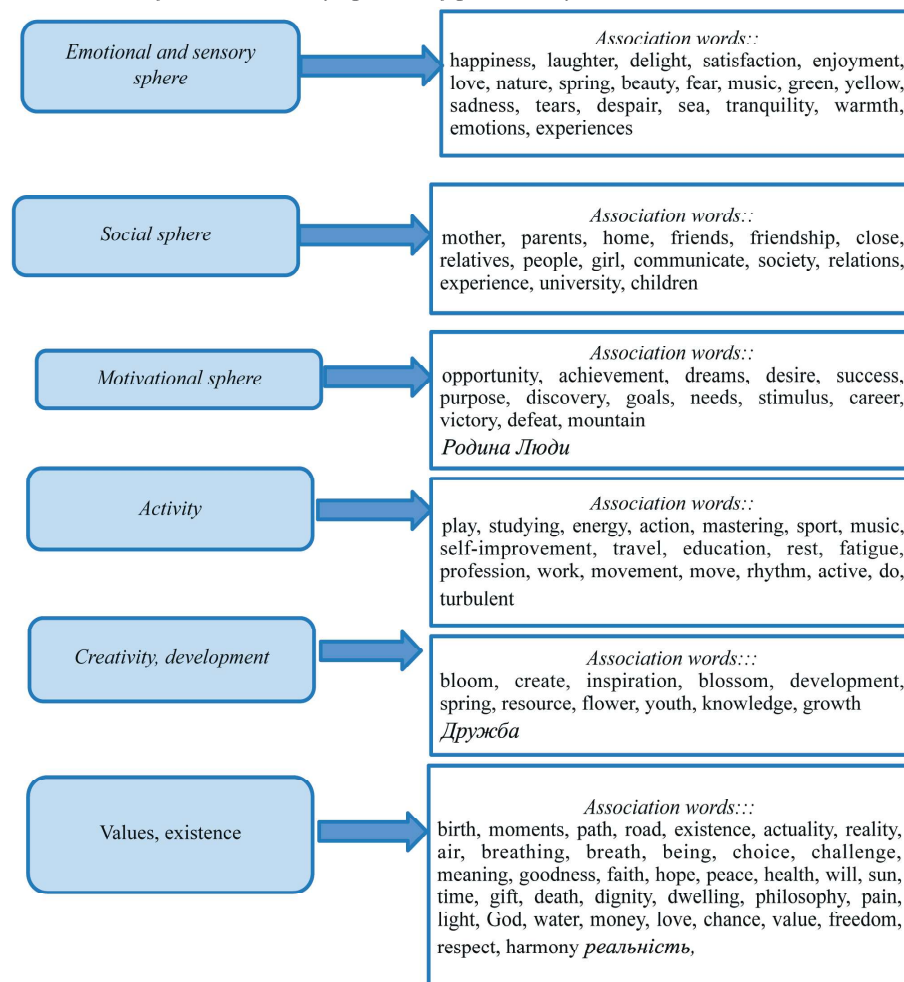
Given the association of life with health, it can be assumed that subjects identified such an important terminal value as health, which is an important component of a full life and the ability to fully enjoy it. It is logical for our sample to focus on associations with the word “peace”, since the citizens of Ukraine are in a military conflict with Russia, which is a direct threat to their lives and health and safe existence. Therefore, such an association indicates the need for the absence of war, violence and conflicts, which will ensure a normal, calm and harmonious life for a young person, and not generate a constant state of anxiety, hopelessness, trouble and the search for security, which is not a full life, but only survival in difficult crisis conditions.

However, still analysing the association words, we note that in many answers there are adjective words that indicate bright and positive emotional experiences and their meaningfulness, such as “real”, “active”, “meaningful”, “purposeful”, “noble”, “creative”, “hon-

est”, “full”, “joyful”, “wonderful”, “diverse”, “unique”, “unforgettable”, “interesting”, “beautiful”, “promising”. In general, we divided all association words into conditional groups that reflect certain areas of personality (Figure 2).

Figure 2

Distribution of associations by spheres of personality



Source. Own research.

