

## PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ABUSERS

Mikhalkova E.I.<sup>1</sup>, Radchenko S.A.<sup>2</sup> (Russian Federation)

<sup>1</sup>Mikhalkova Ekaterina Ivanovna – psychologist,

<sup>2</sup>Radchenko Svetlana Anatolyevna – psychologist, master student,  
MOSCOW INSTITUTE OF PSYCHOANALYSIS,  
MOSCOW

**Abstract:** this work presents the results of a study of the psychological portrait of the abuser, focusing on attachment disorders, narcissism, the desire for manipulation and coercive behavior in interpersonal relationships. Abusive behavior is considered as a result of deep psychological problems associated with childhood trauma, lack of empathy and lack of control over one's own emotions. The study of these aspects is of great importance for understanding the mechanisms of formation of destructive behaviors in family and personal relationships, as well as for developing strategies for prevention and assistance to victims of violence. The paper reveals the peculiarities of abusers in the context of their manipulative behavior, control over a partner and suppression of another person's freedom.

**Keywords:** abuse, violence, coercive behavior, narcissism, psychocide, manipulation, psychological characteristics of abusers.

## ПСИХОЛОГИЧЕСКИЕ ХАРАКТЕРИСТИКИ АБЬЮЗЕРОВ

Михалькова Е.И.<sup>1</sup>, Радченко С.А.<sup>2</sup> (Российская Федерация)

<sup>1</sup>Михалькова Екатерина Ивановна – психолог,

<sup>2</sup>Радченко Светлана Анатольевна – психолог, магистрант,  
Московский институт психоанализа,  
г. Москва

**Аннотация:** в данной работе представлены результаты исследования психологического портрета обидчика с акцентом на нарушения привязанности, нарциссизм, стремление к манипуляции и принудительному поведению в межличностных отношениях. Оскорбительное поведение рассматривается как следствие глубоких психологических проблем, связанных с детской травмой, отсутствием эмпатии и отсутствием контроля над собственными эмоциями. Изучение этих аспектов имеет большое значение для понимания механизмов формирования деструктивного поведения в семейных и личных отношениях, а также для разработки стратегий профилактики и оказания помощи жертвам насилия. В статье раскрываются особенности абьюзеров в контексте их манипулятивного поведения, контроля над партнером и подавления свободы другого человека.

**Ключевые слова:** абьюз, насилие, принудительное поведение, нарциссизм, психоцид, манипуляция, психологические характеристики абьюзеров.

UDC 159.9.075

The relevance of the study of the abuser's psychology is due to the increase in cases of violence in interpersonal relationships and the social need for a deeper understanding of the mechanisms that lead to its occurrence. In modern society, more and more attention is being paid to the problem of psychological and emotional violence, which, unlike physical violence, often goes unnoticed and underestimated. This research is of great importance for understanding the mechanisms of formation of destructive behaviors in family and personal relationships, as well as for developing strategies for prevention and assistance to victims of violence.

The special relevance of the study lies in the need for cooperation with government agencies to effectively counter violence. Government support and involvement in the process of developing and implementing programs to prevent and combat abusive behavior will help create a more systematic and large-scale approach to solving this problem. The formation of a safe environment free from violence is possible only with the joint efforts of scientific, public and state institutions, which will not only help victims, but also prevent violence at the early stages of its manifestation.

The main problem of the study is that abusive behavior is cyclical and difficult to change without understanding the underlying psychological factors. Abusers often do not realize or refuse to acknowledge the consequences of their actions, which creates serious barriers to changing their behavior. The inability to identify abuse, both on the part of the victim and on the part of others, leads to the fact that many people remain in destructive relationships for a long time, being subjected to serious psycho-emotional consequences.

**Research objective** – to identify the psychological characteristics of an individual (abuser, aggressor, coersivist), who often uses psychological, emotional and physical violence towards another person in his behavior.

The study is supposed to test the following hypothesis: the basis of psychological, emotional and sometimes physical violence is coercive behavior, narcissism, attachment disorder, the desire for manipulation, threats and restriction of another person's freedom.

