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## Human labour – an alternative for a young person lost in the world of addiction due to stress and depression

**Abstract:** Nowadays, a young person is exposed to many different disorders from which the most present are depression and stress. For many teenagers such diseases are the introduction to other threats such as physical and mental addictions. The factor that helps to fight them is a human labour - work. It gives a young person a chance to improve qualifications and it is an alternative to say 'no' in a very decisive way to any psychoactive substances.

**Keywords:** depression, stress, work – labour, a teenager, an addiction

### Introduction

Nowadays, each adolescent constantly seeks their own place and destination in the present world. He or she wants to achieve their plans, dreams and they feel a need for being important to others. All the time, they ask themselves questions about a sense and value of their existence. Unfortunately, they cannot find themselves in a new reality due to various mistakes they make. Their failures, which they think about constantly, cause a lot of stress and frustration which makes young people become much more easily and subconsciously addicted since any addiction gives them opportunity to create a fresh look on life and world and help forget about negative life experiences. Different types of addictions are a kind of escape from everyday life and give the youth a chance to create a new but just

seemingly better future. That is why, the remedy for adolescents to overcome those problems is finding a job and devoting to it. The job gives young people a lot of possibilities to fulfil and develop their personal talents; it helps discover own interests and show them capably. Moreover, it leads to vocational qualifications improvement.

### **Depression and stress as an encouragement to get in into the world of addictions**

Stress is an event in a person's life, which can have only one single episode and then its action is limited in time. In other case, it can have a chronic character and it is not known when and if it finishes. What is worse, it repeats regularly and causes much more negative consequences<sup>1</sup>. The life in continual nervousness and tension may lead to the occurrence of a traumatic stress, which can be caused by may negative life experiences<sup>2</sup>. The stress can be:

- Physical – its appearance is related to any physical activity
- Chemical – caused by chemicals or stimulants which are present in a natural environment
- Mental- it happens when a human being is burdened with too many duties and can't deal with them because she or he is a perfectionist in their profession and they start to worry if they can manage well and sensibly;
- Emotional – a person is overwhelmed with anger, fear, frustration, a feeling of betrayal, a close person loss, and they can't release themselves from it.
- Nutritional – caused by a lack of certain ingredients being important for a person's life and by the surplus of fats, proteins and food allergies.
- Psychically – mental – it appears due to the fear of other person's life, their plans or choosing the right way of life.<sup>3</sup>

The life of a young person is not just full of happiness and positive experiences so the feeling of stress seems to be obvious. The first factor causing its appearance is school and further education. Constant tests, quick tests and exams usually lead to stress occurrence and its activation. Moreover, frequent changes in the educational system – for example, new challenges in the aspect of passing the Matura Exam, introduce stressful elements. A lot depends on the teacher

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<sup>1</sup> I. Heszen, *Psychologia stresu*, Warszawa 2013, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> M. Turlejska Lis, *Stres traumatyczny. Występowanie, następstwa, terapia*, Warszawa 2002, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> M.S. Rosenthal, *Depresja*, Warszawa 2002, p. 61–62.

who has a huge influence on adolescents. It is very important if a teacher is an expert who students can trust completely or a person who just passes the knowledge without any commitment. Furthermore, a teaching process is limited only to learning some rules by heart and it does not have any relevance to a practical usage. Unfortunately, a teacher often behaves like a very strict person who everyone should be afraid of and respect him or her. Later, a meeting with a school counsellor who causes fear or distrust has signs of this barrier. Often enough, adolescents react to such a situation with some health problems such as stomach ache, vomiting, and nausea. Those symptoms change into a panic fear when the time goes by. Meanwhile, the responsibility lies on the teacher's side to get the young people's trust and to assure them that they relations will always be full of help, respect and understanding. The stress factors destroy some emotional balance during the time of adolescence and rise susceptibility to addictions<sup>4</sup>.

A family home situation very often has an influence on a stress development. It is connected with the change of parents' previous career path or other events which has changed their family life recently in a drastic way. A young person notices it by frequent quarrels at home. Parents often blame children for such a situation by claiming that they have to work to provide for their education and upbringing. The parents say that they must only care for the children and their future not about their own happiness and career. They insult their children by calling their names of being a loser, who can only count on them and can't deal with problems themselves. This leads the teens to take drugs in order to overcome the stress<sup>5</sup>.

