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EXPECTATIONS TOWARDS THE FUTURE AS A SPHERE OF RESOURCES OF THE SO CALLED DIFFICULT YOUTH

Introduction

The postmodern era we live in, is characterised by the occurrence of numerous changes. In literature these changes are signalled mainly within the scope of patterns of femininity and masculinity realization (Boski and Mikulska, 1999; Poortinga, 1992). They concern the functioning within the occupational and family roles as well as the sexual roles (Boski, 1999; Strykowska, 1999; Ellison, 2005; Bee, 2004). These changes, therefore, occur in the most intimate spheres of life. These changes are partly related with the discontinuation of the patterns of functioning applied in the previous eras (Baumann, 1996; Giddens, 2001; Kwiatkowska, 2011). According to Zygmunt Bauman (1996), one of the consequences of living in the postmodern era is the danger of dichotomisation of the societies. The societies may divide into two groups. The first group may accustom to the changes and use the opportunities arising from the destabilisation of the patterns. The second group, however, may not possess the skills or resources needed to cope with the expectations of the present times. Anna Kotlarska-Michalska (2007) points out the uncertainty of life and lack of clearly defined, effective solutions that reduce fear concerning the unknown future. It applies to many aspects of life like the financial, social, occupational spheres as well as to the sphere of identity of the modern youth. The normative crisis in this age, therefore, which in itself reveals the resources of individuals and the abilities of coping with the “new” may be deepened by a new crisis, namely by the absence of patterns of coping with the diffidence or formulating “reflective I construal” (Kotlarska-Michalska, 2007; Erikson, 2004; Havighurst, 1981; Brzezińska, 2000; Giddens, 2001).

Nowadays researchers studying the period of adolescence (Trempała 2000; Liberska 2004, 2007) indicate the relation between the orientation towards the

future and the realisation of life tasks, making decisions and shaping one's identity. That is why coping with new situations (concerning the inner and outer world) is related to the reorganisation of the psychological structures and may appear not only within the actual experience but also in the expected one (Pervin, 2002; Tyszkowa, 1988, 1993; Liberska 2004, 2007). Orientation towards the future is not only the resultant of age and perceived normative events but is shaped mostly by the socio-cultural reality.

Theoretical Grounds

The starting point towards creation of the research model was the model of developmental changes presented by Trempała and Malmberg (Trempała, 2000). The main assumption of the model is that the temporal perspective may determine the relations between past, present and future. The present may be perceived from the perspective of the remembered past or the anticipated future. The basic categories applied in the considerations about temporal expectations were: the context and the individual experience¹. This model assumes that the individual experience is organized within the frame of two systems: the scheme of social knowledge and one's self-perception (Trempała, 2000). Additionally, two-dimensionality of social knowledge has been emphasized: a sense of normativity and the gap between generations. The self-knowledge, on the other hand, has been characterized by self-esteem and a sense of control over one's own future. Trempała's (2000) research results indicate that the individual experience is more important than the cultural one for the formation of the future perspectives. In this article it is presumed that the process of future perspectives shaping of an individual occurs through the acquisition of experience, its structuring and restructuring – particularly in the area of self-knowledge (Trempała 2000, Tyszkowa 1988).

In the analysis of the researched areas three levels of research – after Stanisław Kowalik, were distinguished: inner-psycho, macro-social, and interpersonal (Kowalik, 2002). In the inner-psycho aspect it is assumed that the changes occur due to the influence of socio-cultural environments interactions

¹ The model creators assumed the following levels of context: macro-level (socio-historical events i.e. social changes), exo-level (local events i.e. sport, cultural, or business related events), meso-level (various spheres of life i.e. professional or school career, family life), micro-level (daily events i.e. shopping, parent-teacher conference, meetings, interpersonal relations within the family structure) (Liberska, 2004). The distinguished levels constitute the socio-cultural context that influences and creates various conditions for the human development and its preservation. Its impact occurs directly on the individual experience, and directly and indirectly – throughout the experience of the individual – on the group of future oriented processes.

and are described as an intrapersonal level. In the second distinguished aspect – macro-social level, it is assumed that the organization of the social life as well as the products of both material and immaterial (symbolic) culture contribute to the creation of the new knowledge and skills of an individual, enabling the individual to participate actively in a group life. The third mentioned above sphere (interpersonal level) highlights the importance of the significant individuals and groups, which when linked by direct relations, majorly influence the course of the process of socialization (it refers to the whole system: the defined subject and the significant group).

