



Axiological dimension of group work in overcoming a personal crisis

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◆ **Abstract.** Contemporary socio-cultural transformations, which cause personal crises and loss of purpose, highlight the need for an axiological dimension in psychotherapeutic assistance. The purpose of the study was to determine how the axiological dimension of group work contributes to overcoming crisis states and affects personal changes. The research was conducted within the framework of a theoretical and methodological approach using a complex of general scientific methods of cognition. The main method used was a theoretical analysis of scientific sources, which helped to systematise and generalise theoretical approaches to understanding the axiological dimension of group work in overcoming a personal crisis. A comparative analysis of leading psychological theories and models (Schwartz, Tajfel and Turner, Feldman) was carried out, which revealed the mechanisms of functioning of values in group interaction. The analysis of these approaches revealed how shared values serve as the basis for creating a safe space where deep self-knowledge, reflection and transformation of the individual in crisis conditions is possible. It was found that values are not only personal guidelines, but also tools for regulating group interaction, determining psychological security, promoting social acceptance, and activating growth resources in a crisis. The form of group work was an effective tool in supporting and rehabilitating a person in a crisis state. It was revealed that values function as regulators of interpersonal interaction, ensuring internal cohesion and external effectiveness of group work. The inclusion of a participant in a value-unified group creates conditions for reflection, rethinking identity, and restoring life's semantic perspective. However, effectiveness is largely determined by the value component, which determines the motivation, nature of communication and quality of relationships in the group

◆ **Keywords:** group psychotherapy; crisis psychology; personality transformation; psychological support; social identity; therapeutic interventions; value systems

◆ Introduction

Contemporary society is in a state of deep socio-cultural transformations, accompanied by increased personal crises, loss of value orientations, and a sense of existential uncertainty. The growing number of people experiencing internal conflicts related to the loss of meaning, identity, or life priorities requires finding effective approaches to overcoming such conditions. In this context, the axiological dimension of psychotherapeutic assistance, which involves a deep understanding and rethinking of the value structures of the individual, becomes particularly important. The problems of the axiological dimension in group psychotherapy in the context of overcoming a personal crisis are

interdisciplinary in nature and were developed in philosophical, psychological, and applied psychotherapeutic contexts by American, Austrian, and Ukrainian researchers. In their study H.O. Homych & O.V. Voitenko (2024) focused on the role of K. Rogers and his concept of value congruence within humanistic psychology, which substantiates the importance of unconditional acceptance, empathy, and authenticity as the foundations of psychological security and personal growth. Research by K. Rogers became the basis for an axiological approach in group therapy, contributing to the development of an environment in which values can be openly expressed and revised. The ideas of

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V. Frankl (2020) were significant, for whom values were the core of personality and the key to overcoming an existential crisis, and the search for meaning was the main mechanism of inner healing. His approach is actively used in logotherapy methods of group psychotherapy. In turn, existential psychology with its leader I. Yalom sees group therapy as a space for value rethinking through live interpersonal interaction, where the group is a mirror for self-awareness, their values, guilt, and responsibility, which, as indicated by O.S. Rybak (2020), promotes self-reflection, empathy development, acceptance, and overcoming isolation in crisis states. Representatives of self-psychology emphasise the role of empathic interaction in the development of personal identity. Thus, the founder of this area, G. Kohut, describes how support and reflection from others contribute to the stabilisation of the "I" and the reconstruction of basic value ideas. Therapeutic relationships act as a means to restore the integrity of the individual after a traumatic experience. Simultaneously, a positive attitude to the future plays a significant role, which is a determining factor in recovery (in particular, post-traumatic growth in combatants), as it increases their confidence in their own capabilities, contributes to effective overcoming of life difficulties, forms an optimistic vision of prospects, and provides better social adaptation in crisis conditions (Reva & Titova, 2024).