The fact the a young person or his close family member is diagnosed with a severe disease diagnosed is a factor causing and deepening the feeling of stress. An adolescent is unable to manage their thoughts that his or her life is likely to finish with a sudden and unexpected death. Constant thoughts about it make him or her feel helpless and scared and paralyse their actions and functioning<sup>6</sup>. It is not surprising that in such a situation adolescents desire to forget just for a while about such events and escape to the world deprived of negative thinking about their own and other people evanescence. Different types of drugs are usually a great way to sooth such an indisposition.

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<sup>4</sup> M. Jędrzejko, M. Netczuk-Gwozdziwicz, *Uzależnienia i zaburzenia. Młodzi ludzie w przestrzeni wielowymiarowego ryzyka*, in: *Pułapki współczesności. Człowiek wobec uzależnień. Wybrane problemy*, M. Jędrzejko, M. Netczuk-Gwozdziwicz (eds.), Warszawa 2013, p. 44.

<sup>5</sup> R. Portmann, *Dzieci a stres*, Kielce 2007, p. 22–23.

<sup>6</sup> R. M. Sapolsky, *Dlaczego zebry nie mają wrzodów. Psychofizjologia stresu*, Warszawa 2010, p. 167.

A lot of failures in young people's lives, which weaken the emotional state, are also the most crucial factor activating the stress. Its consequence is a lack of adaptation to function in the adult life. This can lead to the appearance of much pathology such as drug abuse<sup>7</sup>.

The lack of ability to spend free time is also a problem of a modern teenager. He or she does not know how to use it in a beneficial way in order to regenerate their strengths and relax at the same time. No wonder, then, that young people turn to watching TV or are fascinated by cyberspace which is for them some kind of an authority and reality in which they feel safe and can be anonymous. Moreover, not only a lot of information, which flows to a young man from the Internet, lets him or her regain physical and mental strengths but also rise the level of stress. Young people cannot cope with a lot of negative visual incentives and contrary information transmitted via different TV stations, radio stations or websites. Then, in teenagers' mind a certain vision of the world and man appears that convince them how little do they mean in the global human society. In the consequence it leads them to conflicts with peers because a teen cannot accept their views and is unable to show them understanding and tolerance. In this situation, a fashion style or new gadgets and innovations, that are appearing constantly, are claimed to be the reasons of peers' disputes. An adolescent notices different trends and comes to the conclusion that he cannot afford and own all of the things. This leads young people to the stress and a conviction that they are unable to keep up with the changing world. This fact arises a feeling of being stressed and depressed. Finally, they look for the opportunity to forget about all of the problems just for a while and they start taking drugs<sup>8</sup>.

The adolescent feels the stress coming from the fact that he or she cannot own or try many items and goods because they are treated by adults as, the so called, forbidden fruit. Such a dilemma arises from the process of bringing up teenagers, and from the certain rules passed to them by parents. A parent forbids something for a child without any logical explanation (a child can't have something because they say so). Often enough, a simple curiosity pushes a teenager into an addiction, e.g.: he or she tastes alcohol and checks the effects of it<sup>9</sup>. The same situation

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<sup>7</sup> I. Grzegorzewska, *Doświadczenie życiowe jako źródło zdrowia lub zaburzeń w przebiegu rozwoju dzieci i młodzieży*, in: *Zdrowie, stres choroba w wymiarze psychologicznym*, H. Wrona-Polańska (ed.), Kraków 2008, p. 137.

<sup>8</sup> R. Portman, *Dzieci...*, op. cit. p. 24.

<sup>9</sup> C. Atkin, *Effects of televised alcohol messages on teenage drinking*, "Journal of Adolescents Health Care" 11/1990, p. 13.

repeats when it comes to choosing food. If a teenager is reminded constantly of harmful effects of eating crisps while the others eat them, he or she eats them secretly being stressed that they will be caught red-handed in spite of their parents' prohibition. On the other hand, eating too much crisps causes obesity. It has its reflection into judging oneself in the view of someone who is fat or overweight. According to it, one comes to the conclusion that nobody accepts them or wants to stay in touch with. Peers laugh at such a teenager and do not treat him or her seriously. He or she is perceived as a worse and hopeless person, who it is not even worth making friends with<sup>10</sup>.

A long-lasting stress causes the risk of depression which may lead to a psycho-active substance addiction<sup>11</sup>. Depression may result in a constant mood of sadness which can be followed by the lack of joy of life. A person who falls ill with it is depressed all the time, nothing can make him or her happy and such mood is shared by others. With the passing time, this state can be worsened and last for most of the day or even for years. Then, a teenager suffers from manic episodes and hallucinations. In addition to this, some weather factors such as coldness, chill, a lot of rainy days also influence and deepen such symptoms. Bad weather conditions cause a lack of willingness to live and face everyday problems. What is more, a man becomes a drug addict to cope with everyday life and to stop and heal health problems. The drugs seem to be the remedy to feel better and regain a good mood but in fact they cause a drug addiction<sup>12</sup>.