Life includes a spectrum of various emotional experiences, so a group of associations related to the emotional and sensory sphere is available in each of the subjects. As a rule, these are positive emotions and feelings associated with pleasure and enjoyment, happiness, joy and love. The subjects attach great importance to the experience of aesthetic and hedonistic emotions. The first are connected with the experiences of the beauty of na-

ture, harmony, colours of life, rely on the sensory-perceptive experience of the individual and are reflected in the desire for harmony and beauty, and the second – with bodily comfort and enjoyment of pleasant sensations (association words “food”, “sex”, “pleasure” etc.). In general, the associations that have been described above demonstrate young people’s perception of life as something positive, rich and desirable, as it is filled with pleasure and positivity, which is reflected through the associations “nature”, “spring”, “music”. Social relationships are an important element of life’s existence. It is important for young people to feel support and love. Therefore, in most representatives of the sample, we find words of association that emphasise relatives, friends and family, indicating that “living with others” gives it greater meaning and content (Figure 2).

Association words related to the motivational sphere are related to the peculiarities of this sphere in the student age, namely the growth of awareness of one’s own needs and ideas, the formation of more stable motives for activity, the shift of emphasis to professional motives, the motives of self-development and self-affirmation, as well as complications of motivational structure, emergence of new motives, for example, motives of creativity, self-realisation, service to society (Figure 2).

It is important that the majority of young people perceive life as an opportunity for development and personal growth, realisation of their own “I”. Therefore, among the associations we find those that indicate the desire for change, improvement, realisation and transformation. They reflect the perception of life as a creative bridgehead and a way of knowing the world, which is reflected in finding ways to self-actualise.

At the student age, there is a transition from study to professional activity. Therefore, there is independent planning of activities, decision-making and the formation of a professional “I” in order to take a decision and responsibility. They also begin to communicate more actively with representatives of the professional environment which contributes to their professional development (association words “profession”, “education”, “study”, “university”). Hobbies and interests occupy an important place, because they help to stimulate the vital energy and motivation of the individual at this age and promote the realisation of interests and talents of young people (“sports”, “music”, “leisure”).

In the group of values and existence, there is quite a large number of association words that indicate important aspects of existence: birth as the moment of the beginning of existence, which is associated with the beginning, new opportunities; the moment as a unit of life that symbolises its value; the path and the road as a metaphor for life, which means a journey to new knowledge, experience and development (Figure 2). The life road is also a temporal characteristic, where each stage is characterised by tests, tasks and its own characteristics.

Associations such as “air”, “breath”, “breathing” are an undeniable symbol of life, which indicates freedom, unity with nature and the importance of life as an act of human existence. Also, in this group, a lot of instrumental and terminal values are singled out, which are components of the meaningful content of a young person’s life, namely “goodness”, “peace”, “will”, “honour”, “dignity”, “health”.

Analysing pictures, images and photos on the topic of “life”, we singled out the predominant groups of images. Most of the respondents chose images with such symbols as the sun (sunrise or sunset, rays of sunlight), a swing, a clock, a butterfly, a bicycle, elements of nature (flowers, a tree, a forest). Also, many photos and pictures of the subjects contain images of a person with raised hands, a happy family with children, and couples in love. We present typical images that are most often found in the choices of the subjects and give their brief description (Association pictures to the word “life” [symbol “man”]).

The choice of associative images for the word “life”, which depict a person and the surrounding nature, mountains, sea or ocean, testifies to acceptance and a sense of freedom, and also symbolises a sense of one’s own role and value of life, readiness to live and fully enjoy it. Such individuals feel their place in life and are ready to learn about its different sides with the awareness of the multifaceted diversity and interest of life. We will present a number of images in which there is a special emphasis on such symbols as balloons and swings, the presence of which in the pictures emphasises balance, change, movement, emotions and transition, which are important components of life processes. The swing symbol is a reflection of the balance between opposites: good and evil, light and dark, life and death and represents the need to find balance in your life, as well as the risk of losing this balance. In the images chosen by young people, the swing usually represents a state of pleasure, lightness, movement and relaxation (Kalka et al., 2021). As for the symbolic meaning of balloons, they usually also reflect carelessness, freedom, joy, childhood, dreams, creativity, but sometimes they can indicate instability.