**Research methods.** Theoretical analysis, synthesis, generalization.

Violence originates in childhood, when parents or other significant figures are unable to meet the child's basic needs for love, care and safety. The child learns to protect himself from pain and feelings of helplessness through various behavioral reactions, which may include violence. At the same time, it is important to understand that violence is not an innate human quality, but is the result of upbringing and interpersonal relationships. People can change their behavioral responses and learn to use more effective ways to resolve conflicts. To prevent the spread of violence in modern society, it is necessary to expand knowledge about empathy. People should understand each other and be ready for dialogue in order to avoid violence. In addition, it is important to express your feelings and needs in order to avoid the accumulation of negative emotions that can lead to aggression.

Our concept of the psychology of violence is related to the inability of people to effectively resolve conflicts and adapt to difficult situations. Violence is the result of disrupted interpersonal relationships and deficiencies in early childhood parenting. At the same time, developing empathy and the ability to express your feelings helps to avoid violence and resolve conflicts peacefully.

Psychological violence is associated with the irresponsibility of a person who, striving for self-affirmation, suppresses the will of a weaker and vulnerable person. In other words, psychological violence is the result not only of the specific actions of the aggressor, but also of his worldview, beliefs and character. A person prone to psychological violence often expresses a desire to control others and is unaware or unwilling to acknowledge the consequences of his actions [8].

Such a person tends to suppress the weak in order to feel stronger and more confident. Psychological violence manifests itself in various forms: threats, isolation, harassment, criticism, ridicule, humiliation, manipulation and others. These actions can cause fear, anxiety, helplessness, distrust and depression in the victim. In some cases, violence can lead to the formation of suicidal tendencies in the victim. People who have experienced psychological violence often have difficulty making decisions, asserting themselves and building relationships, which leads to serious problems in their lives.

According to our concept, psychological violence is a coercive behavior and a form of abuse that has a devastating effect on the victim. Inasmuch as this type of violence leaves no visible marks on the body, it often goes unnoticed and underestimated in society. One of the consequences of psychological violence is the development of a "psychocide" personality. Psychocide is the gradual extinction of the psychological functions of a person; an extreme degree of frustration, irritation and resentment. It can arise as a result of dissatisfaction with one's desires, goals and needs, as well as as a result of social pressure, injustice, long-term abusive relationships or post-traumatic stress.

The mechanism of psychocide formation consists in the constant suppression of the victim's personality and self-esteem. Often, an individual (abuser, coersivist), using violence, puts pressure on the victim, ridiculing and insulting her personal qualities, which can lead to a loss of faith in herself and her abilities [8]. In addition, he often uses manipulative techniques to control the behavior of the victim. The victim obeys, ignoring his own needs to avoid further violence. It also contributes to the development of psychocide, as the victim loses the ability to control his life and situation. Ultimately, this situation leads to serious mental disorders – from depression and anxiety to constant stress and feelings of hopelessness. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the seriousness of psychological violence and seek professional psychological help in a timely manner.

Abusive relationships, from our point of view, go through six cyclical stages: the emergence of claims, rising tension, conflict, calm, truce and a quiet life [8]. Since the abuser (the coersivist) plays a key role in the act of violence, it is advisable to study the psychological characteristics of an individual who often uses various types of violence against another person in his behavior [9].

An analysis of the test results of a group of abuser respondents who have come to us for psychological help over the past five years has established a high degree of manipulation on the part of the abuser in relation to the partner. At the same time, low acceptance rates were revealed. The peculiarities of such relationships are that communication skills, tolerance, and the degree of manifestation of manipulative behavior do not differ depending on the length of family life. This suggests that abusive relationships between spouses contribute to stagnation in the family cycle. In other words, abuse causes the dysfunctionality of the family. While conditionally normal married couples understand each other more with the acquisition of marital experience, abusively characterized couples not only move away over the years, but also stop accepting each other. Over the years, the abuser gains more power over the victim, and the victim "withdraws into himself" more.