O. Baidarova & V. Kachan (2025) examined support groups as a resource for psychosocial care in extreme settings, emphasising the role of shared survival values and mutual assistance in shaping personality resilience. O. Kityuk & T. Fedotova (2021) analysed methods of psychological support of the individual, focusing on the role of value interaction between the client and the psychologist in the process of restoring personal integrity. L.Y. Nianko & V.V. Nianko (2024) reviewed the features of psychological support in war situations, focusing on how shared values of security and survival create the basis for group cohesion and mutual support. M. Slyusarevskyy & L. Hryhorovska (2022) identified psychological support for participants in the educational process in war conditions, emphasising the importance of value congruence in the educational environment for maintaining psychological well-being. V.V. Vyshnovskyy & I.M. Perih (2025) identified the impact of psychological interventions on a person's psychological health in war conditions, determining the role of shared values in group therapy as a factor in restoring personal stability. Y. Pylypchuk & L. Ponomarenko (2024) investigated the problem of rehabilitation of military and civilian personnel from psychological trauma, emphasising the role of group values in the processes of recovery and social reintegration. In the process of group interaction, a complex dynamic of group identity development unfolds, which creates the basis for rethinking one's own experience through correlation with the experience of other participants. Such interaction allows rebuilding the value-normative structure of the individual, filling it with new semantic content that meets the actual challenges and internal needs of the individual. Thus, the appeal to the axiological dimension of

group work allows not only to increase its effectiveness in overcoming the personal crisis, but also to rethink the very foundations of psychotherapeutic assistance towards deeper consideration of existential, cultural, and social factors. The purpose of the study was to substantiate the potential of group work as an effective means of overcoming a personal crisis. Research objectives: to analyse theoretical and empirical approaches to the functioning of values in a group; to find out the meaning of value congruence, group identity, and trust for effective overcoming of a personal crisis; to show how common values and the axiological space of a group contribute to reflection, rethinking identity, restoring life meanings, and developing psychological stability.

◆ Materials and Methods

The research was carried out within the framework of a theoretical and methodological approach using a set of general scientific methods of cognition to systematise and conceptualise the axiological dimension of group work in overcoming a personal crisis. The information base of the study was scientific publications on psychology, psychotherapy, and axiology (Maksymenko, 2006; Tytarenko, 2007). The studies of group therapy theorists and contemporary research on the problems of value orientations of the individual were used (Pryshlyak, 2019; Rybak, 2020). Theoretical analysis of scientific sources was used to systematise and generalise existing approaches to understanding the role of values in group psychotherapy work. This method helped to identify the main areas of research on the axiological dimension of group interaction and identify theoretical gaps in this problem. Comparative analysis of leading psychological theories and models (S. Schwartz, G. Tajfel, and J. Turner, A. Feldman) was used to identify the mechanisms of functioning of values in group interaction and their impact on the processes of overcoming the personal crisis. The synthesis was used to integrate diverse theoretical propositions into a holistic conceptual scheme for understanding the role of the value component in group psychotherapy work. The classification method was used to systematise theoretical models according to the criteria of their focus on values, the form of manifestation of value orientations, and the role in overcoming the personal crisis. Structural and functional analysis revealed the relationships between various components of the axiological dimension of group interaction – psychological security, value congruence, group identity, and personal transformation processes. The methodological basis of the research was the principles of a systematic approach for considering group work as an integral system of interrelated elements, where the value component performs an integrative function. The principle of historicism provided an analysis of the evolution of views on the role of values in psychotherapeutic practice from classical humanistic approaches to modern integrative models. The principle of complementarity helped to combine various theoretical approaches to create a multidimensional understanding of the problem under study, covering individual, interpersonal, and group aspects of value interaction.