Association Pictures to the Word “Life” (Symbol “Balloons”, “Swing”)

Quite often, in various interpretations, in the images we notice the symbol “butterfly”. This symbol describes the state of internal transformations and changes, the state of freedom and flight, as well as the ability to notice or the need for beauty (of nature, art or man) (Kalka et al., 2021).

Association Pictures to the Word “Life” (Symbol “Butterfly”)

It is noticeable that the clock symbol, which has a deep philosophical and psychological meaning, is found in the drawings of most of the researched subjects. Thus, the presence of this symbol indicates a person’s awareness of the cyclicity of life, its variability, limitations, control and its finality (death).

The philosophical context of the image of the clock reflects a person’s awareness of the transience of his own being, its momentary nature, constant movement and changes. The clock is the material embodiment of time, and its constant move-

ment reminds us that time does not stop and life is a constant movement and changes of various processes, stages and cycles.

Association Pictures to the Word “Life” (Symbol “Clock”)

Most association pictures, despite the dominant symbols, contain the symbol of the sun or sun rays. The sun is present in all pictures, where there are images of family, nature, people, flowers, etc. This symbol emphasises vitality, energy and potential, describing a positive and optimistic outlook on life.

In the psychoanalytic theory of Jung, the sun is an archetype that represents consciousness, spirit and intuition. It is associated with the beginning, which is active, creative and rational, therefore this symbol indicates a person's ability to self-knowledge, understanding one's own motives and goals (Jung, 2004).

Association Pictures to the Word “Life” (Symbol “Sun”)

A considerable number of images show the importance of the family in feeling and realising the fullness of life. These images depict happy parents and children, thereby confirming the acceptance of the existence of life precisely because of the importance of presence of family relationships in them.

Association Pictures to the Word “Life” (Symbol “Family”)

It should be noted that in addition to family relationships, many images contain couple's relationship, as well as friendship, which once again emphasises the need to establish deep social ties with others, which are an important part of a young person's life and a way to realise the existence of life.

Association Pictures to the Word “Life” (Symbols “Couple”, “Friends”)

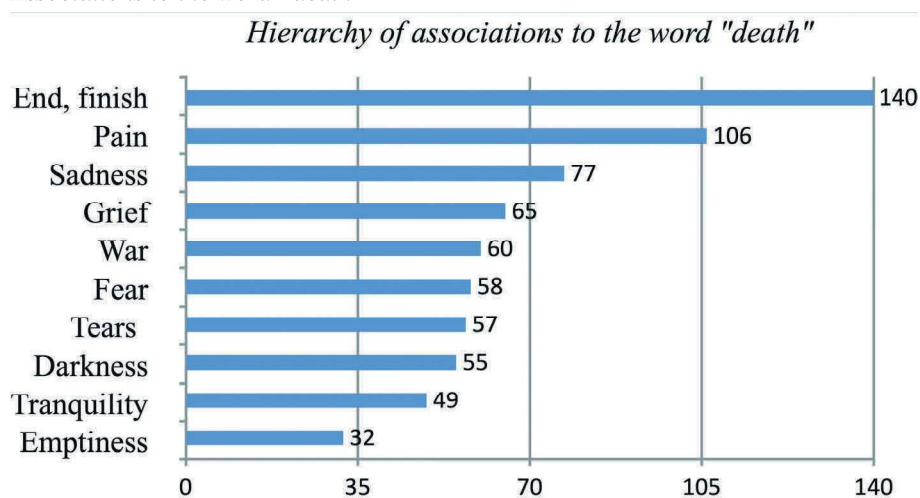
Given that the citizens of Ukraine have been living in the realities of war for the past two years, some of the pictures contain images that eloquently reflect this reality, but with an emphasis on life, where there are dreams of a better life in one's country, readiness to accept such reality and faith in changes for the better. Optimism and the desire to live overflow the pictures of this direction, symbolically emphasising the fact that even in such difficult conditions there is a place for life, and not just survival.