The concept of the abuser lies in the peculiarities of the formation of abusive behavior, which is formed in the context of attachment disorder, narcissism, inability to accept another, low tolerance and lack of empathy. In addition, we assume that some abusers have hallucinatory images, as they often convince others about the presence of non-existent objects. For example, they prove to the victim that she is cheating, secretly dating someone, leaving home in his absence, etc. All these statements of the abuser cannot be refuted [8]. An almost similar idea was expressed in her works by B.V. Zeigarnik, who postulated the idea that "... hallucinations in psychiatry are called false perceptions. Patients see images, objects that do not exist, hear speech, words that are not spoken by anyone, smell smells that do not really exist. The hallucinatory image can be of various modalities", "It is impossible to

convince the patient that the hallucinatory image does not exist" [3]. Most often, in the behavior of a person who uses violence, there are not only hallucinatory images of the presence of unreal people, things, situations and other objects, but also vocal hallucinations. Dominants often convince others that the other has said something that was not in reality. For example, an abusive mother, entering a child's room, may claim that he was calling her and she could not have misheard. It is worth noting that such hallucinations occur to abusers regularly. From this it can be concluded that the behavior of the abuser is as close as possible to the behavior of a person with a mental disorder [8].

Next, let's look at the characteristics of abusers, which are distinguished by various researchers. So, from the point of view of P. A. Savelyeva and I. A. Semenov, an abuser is an individual who pursues the goal of suppressing the personality of the victim, directs all his forces consciously or unconsciously to moral and physical violence [12]. Based on this, E. A. Rogovenkina and T. E. Lifanova identify the characteristics of the abuse:

- the interest in constantly making comments to others;
- the ability to always emphasize that the other is not competent in various matters;
- inability to respect someone else's space;
- the desire to completely possess another person and make a choice for him;
- controlling every step of your victim;
- insisting on your point of view;
- the ability to cause physical harm to another;
- the ability to replace another in a trap.

The characteristics of the abuse do not indicate that the person has any mental abnormalities. Abuse is a specific personality type. However, abuse cannot be compared with the norm of behavior, since it carries a negative impact on the human psyche [7].

A.S. Isaeva, A.A. Skupeiko in the characterization of the abuser indicate the presence of such a feature as the use of material and spiritual resources with disregard for the personal space of the victim. Any abuser is distinguished by his inadequate self-esteem. This is because in childhood he did not receive proper attention and sufficient love from the reference environment. Most often, abusers do not know how to find the positive in other people, they do not notice other people's advantages, since their own projection plays a leading role in their ideas. As the authors note, in the modern world, both a man and a woman can act as an abuser. The psychological portrait of such a person includes a wide range of personal qualities: from malevolence in communication and tactlessness in behavior to causing physical harm to another person and sexual violence [5].

E.G. Sizova identifies several characteristic features of the abuser, which are manifested systematically. The abuser often demonstrates aggression towards the weak and defenseless, uses criticism under the guise of "criticism for the good" and seeks to control others through the establishment of strict rules and restrictions. He is also characterized by an unstable mood and a tendency to ignore other people's personal boundaries. The psychological profile of the abuser includes aggressiveness, short temper, thirst for power, a tendency to manipulation and cruelty, as well as narcissism, machiavellianism and distrust of loved ones. Additionally, the abuser may show a low level of self-control, jealousy, psychopathic traits and a tendency to lie [13].

M.D. Anfinogentova points out the predominance of such personal characteristics among abusers as pessimism, dissatisfaction with their own lives, and blaming society for everything that is happening. It is worth noting that these signs of abusers have a permanent and systematic character. According to the research of this author, the dominant one is characterized by aggressiveness towards helpless and weak subjects, that is, those who will not be able to give a decent rebuff. This is due to the fact that the abuser chooses children, the elderly and animals as victims. In addition, the distinctive features of the psychological abuser are the desire for power, control and restriction of other people. In addition, such a person always sees the world through the prism of negativity. He openly regularly criticizes and devalues others. Ignoring the personal boundaries of another person, the dominant one violates them, not considering it a deviant behavior [1].

At the same time, abusers are afraid of losing control over the victim. The fear of being alone not only scares them, but also contributes to a change in behavior. That is why abusive relationships are cyclical. In addition, the change of behavior is always only temporary. Partner behavior <sup>1</sup> it is specific for abusers to have a systematic violent nature. In our opinion, this is due to the fact that the abusers themselves do not want and are not ready to change, because they do not see anything reprehensible in their behavior.