◆ Results and Discussion

The axiological dimension of group work is a value-based aspect of interaction between participants, which consists in understanding, rethinking and harmonising personal and common values for psychological growth, restoring identity and overcoming a personal crisis. The analysis of scientific sources allowed identifying a number of characteristics of the axiological dimension of group work. In particular, in crisis states, there is a violation of the value system of the individual, but the group creates conditions for its rethinking and restoration (Tytarenko, 2007). An important factor is value congruence: the group environment promotes the alignment of personal beliefs with group norms, which reduces internal conflicts and maintains authenticity (Maksymenko, 2006). Simultaneously, the implementation of the axiological dimension is possible only under the condition of psychological security, which is provided by an atmosphere of trust, open self-expression, and reflection. A sense of belonging to a group forms group identity and community, and common values act as guidelines for later life (Chepelieva, 2014; Lytvynchuk, 2021). Through group reflection, feedback, and behaviour modelling, the value-normative structure is reconstructed, which helps to overcome confusion and return to an active life (Homych & Voitenko, 2024). The axiological dimension of group interaction has been studied within a number of theoretical models: Schwartz's model of universal values, group synergy theory, Tajfel and Turner's theory of social identity and categorisation, and Feldman's model of group norms. Schwartz's model of values is one of the key in contemporary axiopsychology, classifying 10 basic values based on their role in human life (power, security, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, independence, universalism, benevolence, tradition, and conformism) by universal motivational goals. It is used in group psychotherapy, especially in dealing with personal crises, when the value system is destabilised. Values are grouped into a two-dimensional structure: self-realisation ↔ self-growth and preservation ↔ openness to change. In a crisis, there is often a conflict or loss of significance of values, which makes it difficult to adapt and requires rethinking (Lechner *et al.*, 2024). During a crisis, a person's value system often loses consistency: they may stop acting on previously significant motives (for example, family, success, stability), or experience conflict between conflicting values. C.M. Lechner *et al.* (2024) noted that the Schwartz's model in group work allows: diagnosing value gaps, structuring reflection through exercises and discussions, and promoting the development of value congruence. This helps participants to understand internal priorities and align them with behaviours that promote emotional recovery.

As a possible example of applying this model in group work, the exercise "Circle of values" is used, where participants receive cards with the names of 10 basic Schwartz's values and choose the 3 most important ones for themselves at a given time. Next – those that were important before the crisis. The discussion takes place on the following questions: what has changed? What helps you hold on now?

Are there any contradictions between values that prevent us from moving forward? The role-playing game "Solving a conflict of values" also demonstrates the application of this model. The participant is faced with a dilemma: stay with their family (safety, goodwill) or change their profession (independence, stimulation). The group models both situations and provides feedback, helps to see unconscious values and priorities. Thus, the Schwartz's model is not only a theoretical scheme, but a practical tool for group therapy, which allows: understanding changes in one's own values; identifying internal contradictions; finding support points for restoring the integrity of the individual. The theory of group synergy considers a group as an integral system that can create a new quality of interaction that exceeds the amount of individual contributions. In overcoming a crisis, it provides insight into how shared energy, support, and value dialogue contribute to healing and personal transformation. The core principles are emergence, complementarity, shared value field, and collective experience (Rybak, 2020; Kutsyi & Partyko, 2025). In a situation of personal crisis, a person often experiences loss of meaning, isolation, and value disorientation. O. Kutsyi & N. Partyko (2025) emphasised that it is in group interaction that synergy becomes a transformation resource. It helps to find common values and new meanings, creates conditions for psychological security, and restoration of trust. In addition, group synergy activates value reflection through dialogue, metaphors and feedback, and also contributes to the development of a group identity in which a person feels belonging and acceptance. An illustrative example is the exercise "Collective mosaic", which could give each group member the opportunity to bring/name an object or word that symbolises a value that is important to them, in order to create a shared "Mosaic of values". Participants discuss what values unite and complement each other. So there is a synergistic effect: there is a new idea of the "collective self" of the group and the space for identification. The theory of group synergy helps to see group therapy as a source of new integrity. In this process, the group's values can become a temporary or permanent reference point for a person in crisis. Group interaction helps to restore the internal semantic framework. In addition, there is an effect that individual work cannot achieve – a joint search for meaning. Psychological aspects of synergy in a group include the coincidence of values between participants, the presence of clear rules and connections, well-coordinated cooperation, mutual support and recognition. An important condition is to have a leader or facilitator who coordinates actions, defines roles, and supports a common goal. Synergy is also enhanced when each participant feels responsible and belongs to the group (Kutsyi & Partyko, 2025).

