

Psychosocial support and post-traumatic growth: evaluating the effectiveness of the CAMP+ program

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Abstract. *This article presents the results of the implementation of the SAMR+ program, which was launched in 2022 to provide psychosocial support to affected families, aiming at psycho-emotional stabilization, PTSD prevention, restoration of adaptive mechanisms, and development of stress resilience. The article describes the three-year experience of the program, which involved 316 children and 233 adults. The author highlights the outcomes of 13 rehabilitation camps for children and adults from vulnerable groups—military families, families who have experienced loss, residents of de-occupied territories, and individuals who have suffered physical or psychological trauma.*
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Armed conflict has deep and long-lasting consequences for the mental health of children and adults, leaving behind complex psychological traumas that, without timely support, can negatively affect emotional development, social relationships, and the individual's future. Children's psyches are particularly vulnerable to such impacts, being in an active phase of formation.

To provide systematic support to families affected by the war, the CAMP+ program for psycho-emotional stabilization and recovery was created in 2022. Its main objective is to preserve and improve the physical and mental health of children and their parents/guardians, as well as to prevent the development of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The target groups include military families, bereaved families, residents of de-occupied territories, and children who have suffered physical or psychological trauma. The CAMP+ program aims to enhance emotional resilience, improve mental health, restore a sense of safety, and develop skills for effectively coping with stress and traumatic experiences.

Over the course of three years, the program was updated and adapted to the changing conditions of the ongoing full-scale war in Ukraine. A total of 13 rehabilitation camps were conducted, involving 316 children and 233 adults. The results of the program evaluation indicate statistically significant effectiveness and the program's ability to promote post-traumatic growth.

Main objectives of the CAMP+ program include:

- restoration of impaired psycho-emotional functions to an optimal level;
- provision of psychosocial support for effective integration into the social environment;
- assistance in establishing constructive relationships within the family and society;
- restoration of adaptive mechanisms for functioning in extreme (combat) conditions;

- training in self-regulation methods, stress management, and increasing resilience;
- prevention of PTSD and other mental disorders;
- formation of positive social attitudes, motivation for life, and personal development during wartime.

The program includes the following components:

Screening diagnostics – assessment of the psycho-emotional state of participants to identify current needs, select optimal psychological intervention methods, and monitor changes over time.

Psychoeducation – informing participants about the functioning of the psyche under stress, developing self-help skills, and fostering openness to professional support.

Psychological counseling – short-term psychological support aimed at resource mobilization, development of self-awareness, responsibility, and stress resistance.

Psychosocial support – a set of activities aimed at social adaptation, professional self-determination, and overcoming critical life situations.

Group work – training and intervision meetings for developing communication skills, self-awareness, emotional self-regulation, and peer support in a safe environment.

Psychotherapy – application of therapeutic methods to address personal and interpersonal problems, restore mental functions, and improve quality of life.

Program Effectiveness Evaluation. The empirical study was conducted with adult participants in July, August, and October 2024 during the implementation of the program in Truskavets (Lviv region, Ukraine). The sample included 60 women aged 29 to 55 years (average age – 38.1 years). To analyze the dynamics of psycho-emotional state and adaptive mechanisms, the following psychodiagnostic tools were used:

- Impact of Event Scale;
- Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations (CISS) by S. Norman, D. Endler, and J. Parker (adapted by T. Kryukova);
- Resilience Questionnaire (Judith Johnson);
- Intolerance of Uncertainty Scale (IUS-12) by N. Carleton (adapted by H. Gromova);
- World Assumption Scale.

To assess the level of post-traumatic growth, the Post-Traumatic Growth Inventory (PTGI), developed by R. Tedeschi and L. Calhoun and adapted by M. Magomed-Eminov, was used. This tool enables the quantitative assessment of positive changes in an individual after experiencing psychological trauma in five domains: relating to others, discovering new possibilities, personal strength, spiritual change, and appreciation of life.

Given the goal of the CAMP+ program – emotional recovery, psychosocial support, and activation of internal resources – this scale served as the key tool for determining the depth and nature of positive changes in participants' consciousness and self-perception. Below are the results of statistical significance testing using the Student's t-test and the Wilcoxon signed-rank test, showing the most significant changes in post-traumatic growth indicators (table 1).

Table 1. Significance levels in comparative analysis results using the Post-Traumatic Growth Inventory (PTGI) before and after the rehabilitation program

Scales	Criterion	Statistic	p	R
Relating to others	Student's t	-2,892	0,005	-0,3797
	Wilcoxon W	353	0,004	-0,468
New possibilities	Student's t	-0,586	0,560	-0,0769
	Wilcoxon W	685	0,355	-0,142
Personal strength	Student's t	-2,017	0,048	-0,2648
	Wilcoxon W	538	0,051	-0,302
Spiritual change	Student's t	-3,840	<0,001	-0,5042
	Wilcoxon W	225	<0,001	-0,602
Appreciation of life	Student's t	-1,611	0,113	-0,2116
	Wilcoxon W	317	0,059	-0,330

Note: *p* – level of significance; *r* – effect size.

The statistical analysis results using the Student's t-test demonstrate a statistically significant difference on the “*Spiritual change*” scale ($p < 0,001$), indicating an increased ability of respondents to refer to spiritual meaning as a resource for internal support. The effect size is moderate (Cohen's $d = 0,542$), confirming the practical significance of these changes.

A statistically significant difference was also found on the “*Personal strength*” scale ($p = 0,048$), although the effect size is small (Cohen's $d = -0,2648$). This may indicate an increase in participants' confidence in their ability to cope with difficulties and a strengthened belief in their own ability to overcome life's challenges and rely more on themselves.

The Wilcoxon test confirmed a statistically significant difference on the “*Relating to others*” scale ($p = 0,004$), with a moderate effect size (biserial rank coefficient $r = -0,468$). Respondents became more open in relationships, showed more trust, empathy, and willingness to engage in emotional exchange, were more likely to acknowledge the need for support, and began to value other people more.

Among the variables that are not statistically significant ($p > 0,05$), the following should be noted:

– “*New possibilities*” ($p = 0,355$) – confidence in life changes remained almost unchanged;

– “*Appreciation of life*” ($p = 0,059$, almost significant) – a slight shift toward greater awareness of the importance of each day.

Conclusion. The results of the study show that participation in the CAM3+ program contributed to the development of spiritual reflection, awareness of personal strength, and improvement in social relationships. At the same time, such aspects of post-traumatic growth as seeing new possibilities and re-evaluating the value of life remain stable and require further work within the context of long-term psychosocial support.

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