E. G. Sizova believes that the triumph of the abuser is possible where he can feel superiority and omnipotence, because it is these feelings that will allow him to cope with his own sense of weakness, blunt the inner pain from the psychological injuries he received and, ultimately, in his imagination "take revenge" on those figures of significant people who are the source of injury. Usually such figures are images of parents or other close adults, thanks to which the abuser, as a child, experienced everything that he projects on the victim of his abuse today, thereby wanting to get a kind of satisfaction. Strangely enough, but at its core, the abuser is a scared, severely traumatized and never grown up child. The abuser's childhood was often spent in complete emotional deprivation, with cold and

---

<sup>1</sup>Partner behavior is a set of actions and relationships that develop between two people in a romantic or sexual relationship. They can include aspects such as emotional intimacy, respect, support, trust, communication, physical contact, etc. Partner behavior can be both positive and negative. Positive behavior includes showing care, love, attention and support, as well as respect and honesty in a relationship. Negative behavior can be associated with violence, control, deception, ignoring, etc.

inaccessible significant adults, next to whom the child felt unnecessary and unwanted. He grew up in an environment in which he could not satisfy the basic need for a sense of security. In addition, in most cases, such a child learned quite early what physical violence, lies and manipulation are, and he observed such behavior in relatives who were important to him (parents, friends, relatives, etc.) [13].

According to Y. N. Korablina, the abuser shows the following systematic signs. Firstly, he seeks to establish total control and limit the freedom of the victim, shows aggression towards the defenseless and weak. The abuser also ignores other people's personal boundaries and constantly criticizes the victim. A characteristic feature of his behavior is sudden mood swings. If the victim begins to realize the abnormality of the situation, the abuser radically changes his behavior, becoming charming and friendly [6].

In relation to children, abuse manifests itself in the form of depersonalization, when the child goes into the game to process traumatic experiences. Dissociation also occurs — the separation of thoughts from consciousness, which is accompanied by trigger thoughts. Children may resort to defensive comparisons of others, demonstrate obsessive actions, depressive symptoms such as moodiness, tearfulness and decreased appetite, as well as show negative thinking. They often develop a pessimistic attitude towards the future, they are absorbed in trauma, expect violence and feel external control. Such children are afraid of people who resemble the abuser, and show anxious and affective reactions [6].

E. G. Sizova notes several patterns in the behavior of the abuser. After the abuser appears to the victim as a kind of "ideal": loving, caring, attentive, strong and reliable (etc.), having won over the right person and gained access to his inner "child part", acting as a conditionally "caring parent", he gradually sets in motion the mechanism of "projection" projecting onto the victim his own detached parts (feelings of his own insignificance, with which he has no experience of coping). Everything that the abuser splits off from his own personality, what is unacceptable to him in himself, he begins to project onto the victim. However, at first information is provided about the "shortcomings" of the victim under the guise of caring for her, masquerading as a desire to help, protect and secure her. Otherwise, the victim may simply not take his projection and leave the relationship. But it is not enough for the abuser to project negative parts of his personality onto the victim, he needs the victim to believe in the reality of his own insignificance. Other methods of suggestion are used here: cunning, lies, distortion of the reality of what is happening, etc. In this case, the mechanism of projective identification is triggered, in which one side (the abuser) projects onto the other side (the victim) something that is denied in itself, while the victim, under the influence of learned introjects (psychological protection, in this context it means: parental messages, attitudes), unconsciously begins to identify with those projected on it properties and qualities. Consequently, in the relationship between the abuser and the victim, a state of transference works, i.e. the unconscious transfer of previously experienced feelings and emotions manifested in relationships with some people (most likely parents) to another person" [13].

According to K.V. Panina and A.A. Kulikova, the abuser is distinguished by the desire to accelerate the development of relations, without taking into account the partner's willingness to change. He often shows sudden mood swings: in public he shows care and attention, and in private he humiliates, insults and threatens. Humiliation is often covered up with jokes, after which the abuser accuses the victim of having no sense of humor. The abuser regularly compares the partner with other people, makes critical remarks, creating a constant feeling of inferiority in the victim. He always shifts the blame onto the victim, even in situations where he is guilty, forcing her to justify herself. Restricting the victim's communication with friends and family is another characteristic feature that the abuser justifies with imaginary reasons. He often promises to change his behavior, but never fulfills these promises. At the same time, the abuser refuses to admit his mistakes and never apologizes for them.

