DOl: 10.20333/2541-9315-2017-203-212

IDEAS OF THE FUTURE OF DIRECTORS WITH PANIC ATTACKS

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Abstract

The results of research on directors with panic attacks that negatively influence their vision of the future are considered in the article. Impossibility to line up a temporary perspective within the course of management shows director’s inefficiency and disintegration of the management process itself. An ability to control agitation shows professionally valuable competences of a director and his/her professional suitability. Lining up a future perspective determines self-control and self-efficiency abilities in any sphere of human vital activity. The research shows that panic attacks can take place as a result of poor intensity of events. Frequency and duration of panic attacks influence ideas of the present and the future. Time perspective during panic attacks is to a greater extent referring to the past and to a lesser extent referring to the present and the future. These indicators are complications of panic attacks: the longer the “term” of symptoms (disorder), the less connected are ideas of the present and the future in a respondent’s consciousness. People with panic attacks define an insignificantly different number of events in a category of most important for each time.

Keywords: ideas of the future, panic attacks, directors, vision of the future

Relevance

Anxiety and fear are adaptation functions. They mobilize energy and initiate defense reactions in the body, namely, escaping or attacking. Fear is one of the basic negative

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emotions that are classified as emotions that have deep phylogenetic roots, i.e., incidental to both human and animals. Panic is associated with almost permanently raising level of anxiety which negatively influences mental health and health in general. Therewith, at the present time panic attacks are considered to be one of the most widespread forms of borderline state (Bighelli, Trespidi, Castellazzi, Cipriani, Furukawa, Girlanda, Barbui, 2016).

The relevance of this research is determined by constantly changing reality where we can talk about a great number of stress factors and a growing need to adapt to new conditions as soon as possible which itself raises stress level in completely mentally healthy people and severely complicates life for those with adjustment disorders and borderline state. Modern management system requires highly knowledgeable specialists who can properly manage human resources and who are ready to deal with environmental challenges (Krone, Albers, & Timmerman, 2016; Pompoli, Furukawa, Imai, Tajika, Efthimiou, & Salanti, 2016).

State of the problem

Nowadays, a contradiction between a possibility and ability to perform effective management is detected among people who take managerial positions and have anxiety and panic diseases. This influences the management efficiency, as well as the company’s future and organization development. The question is: Whether efficient management is even possible given directors’ destabilized emotional condition (Silfvernagel, Carlbring, Kabo, Edström, Eriksson, Måson, & Andersson, 2012; Smitherman, Kolivas, & Bailey, 2013).

When it comes to the vision of the future, researchers use an equal category “a vision of the future” that is interpreted as “a synthesis of cognitive and emotional processes during which the future events and forecasted events and circumstances are perceived as real, obtain a meaning and take emotional overtones”. K. Levin was one of the first who began to develop subjective time and images. He introduced a category of a time perspective that he understood as “a cumulative combination of individual’s ideas of the individual future, present and past at the present moment of time”. Therefore, individual ideas about the future constitute a part of an individual’s time perspective (Yasnitsky, 2012).

K.A. Abulkhnova-Slavskaya and T.N. Berezina believe that “experiencing the meaning of life or life as if it has a meaning is connected not only with preceding
presence of ideas, plans and intentions. It is also connected with a measure of concordance between their claims and implementation, to a wider extent, of achievements, that gives the feeling of experiencing life as a real one... This is the time of a life” (Albukhanova, 2012).

Research connected with creating the vision of the future is developed in the framework of studying the psychological time of a person and his life path. This approach is based on works by S.L. Rubinshtein and B.G. Ananiev that enriched the science with several terms that describe a person’s ideas of his future, namely, life plans, life perspective, ideas of a future, life program, etc. (Rubinstein, 2015).

J.Kelly describes the influence of the vision of the future on behavior in the present. He views a person as a researcher who has a task to realize and interpret his life experience, hypothesizing on a reality by means of which he can control and forecast life events. J.Kelly believes that people are mostly oriented to the future events of their lives and not to the past or present ones (Hiell, Zigler, 2016).

In fact, J.Kelly claimed that human behavior can be understood as a preventive one by its nature. He noted that through attempts to prevent and control future events a human being is checking his links to reality (Hiell, Zigler, 2016).

J Nuttin describes ideas of the future through a term of time perspective. He believes that time perspective is formed by objects and events that exist at the cognitive level. These objects are not attached to the present moment, they can be in the present, past or, what is interesting to us, in the future. Objects can be both positive and negative but they are supposed to have a motivational importance to a person, i.e. to be significant and initiate an activity for avoiding such an object or achieving such an object, and since these objects (events) are not implemented, they are temporally located in the future (Sladkomedova, 2014).

Time perspective for today should be considered in connection with problems of psychological safety of a person. Some people believe that everything that happens to them is a result of external factors interaction, and others connect these events with internal factors, for example, their efforts and their guilt. These options of attributions are external and internal respectively (Tushkova, & Bundalo, 2013; Medvedeva, Zhuk, & Osipenko, 2011).
J. Nuttin argues that nature and creation of ideas of the future is influenced by a particular level of temporal integration, meaning that the future is seen connected with the present and the past, as its extension (Sladkomezdova, 2014).