Association Pictures to the Word “Life” (Related to the Reality of Military Operations)

In the analysis and interpretation of the pictures, we relied on the dominant symbols and colour gamut of the pictures. It is noticeable that the dominant gamut is yellow, green and blue in the images. The symbolism of these colours indicates the predominance of optimism, joy, desire for creativity, movement and energy (yellow), harmony, balance, development, dynamism (green) and strength, endurance and tranquillity (blue). The combination of this colour pallet in the images once again confirms the main components of the existence of a young person’s life associated with energy, optimism, faith in the best, readiness for creativity, changes and the need for harmony and balance in life (Kalka & Kovalchuk, 2020). Analysing the existence of death, we summarise the qualitative analysis of association words and pictures to the word “death”. The most frequent choices of association words to the word “death” are presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Associations to the word “death”



Source. Own research.

The association word “end” is one of the most common in the associative series of students. It reflects the perception of death as the final act of life and existence, the completion of a certain stage of development. Such an association may indicate the emergence of negative emotions of fear, anxiety, helplessness due to the awareness of the fact of the end of existence. Pain, as a rule, is an association that indicates physical pain that can lead to or precede death, or emotional pain, as a symbol of suffering experienced as a result of the loss of loved ones. Also, a significant number

of associations relate to emotional experiences and their expression accompanying death (fear, sadness, grief, tears). They indicate the emergence of long-term and deep emotional experiences and sufferings arising from the loss of someone. However, such an emotion as fear can be caused by the fear of one's own death, and not only by the experience of losing someone. Therefore, the fear of death is often a powerful motivator for life.

Sadness as a symbol of loss and emotion, which often arises as a result of losses, can indicate love, memory and respect for those who are no longer there. Of course, the presence of such an association as war indicates that it is a symbol of death, collapse, destruction of man. War is a potential bearer of losses and, accordingly, death. Therefore, it gives rise to negative emotions, among them the most frequent are fear, anxiety, hatred, despair. Tranquility is an association that reflects the fact that death can sometimes be pacification. It can make people feel confident that a loved one has found eternal peace. At the same time, death is perceived as the absence of worries and problems.

Darkness is an association that reflects the unknown that awaits a person after death, and emptiness can be a symbol of loss, but also a symbol of the opportunity for a new beginning.

Among the majority of associations there are those that indicate emotional experiences regarding the fact of death and its perception due to the death of someone close. A number of associations refer to the existing fear of death ("darkness", "black hole", "fear"). Therefore, the words "despair", "depression", "pity", "disappointment", "crying", "tragedy", "black", "horror", "cold", "autumn", "rain", "sadness" are often among associations that have a negative meaning. We notice a certain philosophical interpretation in the association words "life", "exit", "beginning", which indicate the perception of death as a continuation of life, as a transition to another, higher level of existence, a way of liberation from difficulties and suffering.

We also meet such a symbol as the scythe, which has historical roots and acts as a symbol of death (the scythe is used for harvesting, and the harvest, like life, has its end). In Slavic culture, the scythe is an attribute of Morana, the goddess of winter, cold and death. She is often depicted with a scythe in her hands, symbolising her ability to take life.

Many associations indicate symbols of death, among them "deceased", "corpse", "cross", "cemetery", "grave", "coffin". Also, associative words that come across quite often and are associated by young people with death are "weapon", "gun", "alcohol", "drugs". There are also verbal associations related to the context of war, namely "Putin", "Russia", "Rusnia". The presence of these association words is observed in numerous images and pictures that were chosen by the subjects. The results of the qualitative analysis of the images made it possible to distinguish the following predominant groups of images about death.

In contrast to verbal associations, a large number of images are related to war. Through the pictures, the subjects show the perception of death, the presence of which

is acutely felt especially during the war. It is associated with losses, the death of soldiers during hostilities and the constant potential threat to life during missile attacks.

Association Pictures to the Word “Death” (“War”)

A considerable number of images associated with the word death contain photos of Russian president Putin in various views. The war, which was started by the Russian Federation, for Ukrainians is the bearer of the loss of family and friends, a change in the rhythm of a full-fledged life, constant presence in situations of threats to one's own life and health, lack of security. Therefore, this person is associated with the suffering of loss and pain of the Ukrainian people.