Tajfel and Turner's model of group identity and social categorisation explains how a person shapes their self through group membership, and how this can affect behaviour, self-esteem, and feelings of security. Group identity is an important source of psychological well-being, especially during periods of instability. The model includes two main

concepts: social categorisation – automatic division of people into “we” and “they”, which helps to navigate society, but can cause prejudice; and social identity-identification with a group, which affects self-esteem and acceptance of its values and norms (Tytarenko, 2007; Homych & Voitenko, 2024). Analysis by N.V. Chepelieva (2014) revealed that during a period of personal crisis, a person often loses a clear understanding of themselves, experiences a loss of belonging, doubts their values, and experiences isolation. Under such conditions, the researcher suggests that participation in a supportive therapeutic group can restore positive social identity (through “I am part of the community”), enable a person to rethink their values in dialogue with others, and strengthen self-esteem and personal integrity. As a possible example in practice, the exercise “I and we” can be considered. Participants are asked to write three words about themselves, three words about the group, and three words about where “I” and “group” intersect. Then there is a discussion: where do I feel like I belong, and where do I feel separate? What is important to me in our group? Such work activates awareness of group identity, its values, and also creates a sense of belonging and support. An additional illustrative example is the group reflection “When I felt like I belonged”. Participants share the moment when they first felt like part of a group. This creates a field of trust and openness, and allows redefining identity through the experience of acceptance. Thus, the Tajfel and Turner’s model allows seeing that group identity is not only a social fact, but also a therapeutic resource, especially when it is based on shared values, a safe environment,

dialogue, and acceptance. In a crisis period, when the “I” is shaken, the group becomes a place where a person can re-discover themselves through others, and gradually restore the integrity of the individual.

Feldman’s model of group norms explains how common rules and values are formed in a group that regulate participants’ behaviour, maintain cohesion, convey important meanings for the group, and ensure psychological security. In times of crisis, clear norms help a person feel supported, avoid condemnation, rethink values and find new supports through common moral principles and group membership (Tytarenko, 2007; Chepelieva, 2014). The process of joint development of group norms plays a key role in the development of team cohesion, determining the rules of interaction and maintaining the stability of internal relations. Already at the first meeting, participants together with the coach create a list of rules (for example, punctuality, confidentiality, “I – message”, etc.), which forms responsibility and involvement in building a value field. It is also important to discuss violations of norms – this is not a punishment, but a reason for reflection, which increases psychological security and supports the value framework of the group. The exercise “Our group’s values” can be considered an example of an effective approach, where participants form a common list of values that are important to them. Thus, Feldman’s model and theoretical assumptions indicate that group norms are not only rules, but also carriers of common values that help to overcome a personal crisis, restore trust and stability. The grouped data of the analysed models are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Theoretical models and the role of values in group interaction

Model	Authors	Main provisions	Role of values
Model of universal values	S. Schwartz	10 basic values are grouped into 4 clusters; values have a motivational core	They form internal motivation, influence the style of interaction; common values contribute to trust in the group
Group synergy theory	D. Johnson, F. Johnson	Group achieves more through combining potentials; there is a synergy effect	Shared values (trust, support) are a condition for synergy and group growth
Theory of social identity and categorisation	A. Taffel and J.C. Turner	Person identifies with a group that has significant characteristics. Categorisation forms “we” versus “them”	Group values become part of self-identification; re-evaluating yourself through belonging to a group helps to overcome the crisis
Group norm model	A. Feldman	Norms arise in response to the group’s needs, expectations, and interaction history	Norms are a form of expression of group values; regulate acceptable behaviour, provide psychological security

Source: compiled by the author

Table 2 compares models to reveal more deeply the multidimensional nature of the axiological approach in group work when overcoming a personal crisis. Models cover both internal priorities (Schwartz) and social

context (Feldman, theory of synergy, social identity). This shows that values are both an internal resource and a group support mechanism that allows creating a holistic system of crisis assistance.