J. Nuttin defines the following characteristics of the ideas: duration, or depth; intension of object allocation in various periods; level of structuredness of motivational objects, namely presence or absence of links between objects and groups of objects (for example, link “mean – purpose” contrary to a simple line of objects); level of brightness and reality of perception of objects by a subject as a function of their distance in time (Sladkomezdova, 2014).

Level of reality of objects that forms a valid time perspective is an important variable that influences behavior of the objects. Their influence decreases together with level of reality of distant (in space and in time) objects. In fact, temporal gradient (similar to spatial gradient) is present here that provides a power of a goal-directed tendency. Objects that are more distant in time and space have a lesser level of reality and less influence on the behavior. In his first publication on temporal measurement, Levin opposed a maximal level of reality of a perceived object to a decreased level of object reality on their mental representation (such as time perspective). But these objects of representation have an unequal level of reality and, accordingly, psychological influence. Therefore, objects that go beyond the limits of a customary temporal horizon of an individual are less real to the individual. Consequently, a short time perspective is an additional variable that decreases the level of psychological reality of distant objects. Moreover, subjective level of reality of future objects obviously shall be influenced by such structural factors as presence/absence of causative or instrumental links between objects of time perspective (Sladkomezdova, 2014).

Thus, when it comes to an idea of the future, researchers used an equal category such as a vision of the future that is interpreted as a “synthesis of cognitive and emotional processes in the progress of which future events and forecasted events and circumstances are perceived as real, obtain a meaning and take emotional overtones”.

When considering ideas of the future, it is necessary to determine characteristics of ideas of the future that directors have and how they influence panic attacks. Managerial activity shall be viewed as an aggregate of actions of director or employees of a management
body in regard to a person or a group being an object of management. Managerial activity includes setting a management goal, processing information and preparation and implementation of managerial solution. An important characteristic of managerial activity is a level of an individual preparedness to take responsibility for what is happening. Preparedness or unpreparedness to take responsibility for the current events result in various anxieties, including panic attacks. W.Frankl noted that responsibility of an individual is equal to individual freedom unless an individual recognizes the responsibility. A person is responsible for the realization of a meaning and values.

Due to a widespread use of the 10th revision of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases (ICD-10), the term “panic disorder” is being used now.

Panic disorder, episodic paroxysmal anxiety, is a mental disorder characterized by a spontaneous occurrence of panic attacks expressed by a sudden anxiety not connected with an objective situation. It is accompanied by vegetative symptoms and occurs from several times a year to several times a day, such occurrences being expected.

Panic attacks are sudden attacks of anxiety and fear accompanied by several vegetative demonstrations such as a feeling of asphyxia, sickness, sweating, burning or cold sensation, etc. Moreover, a fear of dying, losing control and becoming demented is present as secondary symptoms. These attacks happen spontaneously without any obvious connection with external irritants, attacks last 5-30 min and are accompanied by a feeling of panic fear. When panic disorders are accompanied by agoraphobia, panic attacks happen in potentially dangerous places, namely places where it is impossible to get help or escape (Rassel, Kon, 2012).

A.M. Pivovarova suggests the following classifications of panic attacks. Based on represented symptoms associated with panic, they can be: big or expand panic attacks - typically 4 and more symptoms associated with panic are present, and small – less than 4 symptoms are present. Big panic attacks happen less often than small ones (as a rule once a week or a month), whereas small attacks can happen several times a day (Natolochnaia, Cherkasov, 2014).

By intensity of some components of attack, they are divided into: vegetative components – vegetative disorders and undifferentiated phobia prevail, hyperventilation
– with leading hyperventilation syndrome; phobic – phobia prevails, such attacks happen when fear arises in the situations that patients believe to be most dangerous in terms of panic attack occurrence; conversion – attacks are dominated by hysterical-conversion symptoms, often with senestopathic disorders, when fear and anxiety are missing, attacks are ill-defined, senestopathic – with high occurrence of senestopathy; affective – with defined depressive or dysphoric disorders (Natolochnaia, Cherkasov, 2014).

Most researchers say any person can have a panic attack at least once in a lifetime. In view of this, it is necessary to define criteria to diagnose panic attacks. G.A.Dyukova and V.A.Vein suggest the following criterion as basic one in order to diagnose panic attacks: paroxysmal criteria; polysystemic autonomic symptoms; emotional-affective disorders (Andrakhanova, 2012).

The following criteria are also suggested: circumstances are not connected with an objective threat; attacks are not limited by known and predictable situations, mental state between the attacks is comparably free from anxiety symptoms (however, anxiety expectation is common).