The depression appears when a young person gives up the contact with peers and starts to skip classes which they previously considered nice and interesting. The loneliness is the result of a teenager's solitude from others and it is because of the fact that their friends avoid them. A young man is not eager to make new friends and to maintain the relationship with others. Being an outsider fulfils their ambitions and is perceived as a form of completion of the aim of being a human<sup>13</sup>.

A situation when a person does not show any sign of frustration and other emotional problems, and tries to hide them is also one of the symptoms of depression. At the same time, a despair and lack of willingness to life appears. This state is an existential emptiness. A person becomes an introvert and struggles

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<sup>10</sup> I. Izdebska, *Rodzina, dziecko, telewizja. Szanse wychowawcze i zagrożenia telewizji*, Białystok 2001, p. 29.

<sup>11</sup> A. D. Hart, C. Hart-Weber, *Depresja nastolatka*, Poznań 2007, p. 64.

<sup>12</sup> Ibidem, p. 98–99.

<sup>13</sup> S. Atkinson, *Jak wydobyć się z depresji*, Warszawa 1989, p. 190.

with failures and dilemmas on his or her own. In the process, aggression appears which, as far as women are concerned, may be suppressed. As for men, the aggression may be manifested by certain actions. A pent up anger causes the activation of very strong emotions which are not shown to others. When a person blames himself or herself of everything, the depression is worsened<sup>14</sup>. As a result, people seek the remedy in psychoactive substances thanks to which they become more integrated with society because they regain the courage, safety and ambitions. As a result, the world becomes more positive without any negative aspects.

The stress and, later, depression cause frustration and listlessness which may turn into a strong psychoactive substance addiction. This leads to suicidal attempts. If a young person cannot count on anybody and there are too many problems, the suicide seems to be the only solution. A low self-esteem is the reason for it; everything is hopeless, I hate myself, I do not accept myself, I am not reliable and I have nothing to offer. What is more, a conviction appears: it would be better if I were dead and did not exist<sup>15</sup>.

The lack of need for being successful, which appears with time, is another symptom of depression. People's lives are accompanied by a feeling of laziness, sadness. They feel lack of satisfaction and self-discipline and panic attacks appear. The everlasting sadness is evoked by a lack of alternative for a better tomorrow. This condition has been lasting since childhood and it worsens as a person gets older. This situation is worsened by taking psychoactive drugs, which instead of having therapeutic role, they very often deepen the state of depression since they are taken against the doctor's advice. A teenager does not control taking the drugs as he is addicted<sup>16</sup>.

### Work as a solution to a teenager's addiction

Human labour is an effort that is necessary to exist. Its aim is to achieve certain physical, mental, personal and social benefits. On one hand, it is a duty and human choice, on the other hand – an assured profit, salary and effort. What is more, it brings some consequences for a man and for a population<sup>17</sup>. That is why, employees are obliged to have certain knowledge of a job. They must constantly learn and enrich their knowledge and an inborn ability of acquisition definitely

<sup>14</sup> L. P. Frankel, *Kobieta i depresja*, Gdańsk 2002, p. 32–33.

<sup>15</sup> S. Atkinson, *Jak wydobyć...*, op. cit., p. 105–106.

<sup>16</sup> E. Woydyłło, *Bo jesteś człowiekiem. Życ z depresją ale nie w depresji*, Kraków 2012, p. 51–52.

<sup>17</sup> J. Wilisz, *Teoria pracy. Implikacje dla pedagogiki pracy*, Kraków 2009, p. 18–19.

helps to get it. It happens thanks to logical, intuitive, creative and practical thinking. The last one is connected with some agility and using methods, materials and instructions in order to improve qualifications. The certificates are issued by local councils. The employees desire being appreciated by their employers and, at the same time, noticed according to their qualifications in their country or abroad<sup>18</sup>. Today's world became a big global village by its opened borders, where the flow of people and their jobs is easy to notice.