The above mentioned levels describe different aspects of psychological life which contain described previously experiences in the scope of event influence evaluation, expectations towards the future, timing of events occurrence and the organization of a family. In the described research model the event influence evaluation and the expectations towards the future were qualified as intrapersonal sphere, family situation of the participants as interpersonal sphere, whereas changes connected with the different dates of the researches were qualifies as an indicator of the macro-social sphere.

If we assume the model of competitive influence presented by Zygfryd Juczyński, which highlights the role of motivational-volitional structures in the process of behavior change or planning future action, then the sphere of future events evaluation is a part of it (Juczyński, 2003). Deciding upon behavior or changing it is not always a result of rationale action (Klauer, 2009; Schwarz, 2009). Well-known facts, social cognition psychology and Juczyński (2003) himself, highlight the role of a personal aspect. A previous action is the basis for an individual to acquire experience and data in the sphere of self-knowledge (about his/her competence and perseverance), which are later on used while planning the next action. An intra-psychoic element is, therefore, based on the evaluation processes created before, during and after an action, may condition the decision-making process of an action (planned or undertaken).

In order to recognize the essence of the occurring changes the idea presented by Robert Havighurst (1981), in which the process of human development may be presented as a series of tasks that are to be fulfilled, was applied. The reason for undertaking each task is the realization of social expectations towards each developmental stage. For the character of these tasks they may be also called normative developmental events (Trempeła, 2000). Members of the researched group (in the age of 18-26) shared the same tasks of early adulthood, such as selecting a mate, starting a family, rearing children, managing home, getting started in occupation, taking on civic responsibility, finding a congenial social group (Gurba, 2000, Havighurst, 1981). The chosen stage in human life is characterized by the possibility of complete independence both in actions and in decision making (including decisions about the future) (Bee, 2004; Gurba, 2000).

Research Purpose

Previous researches (Farnicka, 2011) indicate significant changes in the scope of self-esteem and sense of influence on events between groups coming from different education environments. The research, therefore, focuses on searching differences and similarities in the essence of event evaluation significance connected with realisation of developmental tasks and with expected future events among people coming from different family environments. The aim of the research is to find the answer to the question: "Do the similarities in the scope of evaluation of specific events among Young Adults coming from different family environments exist and what do they concern?" The assumed hypothesis concerns the existence of the differences among the subgroups. The null hypothesis ("There are differences in evaluation of event significance between the distinguished groups.") is presented below.

Moreover, the previous researches, presented during the International Conference on Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (Farnicka, 2010), indicated that there was a tendency to change the event evaluation, self-image and sense of influence on events among participants who admitted to have experienced traumatic event. The research analyses spheres like: self-esteem, event influence evaluation and making expectations towards the future. The study results indicated the differences between the verification of events related to occupational and family life. In each age group (15-18, 19-25 and 25-35) the evaluation of the influence of each event on life decreased from strongly positive towards moderately positive. On the basis of the research results the author asked another question: "What are the differences in the spheres of events evaluation and expectations in the group of participants from foster families in 2008 (T1), 2009 (T2) and 2010 (T3)?" It was expected that in accordance with the elapsed time event evaluation would decrease. The second null hypothesis was set forth, namely: With each subsequent research (in T1, T2 and T3) event influence evaluation among participants from foster families decrease.

Research Tools

In the study the following research tools have been used:

- The Bene-Anthony Family Relations Test based on Frydrychowicz (1986) study,
- a tool studying the assessment of event influence on the life of an individual presented by Boszkiewicz (1997),
- a tool investigating the spheres of expected changes in a form of questionnaire (Farnicka 2009).

The Bene-Anthony Family Relations Test explores the directions and intensity of the outgoing and incoming feelings among the family members. During the test, participants under study choose one member of a family and characterize him/her. The statements are classified (according to the key) as strongly positive, moderately positive, indifferent, moderately negative and strongly positive. The procedure of testing the emotional climate of a family and the analysis of the test is presented in details by Frydrychowicz (1993) in her book.

The tool investigating assessment of event influence on the life of an individual is based on the Life Experience Questionnaire by Boszkiewicz (1997). The questionnaire comprises of 20 questions concerning events from young adulthood. The respondents defined the importance of a particular event (e.g. first work, graduation from a school) on a 7-point scale, where '6' is extremely positive and '0' is extremely negative.