Usually, attacks happen to people with specific personal characteristics. Thus, women tend to have personalities with demonstrativeness, increased need to attract attention and craving for recognition. They often demonstrate themselves, exaggerate their feelings, trying to get you interested and quickly reject those who are not involved as much as they expect (so called histrionic personality). Men have an opposite type of pathocharacterology called “hypochondria of health” which means an attentive interest in physical health. It is important for them to pay attention to health and always be in excellent shape.

The connection between panic attacks and negative emotions experienced in the childhood can be often observed. Approximately half of the children who suffered from a school phobia (fear of school) have symptoms of panic attacks when they grow older (Andrakhanova, 2012).

Severe losses (death of relatives, divorce) are more often found in anamnesis of patients with panic disorder than in those of patients with monopolar depression. An average age for the first panic attack is 20-25 years.
Thus, panic attacks are sudden attacks of anxiety and fear accompanied by several vegetative symptoms, such as a feeling of asphyxia, sickness, sweating, burning or cold sensation, etc. Moreover, a fear of dying, losing control and becoming demented is present as secondary symptoms.

Empiric study aimed at defining the symptoms of panic attacks and ideas of the future was conducted on medium-level managers employed at “Siberia –Krasenergo” power enterprise. A total of 7 men and 8 women at the age of 25-35 years old were selected for the research.

The researchers’ hypothesis was that ideas of the future that directors with panic attacks have were negative and it was impossible for them to set long-term managerial goals.

In order to obtain information on specific symptoms of panic attacks and create a time perspective, the following methods were used.

Interview was held in order to collect anamnesis on frequency of symptoms of panic attacks. Cyclic Cottle Test (Cottle, 1976) in order to “analyze temporary perspectives” was applied. This method is classified as a projective one. This method is designed to create a situation that allows a respondent to associate time with cycles and, by doing so, to demonstrate his concealed tools of time conscience orientation. The method of life perspective determination developed by Kronik-Akhmerov (1982) allows to determine a level of event intensity of time perspective objects. Data received from respondents suffering from panic attacks were analyzed. It was revealed that 10 out of 15 respondents with panic attacks have been suffering for at least a year, and 2 respondents – for about three months.

Five potential respondents with panic attacks not included in the selection refused to undergo testing after they had gotten acquainted with the method, because this method seemed too complicated and unclear to them. One of the respondents who had been suffering from panic attacks for 5 years said that she had to do one task per week under the method in order not to “disturb her fears”. This can mean that such respondents with panic attacks have a low working capacity and high biographic protection, namely, they are extremely unwilling to provide information about themselves or do not provide such information at all.

Respondents describe panic attacks as follows: “situation is out of my control”, “hands are shaking, it is difficult to breathe, difficult to seat at the same place, my body
starts to hurt”, “sudden reasonless internal unrest and anxiety, physiological panic attacks are expressed in a form of shaking, change of body temperature, rapid heart beating, uneven breathing”. Most cases of described panic attack happen in a tense working situation, and soon panic attacks begin to happen more often and during non-working time.

Under methods of unfinished sentences, respondents with panic attacks describe their future as positive. Then 9 signs of event detection were compared, namely: intereventual connections (in a bigger or lesser extent) detected in the past and in the future (4 signs), difference in intensity level of ideas of the future, relation to the future, positive description of the future in the methods of unfinished sentences, positive idea of oneself in the future, connectivity of the future and the present perception.

Table 1.

Characteristics of directors that suffer from panic attacks under causometric method of Kronik-Akhmerova and Cottle method.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Directors with panic attacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Events involved in the biggest number of intereventual connections relating to the past, number of events</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events involved in the least number of intereventual connections relating to the past, number of events</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events involved in the biggest number of intereventual connections relating to the future, number of events</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events involved in the least number of intereventual connections relating to the future, number of events</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low intensity level of ideas of the future, people</td>
<td>8 of 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive attitude towards the future, people</td>
<td>11 of 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive description of the future, people</td>
<td>5 of 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive idea of the future, people</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connectivity of ideas of the present and future under Cottle method, people</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our data show that ideas are positive. This fact can be connected with neurotic nature: the future seems too positive, everything works well in the future.

Also, ideas of the future that people with panic attacks have are not connected with the present. This may be a result of influence on ideas produced by a disorder mechanism: it is seen that a respondent with panic attacks lasting for more than three months has ideas
of the future under Cottle cycles that are in accordance with an age norm for healthy people of 15-24 years old. This respondent described herself positively unlike most respondents with panic attacks who have a negative personal image in the future.

Probably these indicators are complications of panic attacks: the longer the “term” of symptoms (disorder), the less connected are ideas of the present and the future in a respondent’s consciousness. People with panic attacks define an insignificantly different number of events in a category of most important for each time.

Ideas of the future of people with panic attacks are positive with low level of event intensity, ideas of the future are disconnected to the present under Cottle method. Therefore, ideas of the future of directors with panic attacks are positive with low event intensity level, disconnected to the present, mostly based on the past, which is a negative indicator in terms of planning and setting objectives in general.

References