According to K. V. Panina and A. A. Kulikova, the causes of abusive behavior may be mental abnormalities and negative past experiences, especially if the child himself was subjected to violence or bullying in childhood. This behavior is often formed as a result of relationships with parents, where the child did not know other ways to interact with loved ones. The abuser seeks to assert himself through violence, using force and power to satisfy his own needs [11].

A.D. Stark, N.V. Azarova, Y.I. Leonova, Y.S. Ulyanova believe that the abuser has the following qualities: narcissism, arrogance, thirst for attention, aggressiveness, low level of self-control and empathy, a tendency to lie, jealousy and manipulation. At the same time, the authors note that the first signs of abuse are total control and jealousy. An atypical pattern is observed in the relationship between the dominant and the oppressed side: the first focuses on the search for (most often completely absurd) arguments that help to prove the inadequacy of the second. In addition, the authors point to a distinctive feature of the abuser – a tendency to sadism [10].

A.S. Isaeva, A.A. Skupeiko provide a list of actions that the abuser uses in relation to the victim in the context of psychological violence. These actions include: coercion, prohibitions, restrictions, isolation, reproaches, rudeness, indifference to feelings, coercion of success, shouting and insults. The reasons for this behavior, researchers call the lack of parental education, experienced violence, a tendency to manipulation, as well as an excessive desire to control everything, have power and dominate others [5]. In other words, abusers use coercive behavior. The term "coercive" comes from the Latin word *coercitio*, which means "coercion", "deterrence" or "control". The verb itself consists of two parts: *co-* ("together") and *arcere* ("hold", "restrain"). Collectively, this means "to hold someone together", but in a broader sense it translates as "to restrain by force" or "to force". In modern language, the word "coercive" describes any action aimed at forcing someone to act against their will or restrict their freedom.

Coercive behavior is a form of psychological or physical influence aimed at controlling, manipulating, or suppressing another person. It is characterized by the systematic use of threats, intimidation, punishment, or emotional pressure to achieve desired behavior on the part of the victim.

Examples of coercive behavior:

- control over financial resources;
- restriction of social activity and contacts with other people;
- constant criticism, humiliation or devaluation;
- the use of threats of physical violence or punishment;
- blackmail or manipulation of emotions to induce feelings of guilt or fear.

Coercive behavior is common in abusive relationships and can lead to serious psychological and emotional trauma for the victim. Such behavior has a serious negative impact on the victim — her daily life and mental health.

Summarizing the above, let's highlight the psychological portrait of the abuser (abuser). Such a person has the following characteristics: authoritarianism, aggressiveness, irresponsibility, lack of empathy, short temper, rudeness, despotism; as well as frequent duplicitous behavior, the predominance of cruelty, anger, impulsivity, deceit. Machiavellianism, pathological narcissism, distrust, lack of formation and emptiness of the "I-concept", suspicion, resentment, indifference, egocentrism, the need for power and control – all this can be attributed to the spectrum of characteristics of the abuser.

The abuser's behavior clearly shows an emphasis on the negative aspects of life and the ambivalence of a social role: at home he acts as a tyrant, and in society he is an ideal person. He demonstrates only "I am perfect", "I am unnatural", "I am right" and "I am the best", abuses trust, ignores and violates other people's boundaries. The abuser identifies himself with the objects of adoration and has a distorted view of reality. In a relationship with a partner, he uses ultimatums, threats, accusations, blackmail, interrogations, orders, provocations and criticism, and also plays non-social roles, for example, a parent or boss. He is characterized by sarcasm, malicious jokes, lability of mood and feelings, manipulation of other people and failure to fulfill promises. The abuser negatively evaluates the partner, work and society as a whole, shows a lack of self-control and devalues other people. He seeks to control and dominate, satisfying infantile needs, denies the identity of other people and everything important to them, positions himself as an expert in all spheres of life. He also strives for support, recognition, popularity and pity from others, while prone to exaggerating his abilities and violating other people's borders. The abuser often criticizes others, compares a loved one with others and seeks to "clip the wings", making him helpless, dependent and needy, avoiding responsibility and shifting the blame to others.