First of all, a job is a source of dignity and value for a human being. It gives them the basis for developing own morality if it is performed honestly and conscientiously. Thanks to own dignity the human is a value for and by themselves. The sense of dignity is the most important criteria for people to be dealt with by other people and society. In case it is threatened, it needs to be defended and fought for with the use of all strengths. Therefore, because of that and a human value is the aim not a source, a subject or an item. The human dignity is a part of the essence of humanity<sup>19</sup>. It is the core of sensitivity and good. A young person, who grows up with these values, realises that he or she cannot break the law. All the efforts that they put into any activity completion are good for them and the whole society. It is a kind of good, which other people participate in. While doing any job, in a teenager creates sensitiveness and respect for themselves and for others. All the actions taken are useful to overcome their own weaknesses, lifting up and mastering to overbear their disadvantages. In difficult life moments such as reaching for psychoactive substances, they will overcome them by the value and joy of work they have inside<sup>20</sup>.

Nowadays, we constantly experience a lack of speech culture. We are exposed to swear words and other vulgarisms. Young generation is accustomed to using them in speech and threat them not only as something natural in speech but also as something obvious. The utterance of words and building logically and grammatically correct sentences provokes humanity and teaches the opportunity of interaction between people. Then, the speech culture and a native language are developed. A young person is motivated to speak and write according to conventionally accepted rules. He or she learns the rules of social communication. For them, the native language is a very important aspect of conveying information

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<sup>18</sup> B. Baraniak, *Metody badania pracy*, Warszawa 2009, p. 73.

<sup>19</sup> A. Olczyk, *Etos ludzkiej pracy. Refleksje nad nauczaniem Jana Pawła II*, Częstochowa 2004, p. 43.

<sup>20</sup> Cz. S. Bartnik, *Praca jako wartość humanistyczna*, in: *Praca a kultura*, M. Kowalczyk (ed.), Lublin 2005, p. 50–51.

about the world, their interests and work. The work creates a new dimension of culture and implies a new look on it. It is also a challenge for them and, as time goes by, it shows them that it is an invaluable gift and eternal virtue encouraging teenagers to reflect deeply on their lives. The work, which becomes a part of their lives and co-exists with a speech range, particular words, gives them more understandable for people humanistic dimension. That is why, there is no valuable work without a correct language but without a cultural language the value of human effort and labour cannot be mentioned<sup>21</sup>. Such an approach to the native language which creates the culture motivates a young person to notice the possibility of self-development and talents realization.

An average teenager, depending on his or her own culture which is developed thanks to their own effort and work, notices the ability to help others. The feeling of being a volunteer which means a free-will sacrifice for others appears<sup>22</sup>. The volunteer has a strong sense of importance of what he or she does, and thanks to this they build the image of a sensitiveness for other people's needs. They do not get any financial gratification or benefits such as salary for their voluntary work for the old or people in need. They are interested in a human being and they want to change their personal, material and moral situations. They notice the sense of their commitment and they feel satisfaction of their social lives. Everything they do is a huge sacrifice which is determined by solidarity and selflessness. They share their existence with others want to offer a part of themselves<sup>23</sup>. A voluntary worker decides to take his or her actions because they see unhappiness of other people. They perform certain actions according to their abilities and skills. They also work for addicted people. Looking at their situation they become more sensitive to their addiction but it can be a warning for them about the consequences of taking psychoactive drugs. Moreover, if they have been addicted, thanks to the work for such people, they are really eager to give them help to get out of this addiction<sup>24</sup>.

Work means for an average human a constant improvement of qualifications so it is not surprising that teenagers must develop a sense of resourcefulness and comprehensiveness. What is more, a professional will always be treating

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<sup>21</sup> Ibidem, p. 60–61.

<sup>22</sup> D. Pietrowski, *Wolontariat w Polsce – nowe spojrzenia na pracę społeczną*, Roczniki Naukowe Caritas, R.V 2001, p. 31.

<sup>23</sup> M. Górecki, *Wolontariat*, in: *Elementarne pojęcia pedagogiki społecznej i pracy socjalnej*, D. Lalak, T. Pilch (eds.), Warszawa 1999, p. 335.

<sup>24</sup> T. Kamiński, *Praca socjalna i charytatywna*, Warszawa 2004, p. 70–71.