In the study carried out with the use of the tool investigating the spheres of expected changes, the participants defined the sphere of life which, according to them, will change and decide on the probability of this sphere changing for better. On the scale from 0-5, 0 meaning that the life (in a particular sphere) will change for worse, 1 – will not get better, 2 – will slightly get better, 3 – will get better, 4 – will substantially get better, 5 – definitely is going to change for better.

The Description of a Researched Group

The research was carried out in two groups. The first group was composed of participants coming from natural families with a positive emotional climate. In this group the research was carried out by means of the Bene-Anthony Family Relations Test. The second group was composed of participants coming from foster families and educational institutions (Table 1.). The research was carried out three times.

106 Young Adults took part in the first stage of the research – 76 women and 30 men. All of the participants came from the lubuskie region. The research in the subgroup of people from foster families and educational institutions were possible to carry out thanks to PCPR in Zielona Góra. This group is the fundamental group, whereas their peers from natural families compose the control group.

Table 1. Researched group (N=106)

Young Adults from:	Overall	Women	Men
Foster families	48 (45.28%)	32 (66.67%)	16 (33.33%)
Natural families	58 (54.72%)	44 (75.86%)	14 (24.14%)
total	106 (100%)	76 (71.7%)	30 (28.3%)

Source: Own work

People from the natural (nuclear) families were further divided into three groups according to the emotional climate of a family (The Bene-Anthony Family Relations Test): extremely positive, moderate and negative.

In both groups (foster and nuclear families) there were noticeable differences in education, current occupational activity and family status. Most of the participants from nuclear families were studying (school or higher education) or working, as opposed to the group of participants coming from foster families or orphanages, who were mostly unemployed or were studying at postsecondary schools. Among the second group, 40% of participants of the research had primary or vocational education, 50% had secondary education and 10 % were studying (only women). In the group of youth coming from nuclear families with positive climate, 80% were studying, 20% had secondary education (see Farnicka, 2011).

The Research Progress

The research was carried out in two stages. At the beginning, the two groups of Young Adults were compared in accordance with the variables such as: event influence evaluation and changes expected in future life. Subsequently, the results were compared with the results from the consecutive research (T1, T2, T3) in the group of participants coming from foster families or educational institutions.

Research Results

Emotional Climate of a Family

According to the emotional climate of a family, three groups of different emotional climate were distinguished: positive, moderate and negative. The results gathered from the participants from nuclear families may fall in each category. Strongly positive and positive climate was indicated by 35% of the participants, moderately positive by 55% and 10% indicated negative emotional climate. Among the second group - participants coming from foster families or educational institutions, 10% indicated moderately positive climate, 55% moderately negative and as much as 35% indicated negative emotional climate of a family (see Table 2.)

Table 2. Emotional climate amongst the participants (N=106)

Emotional climate of a family	Number of people	Strongly positive	Moderately positive	Moderately negative	Strongly negative
Foster families	48 (45,28%)		5 (10%)	26 (55%)	17 (35%)
Natural Families (control group)	58 (100%)	20 (35%)	32 (55%)		6 (10%)

Source: Own work

Event Influence Evaluation

The most positive events in both groups were completion of education process, first job and promotion at work. The event that negatively influences life was job loss. Worth noticing is the fact that the differences important statistically were the evaluation of completion of education process, involvement in social events, promotion at work and job loss. Members of the control group evaluate the positive influence of these events lower. It means that they perceive job loss as very negative. In order to establish the significance of the mentioned above differences the means were compared in the parametric Student's *t*-test for independent samples.

Table 3. Differences and similarities between groups

Categories of event influence evaluation	Researched group (people from foster families, N=47)		Control Group (N=57)		Significance Student's <i>t</i>
	M	SD	M	SD	
Completion of education process	6.19	1.07	5.40	1.33	0.0001
First job	5.83	1.16	5.13	1.23	0.02
Involvement in social events	5.81	1.09	4.53	1.56	0.0001
Promotion at work	5.93	1.26	5.02	0.171	0.006
Job loss	1.51	1.09	0.09	1.2	0.0001
Moving to own apartment	5.41	2.58	5.02	1.34	0.345
Choice of a life-partner	5.80	2.06	5.26	1.13	0.12
Change of work	4.33	2.48	3.91	1.47	0.39

Source: Own work

The statistical analysis of the *t*-test ($\alpha = 0.05$) showed that the differences between the two groups concern the evaluation of events like: choice of a life-partner, moving to own apartment or change of work. Members of both groups indicated that these changes are strongly positive or positive. The differences occurred in the evaluation of the influence of: school completion, first job, involvement in social events, promotion at work and job loss. Members of the researched group claimed that the influence of these events is strongly positive as opposed to members of the control group (see Table 3.).