Association Pictures to the Word “Death” (“Putin”)

In many images we find the scythe symbol, as mentioned above in verbal associations, it is a powerful archetypal symbol. In legends and fairy tales, death is depicted as a warrior or a girl or an old woman with a scythe.

Association Pictures to the Word “Death” (“Scythe”)

The scythe symbolises the gathering of souls who have lived life; a weapon that can cause a fatal wound and indicates the inevitability of death; it symbolises man's insubordination to the laws of existence (“death will take everyone”). We will also single out such an association that quite often symbolises death – sunset and withered flowers. In the language of images, these pictures “talk” about the end of life as a certain cycle, the awareness of the inevitability of the end, the presence of sadness, melancholy and nostalgia for life. The sunset is a beautiful phenomenon, but it can evoke sadness, because it reminds us that life is beautiful, but short.

Association Pictures to the Word “Death” (“Sunset”)

It is often possible to notice the use of a crow in pictures, which is a symbol of death and causes an association with the dark forces of nature, which portend the end of life, its inevitability (Kalka & Kovalchuk, 2020). Since this bird is a symbol of wisdom, spirituality and intuition, it can be assumed that such a choice is connected with a person's awareness of the fact of the end of life, deep knowledge of such sides of existence as life-death. From such a position, death is explained as a danger and threat to human life.

Association Pictures to the Word “Death” (“Crow”)

As for the colour gamut of the drawings, most of the images on the theme of “death” are black and white. The colour of black is associated with darkness and the unknown, so it is often associatively consonant with death. It symbolises destruction as the end of life, grief, sadness, sorrow, emptiness, loss and chaos (Kalka & Kovalchuk, 2020).

Black absorbs all other colours, which can symbolise denial and despair, rejection of life and reconciliation with death. In Christian culture, the colour of black is often associated with sin and evil and can symbolise death as a result of sin (Koval). In some cultures, black is associated with mystery and magic. In this case, death is a mystery that man cannot fully understand.

A black and white image can also symbolise the inevitability of death. Black and white are two contrasting colours that symbolise life and death; they are two sides of being and non-being and remind us that death is the logical end of life.

CONCLUSIONS

Summarising the results of the qualitative analysis of the study shows that the existence of life of higher education applicants is based on positive emotional experiences of joy, love, and happiness. Thanks to the presence of these emotions, they perceive life brightly and fully, strive for satisfaction and enjoyment of it. For our sample, the associative chain to the word “life” looks as follows: “joy” - “love” - “happiness” - “family” - “meaning” - “development” - “emotions” - “being” - “freedom” - “sun” - “health” - “peace” (hierarchy of association words according to the frequency of appearance in the responses of the subjects). We emphasise that the existence of young people’s lives is determined by the presence of social ties (family, friends, loved ones) and a focus on achievement (desires, dreams, goals, success). Analysis of image associations to the word “life” indicates the need for lightness, bright positive emotions, carelessness, harmony and balance (symbols of the sun, swing, balloons, butterfly, sea, person, nature, family, couple in love, friends, human, green, blue and yellow). The analysis of associations to the word “death” shows the dominance of emotional experiences and understanding of the fact of the end of life, which is accompanied by states of fear, uncertainty, interest and mystery. This is indicated by the associative chain to the word “death”, which contains the following words: “end (finish)” - “pain” - “sadness” - “grief” - “war” - “fear” - “tears” - “darkness” - “tranquility” - “emptiness”). Images and photos depicting death convey fear, acceptance of the end of life, anxiety, destruction and threat (a woman with a scythe, attributes of war, an image of Putin, sunset, withered flowers, black, black and white). The existence of the death for young people is focused on negative emotional experiences (sadness, fear, despair, disappointment), which is related to the losses and the reality of the war in which they

are. In general, the existences of life and death are closely related, as the fear of losing life or the contemplation of losses all around motivates a young person to fully enjoy life and appreciate it, to realise the value of relationships and to strive for an active, creative and successful life.

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