The reasons for this behavior are several factors. One of the key factors is the lack of love, affection and empathy on the part of parents, which leads to the formation of negative qualities in a person. Prolonged exposure to crisis and stress also contributes to the development of destructive behavior. The infantile personality, which manifests itself in the inability to emotional stress and the ability to reckon with others, also plays an important role. The model of behavior adopted from childhood, when healthy ways of interaction were not demonstrated to a person, is transformed into destructive actions in adulthood. A person can accept a social role from significant figures such as parents, caregivers, teachers, or leaders and reproduce it in their relationships. The fear of loneliness makes the abuser subordinate another person, making him dependent. The desire to assert oneself and compensate for one's unrealized in society is also one of the reasons for such behavior.

We want to complete the portrait of the abuser based on our many years of research. The abuser has the following personality qualities: aggressiveness, ambition, carelessness, flighty, love of power, influence, belligerence, short temper, arrogance, rudeness, dictatorship, malice, cruelty, envy, arrogance, boredom, obsession and schadenfreude, intolerance, conservatism, coersivity, deceitfulness, masochism, obsession, narcissism, perseverance, alertness, infantilism, negativism, distrust, unpredictability, inconsistency, uncontrollability, suspicion, bias, pickiness, jealousy, self-aggrandizement, sarcasm, waywardness, vanity, stubbornness, cunning, coldness, selfishness and emotionality.

Due to the fact that the behavior of abusers is often compared with personality disorders [2], [4], it should be noted that in some cases, abusers are convinced of the existence of things, situations that do not exist; the presence of smells that are absent in reality; hearing words that no one uttered at that moment. However, very often such a disorder is characterized by difficulties in establishing and maintaining healthy relationships, as well as an inability to feel empathy and empathy for other people. However, not all people who exhibit violent behavior in relationships necessarily have a personality disorder. Therefore, the highlighted psychological portrait of the abuser is only conditional. These features of abusers were identified based on the analysis of research by various practicing psychologists and their own research.

It is worth noting that abuse can manifest itself both verbally and non-verbally. Verbal abuse is a form of mental abuse that can occur in a home or professional environment. It is carried out with the help of words and speech that create a negative or humiliating effect on another person. Unlike non-verbal abuse, where gestures and facial expressions play the main role, verbal abuse transmits information through language as the main sign system. Verbal abuse uses language knowledge, namely vocabulary and syntax, to convey thoughts and feelings in order to suppress the victim's personality. Speech is the most effective means of verbal communication, because it allows you to accurately convey information. Therefore, abusers often use aggressive criticism, insults or condemnation of another person as a means to implement the abuse.

Examples of verbal abuse:

1. The use of offensive words and gestures: for example, swearing, insults, ridicule, etc. – to express disrespect or hatred.
2. Harsh tone and intonation: for example, a loud, insistent, harsh tone or a tone with threats and frightening words.
3. Imposing wrong opinions: for example, asserting that someone's opinions are wrong or ridiculous, without argument or respectful discussion.
4. Constant criticism and contempt: for example, the use of nationalistic, sexist or homophobic comments that humiliate another person.
5. Blackmail and threats: for example, the threat of breaking up a relationship or dismissal if the victim does not meet the requirements of the abuser.
6. Denial of personal space and personal boundaries: for example, intrusive control over another person's life, physical violence and the requirement of access to confidential information.
7. Decreased confidence and self-esteem: for example, the ability to convince the victim that she is worthless, constant humiliation of the victim's qualities affecting her self-esteem.

Non-verbal abuse is when a victim is subjected to psychological abuse using non-verbal means of communication. This way of implementing the abuse occurs without the use of words and language. It includes all body expressions such as gestures, facial expressions and intonation. This body language helps to convey emotions and communicate information about a person's mood. Understanding nonverbal signals is an important prerequisite for effective recognition of abuse. Knowing body language helps not only to better understand your interlocutor, but also to anticipate how he will react to what he hears from another person. This can help you achieve the desired result and change your behavior, if necessary.