Expectations Towards the Future Events

The answers on the question about the directions of changes showed that members of the researched group did not expect positive changes in the next five years neither in occupational life, material life or family life. They did not expect their situation to change for worse or better. However, members of the control group expected changes for better in every sphere. All participants predicted changes in the sphere of family life (choice of a life-partner, giving birth to the first child) and occupational life (first job or the change of work).

Event Influence Evaluation Studied Among Participants From Foster Families in Three Time Intervals

The results of the research in the evaluation of the influence of events related to the realization of developmental tasks of young adulthood within 3 years, indicate the gradual process of changing the opinion in two spheres – in the sphere of events related to occupational life (completion of school, job loss, promotion at work). The second sphere was related to event influence evaluation from the area of private life (starting up a family, moving to own apartment and choosing a life partner)

When comparing the results it is easily noticeable that the accomplished events – completion of school, first job, decrease in the importance of positive influence, whereas expected events (promotion at work, moving to own apartment) gain in value. Moreover, the dependency on the time of research in the case of taking up first job is highly visible (Pearson's correlation coefficient $r=0.9$, $p=0.05$). In each subsequent research the positive value of this event decreased (see Table 4.). The analysis by means of parametric test for dependent groups showed the existence of differences between the first and second surveying.

Furthermore, the negative evaluation of the job loss influence increases over time. The decreasing indexes indicate the increase in the negative influence of this event upon life (1.84 to 0.9).

Worth noticing is the stability in the evaluation of the involvement in social events and in the events related with building the intimate relations (choosing a life-partner).

Table 4. Event evaluation in the space of three years (standard averages and variables)

Categories of event influence evaluation	2008	2009	2010	Significance 2008-2009	Significance 2008 - 2010	Significance 2009-2010
Completion of education process	5.85 (0.92)	5.34 (1.07)	5.58 (1.25)	0.0001	0.012	0.2
First job	5.83 (1.16)	5.62 (2.06)	4.23 (1.41)	0.004	0.001	0.03
Involvement in social events	5.81 (1.09)	5.6 (0.93)	4.68 (1.34)	0.055	0.001	0.0035
Promotion at work	5.93 (1.3)	4.5 (1.05)	5.96 (1.71)	0.0001	0.2	0.0001
Job loss	1.9 (2.04)	1.8 (1.32)	1.6 (0.53)	0.061	0.001	0.0001
Moving to own apartment	5.41 (1.52)	5.8 (1.07)	5.93 (1.45)	0.0001	0.001	0.0001
Choice of a life-partner	5.80 (1.38)	5.86 (0.57)	-	0.055		-
Change of work	4.33 (1.5)	4.55 (1.64)	-	0.541		-

Source: Own work

The figure 1 presents the results from Table 4.

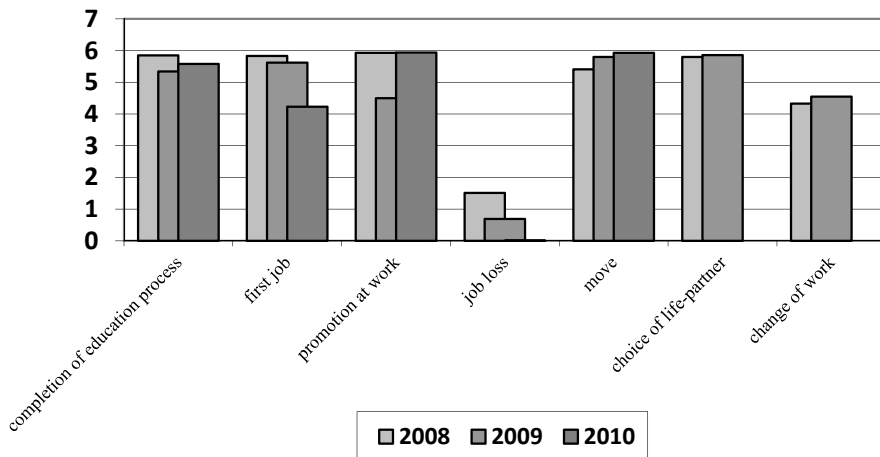


Figure 1. Change of event evaluation (by M. Farnicka)

Expectations Of The Participants From Foster Families During The Three-Year Stretch Of Time

The study on the expectations showed that the participants of the research indicated family as the only sphere where changes could occur. The participants did not expect any changes in the spheres of professional life and health to appear within 5 years. During the first two researches they demonstrated rather low expectations towards the direction of the change. In the first research the participants assumed that it is rather unlikely that their life will improve (see Table 5.; index 1.6, standard deviation 0.76 on a scale from 0 to 6). In the third research the expectation for the life to change for better increased significantly (index 4.2).