Table 2. Comparison of models

Criteria	Schwartz’s model	Synergy	Social identity	Feldman’s model
Model type	Individual axiological	Dynamic group	Socio-psychological	Normative behavioural
Focus on values	Core of personality	Condition for effective interaction	Identification tool	Behaviour regulator
Form of manifestation of values	Personal priorities	Shared goal, trust	“We are an identity”	Group rules
Role in the crisis	Understanding meaning, motivation for change	Support and resource enhancement	Reassessment of the “self” through the group	Ensuring stability and ethics of interaction

Source: compiled by the author

Systematisation and comparison of the four theoretical concepts in Table 1 and Table 2 revealed their complementarity in explaining the value mechanisms of group therapy. Schwartz's concept highlights the intrapsychological processes of transformation of individual worldview priorities, while the synergistic approach reveals the collective effects of combining individual potentials around common ideals. The theoretical framework of social categorisation demonstrates how inclusion in a significant community restructures self-perception through the assimilation of group standards, while the normative concept shows practical ways to implement value principles in specific rules of coexistence. Each paradigm emphasises different facets of axiological influence – from intrapsychic changes in worldview orientations to the development of interpersonal connections and the establishment of organisational standards of behaviour, which together creates a multi-level support system for people in a state of existential disorientation. Important studies have highlighted the influence of psychological security, value congruence, and cultural and value attitudes on the effectiveness of group dynamics and overcoming personal crises. A. Lytvynchuk (2021) noted that in the “transformational environment” of the 21st century, the subjective sense of personal security changes significantly, which determines the need for in-depth scientific research. A.C. Edmondson & Z. Lei (2014) defined psychological security as a reduction in interpersonal risk in conditions of uncertainty. They identified the premise of teamwork as an intermediary between the organisational climate and knowledge exchange, as a consequence of interaction in different teams, and as a regulator of resistance to innovation. A. Carmeli & J.H. Gittell (2009) found a link between “high-quality relationships” and security levels that affect employees' ability to learn from mistakes. Research by S.B. Wanless (2016) views security more broadly – as a resource for personal development and part of social capital. In 2020-2021, researchers' attention shifted to the healthcare sector in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, which actualised the issue of psychological safety in extreme conditions (O'donovan & McAuliffe, 2020).

Current research focuses on the role of shared values in creating a safe environment where value congruence contributes to effective teamwork, which is critical in coping with crises (Edmondson & Lei, 2014). Analysis by O.S. Rybak (2020) showed the relevance of the Hofstede model for contemporary socio-cultural challenges, since its five key orientations (individualism – collectivism, short- and long-term orientation, femininity-masculinity, attitude to uncertainty, orientation to power) are productive tools for understanding group dynamics and overcoming personal crisis. O.Yu. Pryshlyak (2019) emphasised that “according to Hofstede's theory of cultural dimensions, the main indicators of national cultures are: the index of the distance of power; the level of integration into social relations (individualism/collectivism); the social roles of the sexes; the attitude to uncertainty; long-term orientation; condescension/self-restraint”. These orientations help to better understand the motivations, expectations, and interaction

styles of participants, which forms a psychologically safe environment – the basis for personal transformation. For example, individualism or collectivism affects the need for support or reflection; time orientation affects expectations about the pace of change; femininity or masculinity affects emotional openness; uncertainty response affects the need for structure; power orientation affects expectations about group leadership style. This methodology has also found application in the paper by L.M. Karamushka (2022) for the analysis of transformations of mental states in crisis, in particular military conditions. O.M. Kochubeinyk (2023), in turn, analysed the influence of national and cultural characteristics on the development of the identity of refugees in the process of their integration into another society. Understanding cultural parameters such as distance to power, avoiding uncertainty, and individualism/collectivism is essential for building effective group interventions with a value component. Empirical research confirmed the importance of value congruence, that is, the correspondence between the personal values of a participant and the dominant values of a group or organisation. Meta-analysis by A.L. Kristof-Brown *et al.* (2005) demonstrated that this correspondence directly correlates with emotional engagement, intrinsic motivation, and overall well-being of participants. Research on emotional health and congruence confirms the importance of consistency of personal and group values for psychological well-being (Sannikova, 2024). In the context of a personal crisis, when the internal value system is subject to revision, belonging to a group dominated by consonant value orientations acts as a stabilising factor and a source of meaning. It is value congruence that is one of the main predictors of trust, openness, and active participation in group processes. Thus, the integration of concepts of value congruence and cultural parameters helps to deepen the understanding of the mechanisms through which a group becomes not only a social system, but also an axiological space that helps to overcome the crisis, restore personal integrity, and develop a new identity.