Here are some examples of non-verbal abuse:

1. Avoiding eye contact. A person who allows non-verbal abuse may deliberately avoid eye contact. He may look away or at the floor when you talk to him. This allows him to avoid responsibility for his actions and expresses a lack of respect and attention to you.
2. Irritability. When a victim is subjected to non-verbal abuse, she can be constantly in tension, because the abusing behavior can manifest itself in the worst possible way. This can happen when a person becomes irritable, when they talk to another person, or when they do something that needs to be done.
3. The expressionlessness of the face. If a person who is in a non-verbal abuser does not show emotions on his face, then this may mean that he is trying to hide his real feelings from the victim. This can be expressed in the fact that he never smiles or does not take jokes.
4. Psychological violence through gestures. An annoying, harsh, aggressive gesture is also a form of non-verbal abuse. A person can use gestures to control others, express their concern, intimidate, etc.
5. Misunderstanding. A person who often abuses behavior can consciously or unconsciously interfere with understanding, believing in the correctness and understanding of what the victim is saying. Unjustified misunderstandings and accusations are also a form of non-verbal abuse.
6. Persistence. The use of increased rigidity and volitional/managerial orders is also a form of non-verbal abuse.
7. Passive hostile behavior. The abuser may use passive behavior to express his displeasure. For example, he is silent when the victim speaks to him or ignores her needs, requests.

Of all the listed examples of non-verbal abuse, the most important sign is that the victim feels some pressure regarding the abusing behavior of a person, and this creates a situation in which the victim feels that her opinion is less significant than the opinion of another person.

It is important to note that the abuser seeks to vent his own anger. He gets a boost of energy and motivation after inflicting mental pain on another. This behavior is comparable to the behavior of a vampire who feeds on someone else's blood. In the behavior of the abuser, one can observe constant control (coersivity), dominance and regular "biting" of the victim. Hence, it is more appropriate to replace the term "abuser" with "coersivist". This concept refers to a person prone to aggressive behavior, that is, using emotional, psychological and sometimes physical influence, in the context of which there are systematic attempts to suppress or restrict the freedom of another person. This may include manipulation, threats, isolation, gaslighting and other control methods.

At the same time, the nature of the manifestation of the coersivist depends on the style of the relationship. For example, parents show coercive behavior towards their children in the form of their projections. In their relationships with elderly parents, adult co-parenting children are guided by resentments that have been accumulating and negatively enriching for many years.

It is worth noting that in the era of modern technology, many people have become to some extent abusive and coercive, as "disappearing on the Internet" deprive of attention, love and care of loved ones. Based on this, the tendency towards emotional deficit is growing, there are more contradictions in interpersonal relationships, and acts of cruelty, aggression, coersivity and violence are more common.

### **Conclusion**

The study of the abuser's psychological characteristics is an important step in understanding the underlying psychological mechanisms underlying abusive behavior. The results of this study highlight the need for a comprehensive approach to a problem that affects not only victims of violence, but also society itself, which is faced with the consequences of abusive relationships.

Abusive behavior is formed as a result of impaired attachment, narcissism, lack of empathy and the ability to self-control. It is important to understand that violence is not an innate quality, but an acquired behavior developed in childhood under the influence of destructive interpersonal relationships, lack of love and attention from parents. Abusers, despite their external aggression and dominance, are often traumatized people themselves, who transfer their internal conflicts and resentments to others.

The cyclical nature of abusive relationships is one of the key problems that prevents behavior change. Without awareness of their actions and their consequences, the abuser cannot get out of this vicious circle. However, awareness and work with deep psychological traumas can change the dynamics of relationships, which requires not only individual work with abusers, but also changes at the level of social and legal systems.

An important aspect is society's awareness of the destructive power of psychological violence, which, unlike physical violence, often goes unnoticed. Its long-term consequences can include deep psychoemotional traumas in victims, up to suicidal tendencies and the formation of psychocide - the extinction of personality.

To effectively prevent and solve the problem of abusive relationships, it is necessary to focus efforts on developing empathy, dialogue skills and respect for each person's personal boundaries. Society should pay more attention to informing about the mechanisms of abuse and actively support victims in finding a way out of destructive relationships. It is extremely important to educate the younger generation in non-violent ways of communication and conflict resolution, thereby creating the basis for healthy and harmonious relationships in the future.

In this context, we are ready not only to continue research on the problem of abuse, but also to actively participate in the development and implementation of government programs aimed at combating violence in all its forms. We are open to dialogue and cooperation with government agencies, social services and educational institutions. We believe that solving the problem of violence is impossible without the active participation of the State, as well as the inclusion of this topic in the agenda of social and demographic policy.