Table 5. Direction of expected changes in family life

Date of research	M	SD
2008	2.04	0.76
2009	2.03	0.77
2010	4.2	0.75

Source: Own work

Summary of Results

The aim of the study and the research results analysis was to find the answer to the following questions:

- Do the similarities in the scope of evaluation of specific events among Young Adults coming from different family environments exist and what do they concern?
- What are the differences in the spheres of events evaluation and expectations in the group of participants from foster families in 2008 (T1), 2009 (T2) and 2010 (T3)?

The research results analysis show that there are 5 out of 8 events as to which there are different answers about the event influence among the participants. The hypothesis that there are differences in evaluation of selected events significance between the distinguished groups is, therefore, confirmed. The differences concern events such as: completion of school, first job, involvement is social events, promotion at work or job loss. The hypothesis was not confirmed in the case of events such as change of work, choosing a life partner and moving to own apartment.

As an answer to the first research question, the results show that the spheres in which the differences/similarities did not occur between groups relate to:

- moving to own apartment, choosing the life partner and change of work (in the scope of future event evaluation),
- parenthood and choice of a life partner (in the scope of expectations towards normative events).

The differences, however, were related to the expectations of positive changes in one's life and the evaluation of events concerning professional life (completion of school, taking up first job, involvement in social activities, promotion at work or job loss).

As for the question concerning the changes occurring between subsequent researches in the event influence evaluation and expectations it can be said that, as it was assumed, the evaluation changed significantly. The strongly positive evaluation of completion of school, taking up job and involvement in social actions decreased. Furthermore, job loss became perceived as strongly negative event. Therefore, it is possible to agree with the second hypothesis that with each subsequent research (in T1, T2 and T3) event influence evaluation among participants from foster families decrease but only in case of events such as: completion of school, taking up first job and job loss. In case of other events (choosing one's life-partner, moving to own apartment promotion at work) this hypothesis is invalid.

On the basis of the conducted research it is possible to claim that the macro-social level influences the differences and similarities. It is reflected by the conformity of the expected normative events, which are hidden in the judgements about the expected and accepted, by a given society, path of life (the persons under research indicated the choice of a life-partner, giving birth to a child, finding a job and living in own apartment).

Moreover, the research results indicate the difference in evaluating events related to professional career and involvement in social activities. Members of the researched group evaluate the influence of the mentioned events as positive. This result may indicate that the importance of these events is over idealized.

Discussion of the Research Results

The aim of the research was to present the way of adaptation to the challenges of modern world and adulthood among the so called "difficult youth" and people diagnosed as normative. The researchers emphasize that in order to effectively develop your own idea of life, one needs to previously anticipate it on a very detailed level (Liberska 2007, Juczyński 2003). In the research model the hypothesis that the process of building temporal expectations and event evaluation occurs during the development of individual experiences under the influence of particular factors of the socio-cultural context. The results of the researches indicate a different evaluation of events connected with professional career and involvement in social

activities. The results, therefore, do not contradict the hypothesis. Strongly positive evaluation of the events related to those spheres may present the over idealized importance of the events connected with first job or choosing a life-partner. This mechanism concerns the normative events of young adulthood. The idealization may be of compensative nature for the deficiencies in other spheres or disturb the perception of reality due to too high expectations from the forthcoming events, which may not be accomplished. This inadequacy between the values and evaluations passed on during the process of socialization may cause disappointment which in turn may disturb the correct evaluation of events (Kotlarska-Michalska, 2007).