◆ Conclusions

The study proved that values are extremely important for a person, because they act as a source of motivation, and their awareness and implementation provide an opportunity for personal development and a sense of satisfaction from life. It was determined that values play a key role in regulating group interaction, because they create a sense of psychological security, activate hidden resources of the individual, promote social adaptation and self-acceptance in crisis situations. It was established that the group form of work is an effective tool for supporting and rehabilitating a person experiencing a crisis state. The effectiveness of group interaction was determined not only by its structural or procedural parameters, but also by the value component that determines the motivation, nature of communication, and quality of relationships in the group. It was proved that the combination of different psychological models helps to integrate intrapersonal, interpersonal, and social aspects of

the axiological influence of a group in a personal crisis. The analysis of theoretical approaches, in particular, the Schwartz's model of universal values, the theory of group synergy, the theory of social identity and categorisation of Tajfel and Turner, and the Feldman model of group norms, showed that common values serve as the foundation for creating a safe space where self-knowledge, reflection, and transformation of the individual in crisis circumstances are possible. Values serve as a regulator of interpersonal interaction, ensuring the cohesion and effectiveness of group work. It was established that common values form a positive group identity, contribute to the development of norms of mutual respect, empathy and trust, which are key factors for overcoming a personal crisis. Accordingly, in the conditions of group interaction, a person can reintegrate into the social space, update their own value system, and form new life meanings, which increases their psychological stability. The results of the study confirm that the

axiological approach to the analysis of group work opens up new opportunities for understanding the mechanisms of personal support in critical periods of life and substantiates the expediency of including value interventions in psychological practice. The prospects for further research consist in an in-depth study of the mechanisms of value influence on group dynamics and the development of innovative psychological interventions aimed at increasing the stability and adaptability of the individual in crisis situations.

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Аксіологічний вимір групової роботи в подоланні особистісної кризи

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♦ **Анотація.** Соціокультурні трансформації сучасності, що спричиняють особистісні кризи і втрату орієнтирів, актуалізують потребу в аксіологічному вимірі психотерапевтичної допомоги. Метою дослідження було визначення, як аксіологічний вимір групової роботи сприяє подоланню кризових станів та впливає на особистісні зміни. Дослідження проведено в межах теоретико-методологічного підходу з використанням комплексу загальнонаукових методів пізнання. Основним застосованим методом був теоретичний аналіз наукових джерел, що дозволив систематизувати і узагальнити теоретичні підходи до розуміння аксіологічного виміру групової роботи у подоланні особистісної кризи. Проведено порівняльний аналіз провідних психологічних теорій і моделей (Шварца, Таджфела і Тернера, Фельдмана), що розкрив механізми функціонування цінностей у груповій взаємодії. Аналіз цих підходів розкрив, як спільні цінності слугують основою для створення безпечного простору, де можливе глибоке самопізнання, рефлексія та трансформація особистості в кризових умовах. Було встановлено, що цінності є не лише особистісними орієнтирами, а й інструментами регулювання групової взаємодії, що визначають психологічну безпеку, сприяють соціальному прийняттю та активізують ресурси зростання в кризі. Форма групової роботи є ефективним інструментом у підтримці та реабілітації особистості, що переживає кризовий стан. Виявлено, що цінності функціонують як регулятори міжособистісної взаємодії, забезпечуючи внутрішню згуртованість і зовнішню ефективність групової роботи. Включення учасника до ціннісно-уніфікованої групи створює умови для рефлексії, переосмислення ідентичності та відновлення життєвої смислової перспективи. При цьому ефективність значною мірою визначається ціннісним компонентом, який окреслює мотивацію, характер спілкування та якість стосунків у групі

♦ **Ключові слова:** групова психотерапія; психологія кризи; трансформація особистості; психологічна підтримка; соціальна ідентичність; терапевтичні інтервенції; ціннісні системи