We are convinced that it is impossible to achieve sustainable demographic growth and well-being of citizens if various forms of violence continue to flourish in society. Moreover, only a healthy society, free from violence, can serve as an example and standard of high-quality social policy in the international arena. State support in the fight against violence will be an important step towards creating a safe and just society where everyone feels protected and respected.

#### *References / Список литературы*

1. *Anfinogentova M.D.* Abuse and abusive relations / M.D. Anfinogentova // Science of the XXI century: current directions of development. – 2020. – № 1–1. – P. 118–120.
2. *Buryakovskaya V.A.* The quasi-scientific term "toxic" in the modern blogosphere (based on the material of Russian, English and French languages) / V.A. Buryakovskaya, O.A. Dmitrieva // Proceedings of the Volgograd State Pedagogical University. – 2022. – № 5(168). – P. 132–139.
3. *Zeigarnik B.V.* (1900-1988.) Pathopsychology: [Studies for universities in spec. "Psychology"] / B.V. Zeigarnik. – 2nd ed., reprint. and additional – Moscow: Publishing House of Moscow State University, 1986. – 286 p.
4. *Ignatova E.S.* Abusing and gaslighting in interpersonal relations between a man and a woman / E.S. Ignatova, E.D. Razvedova // Youth in science: new arguments: international youth collection of scientific articles / The responsible editor is A.V. Gorbenko. – Lipetsk: Scientific Partnership "Argumentum", 2018. – P. 228–232.
5. *Isayeva A.S.* Psychological characteristics of abuse victims: a theoretical analysis / A.S. Isayeva, A.A. Skupeyko // Psychology, education: current and priority areas of research: Materials of the international student scientific and practical conference dedicated to the 120th anniversary of the birth of L.V. Zankov, Tver, April 22-23, 2021. – Tver: Tver State University, 2021. – P. 327–331.
6. *Korablina Y.N.* Signs and difference between PAS and abuse / Yu.N. Korablina // We love you both: proceedings of the first international scientific conference on the problem of parental alienation, St. Petersburg, May 28-30, 2021 / St. Petersburg Institute of Psychological Counseling, National Association of Researchers of Parental Alienation Syndrome. – St. Petersburg: Limited Liability Company "Center for the Promotion of Education", 2022. – P. 139–146.
7. *Lifanova T.E.* Abuse in the modern world: markers of abuse / T.E. Lifanova, E.A. Rogovenkina // Socio-psychological challenges of modern society. Problems. The prospects. Ways of development: Materials of the VI International Scientific and Practical Conference, Bryansk, April 22, 2021. – Bryansk: Bryansk State University named after Academician I. G. Petrovsky, 2021. – P. 227–230.
8. *Mikhalkova E.I., Radchenko S.A.* Abuse: from A to Z. – M.: Publishing house "Pero", 2024. – 608 p.
9. *Mikhalkova E.I.* Acceptance of the other as a rejection of the abuse / E.I. Mikhalkova, S.A. Radchenko // European Science. – 2023. – № 1(65). – P. 76-88. – DOI 10.24411/2410-2865-2023-10105.
10. Features of ideas about abusive relationships among representatives of modern youth / N.V. Azarova, Yu.S. Ulyanova, Yu.I. Leonova, A.D. Stark // Materials of the University Student Scientific and practical conference of Kaluga State University named after K. E. Tsiolkovsky, Kaluga, April 22-23, 2021. Kaluga: Publishing House of Kaluga State University named after K. E. Tsiolkovsky, 2021. – P. 228–231.
11. *Panina K.V., Kulikova A.A.* Abuser: who is in a relationship. [Text]– M.: NovaInfo.Ru. 2021. № 123. P. 49–50.

12. *Semenov I.A.* Domestic violence against women. Some features of the abuse / I.A. Semenov, P.A. Savelyeva // Women's activity: history and modernity: materials of the International Scientific and Practical Conference, Makhachkala, January 21-22, 2021. – Makhachkala: ALEF Limited Liability Company, 2021. – P. 129–132.
13. *Sizova E.G.* Abuser. Who is it and what is it eaten with? / E. G. Sizova // Organization of work with youth. – 2021. – № 5.