High evaluation of events related to family life may present the influence of a dominant pattern of normative values what may be a sign of intrapersonal level that is related to the influence of significant individuals or groups (e.g. family). People who directly interact with each other significantly influence the process of the sense of normativity formation as well as the course of the socialization of an individual in a group such as family. This thesis seems to be confirmed by the constant, invariable picture of Polish youth gained in different researches (see Szczykutowicz, 2011; Farnicka 2010a; OBOP, 1998, 2003, 2005; Olszak-Krzyżanowska 1992). Young Poles very highly and positively evaluate events related to family life and expect particular positive events related to this sphere to occur. Moreover, "family and family life" is in the lead of values in the sociological and psychological research (OBOP, February 2003, July 2005). The research carried out by Szczykutowicz (2011) indicate that young Poles have positive and expanded expectations towards future family than their peers from Belgium. Moreover, the earlier researches carried out by Farnicka (2011) indicate high positive evaluation of parenthood among Young Adults regardless of the emotional climate of the family of origin. These results may be perceived as developmental optimism, or as a pattern adopted from the family of origin.

Similarly, under the influence of widely understood culture it is possible to give reasons of the conformity of the expectations as to normative events, which are hidden in the judgements about the expected and accepted, by a given society, path of life (the persons under research indicated the choice of a life-partner, giving birth to a child, finding a job and living in own apartment). Path of normative development is also the path of current culture and their conformity indicates similar reception and understanding by young people even if they differ in ways of realization of adulthood.

The results of previous researches (Farnicka, 2010a) show the change between event evaluation and the age of participants of the study during young adulthood. The results inclined to observe the event evaluation in the researched group for three years. Subsequently, three theses were advanced. The first one concerns the decline of positive evaluation of events relating to completion of school and first job but increase of positive evaluation of expected events (promotion at work, moving to own apartment). This phenomenon may indicate not only

the developmental character of these changes but also shows passing from accomplishing one task to another in the psychological structures what confirms the correlation of events evaluation with the process of temporal perspectives formation.

The research results in the sphere of the evaluation of job loss among the researched group confirm the negative influence of this event upon the life Young Adults. Over the time not only the evaluation of this event became strongly negative but also the standard deviation of this variable decreased. It is possible to deduce, therefore, that this event becomes interchangeably negative in reception and experience of Young Adults and may be perceived as a danger towards normative development in this age.

While researching the expectations towards the future it is worth taking a closer look at a family. People under research indicated this sphere as the only one in case of which they expect positive changes within five years. What is more, positive expectations towards this sphere increased with each subsequent research. This result may be connected with the process of gaining new experiences and/or becoming emotionally, psychologically independent or becoming more active in this sphere (e.g. creating lasting relationships, expecting offspring). That kind of connection is indicated by the developmental function of undertaking family roles. This issue was studied by Mirosława Matuszewska (1993) and Barbara Harwas-Napierała (1995).

On the basis of the research results and the function of undertaking developmental tasks it may be assumed that it is in the structures connected with the expected future that the change occur. This change is connected with independence in noticing and creating the adult self-image not subject to patterns of the family environment. One may also deduce that the structures of the expected experience (the sphere of perceived change and events evaluation) are more susceptible to the influence of individual's own action than to the structures related to self-knowledge. The sphere connected with the evaluation of future events, therefore, by undergoing changes, appears as a factor transforming previous experiences. By connecting it with the future, it may become a selective modifier of individual's own actions and his/hers future experiences.

On the basis of gathered data it is worth noticing the possible motivational role of evaluation of future experience.

In the view of adopted research model it was assumed that the orientation towards the future is not only a resultant of age and perceived normative events but above all it is shaped in a particular socio-cultural reality as a subjective "theory of one's own life" and integrates the creation of the concept of "I", which is temporal (Trommsdorff 1994, Trempała and Malmberg 1996, Liberska 2007). The results of evaluation of events on an individual's life and the expected areas of change describe not only the differences between people of different environments and of different life experiences but also shows the flexibility of those structures. The occurring changes may indicate a dynamic way of restructuring one's experience

and an adequate way of coping with the situation of constant changes (Tyszka 2007, Liberska 2007).

The highlighted role of future events evaluation incline to advance two conclusions useful in the work related to prevention and rehabilitation. The first conclusion relates to the necessity of learning the knowledge hidden in the evaluation of different events during the undertaken prevention actions among youth. The second conclusion indicates the necessity of work that enables the change of evaluation of significant events both past as well as the future developmental tasks. These effects may also be achieved through enabling the exploration and participation in the reality alternative to the one known from the family environment. Through those actions Young Adults will be able to improve their skills and experience as well as to meet the consequences of events, other than hitherto prevailing. In that kind of process there is a chance to change the previous evaluations of expected events.

The research results encourage to study this phenomenon and the control the changes occurring during the different correctional and preventive measures. The undertaken study and prevention may complete the current state of knowledge and support new ways of actions in preventive programs for people threatened with marginalization.

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