problems in a complex way. That is why, his or her brain must associate different facts quickly and analyse arisen problems effectively. Their knowledge cannot be restricted only to one problem but it must be complex and comprehensive. While working, they have to make quick decisions which may prevent dangerous accidents or disasters. If they work among various people, they are expected to be able to coordinate the actions and analysis of given information. A young person has acquired such skills which demand having a good memory - a quick memorising of once-heard information. While working, details of a performed duty are very important. It is commonly believed that some people have talents to do this or that job because they like it, appreciate it and want to be the best at their profession. If that happens, the people perform their duties with a great passion. They do not waste time to relax with the use of drugs which are perceived as something totally strange. If they notice that a lot of people count on them and they are expected to present certain solutions, they try their best to complete their duties<sup>25</sup>. G Kranas says – ‘The higher a job stands in a virtues hierarchy and the more important it is, the bigger sense of loss is present while losing the job’<sup>26</sup>. Therefore, in present employment situation, where it is so hard to find a job one must constantly care about it, do their best and should not let an employer think that they do not fulfil their duties correctly. The reason to make a young person redundant may be only a presumption that he or she is taking any drugs. That is why, it is not surprising that a teenager caring about his or her job and image does not let anyone notice that they are, e.g.: drug addicts. Therefore, while improving qualifications it is crucial to work out a habit of a multiple repetition of the same task. Then an automatism appears which is evoked by constant qualifications improvement. This habit leads to certain routines at work. Contrary to a habit, a routine is a mechanism which aims at a certain task completion. Those two abilities, mentioned above, have their reflection in a skill. It is a type of a performed action and a quick working pace directed to correctness and higher efficiency. To achieve it some workshops and trainings in a work place or outside it aim at eliminating workers’ weaknesses and implementing them to constant and better responsibility for taking actions and managing other people<sup>27</sup>.

A teenager raising his or her educational needs at work is at risk that education instead of helping them may become a threat. Using a virtual reality too often may lead not only to a crisis of social bounds but also to a man destruction

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<sup>25</sup> J. Wilsz, *Teoria pracy...*, op. cit., p. 237–238.

<sup>26</sup> G. Kranas, *Organizacja, praca, bezrobocie*, Warszawa 1999, p. 29

<sup>27</sup> B. Baraniak, *Metody...*, op. cit., p. 35.

who becomes isolated in his own world. This situation may cause an impulse to spend a lot of time in the cyberspace and neglect other vocational and personal duties. That is why, it is very important to raise children in such a way that they could use technological gadgets in a competent and wise way and implement in them such advantages thanks to which the children could the control over new technological gadgets. A person who can reconcile his or her own sake with the good sake of a bigger group of people is able to cooperate with others. They are responsible for the future of their own homeland, a country, where they live and which they work for<sup>28</sup>.

Work is a difficulty, effort and sacrifice for others because of a certain idea and virtue. Apart from that, it is also a free time and relaxation. Therefore, it is a great art of having a right ability to make use of it all. At first, a temptation of a total relaxation from work appears with the use of drugs, hazard, alcohol or other psychoactive substances. That is why, a meaning of rest after work and understanding that the work is the introduction to active engagement in possibility of spending a free time is very crucial. A good and responsible worker, who is a teenager, will definitely consider an aspect of caring about his or her physical appearance. Besides, doing professional or amateur sport becomes trendy nowadays. Physical exercise develops a strong will and a slim body. It also teaches to defend one's value and how to say 'no' in different situations. Sport is the introduction to self-development and self-control. It gives opportunity to create an own personality and own world. Moreover, the sport influences building personal and moral examples for teenagers. A young man sees in an extreme sportsman the examples to follow. He becomes an authority and a guide for a teenager. The teenager notices that nowadays, you can live your life without any psychoactive substances which are available widely and which are an easy temptation to destroy one's health and life<sup>29</sup>.

The work develops in the teenager a sense of responsibility for himself and his family he wants to have. He decides what the new social group will be like and how he will fulfil his values and duties. The main duties of the new social group are assuring a welfare and wellness, a procreation, raising up children and their future concern, and parental duties fulfilment. That is why, the work is a family life ally and contributes to human society development<sup>30</sup>.

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<sup>28</sup> M. Sztaba, *Głos w dyskusji na temat potrzeby wychowania społecznego współczesnej polskiej młodzieży*, in: *Młodzież, a kultura życia*, F.W. Wawro (ed.), Lublin 2008, p. 337–338.

<sup>29</sup> T. Nowacki, *Praca ludzka. Analiza i pojęcia*, Radom 2008, p. 21.

<sup>30</sup> A. Olczyk, *Etos...*, op. cit., p. 191.

## Conclusion

The work is something natural for a human being and it is hard to imagine not developing his or her humanity in a certain profession. Unfortunately, a teenager or present civilisation diseases very often stand in the way to it. Those obstacles are stress and depression. They paralyse a person especially a young one, who is at the beginning of his or her way of life and they make a lot of important decisions. Nevertheless, the way of life is frequently determined by parents, school, in which they learn, teachers and friends. It is very crucial if either they will be formed correctly in the aspect of education and parental guidance, or the feeling of depression and stress will be worsened. As the time goes by, in the result of a further existence the condition mentioned above may lead to the use of psychotropic and psychoactive substances in order to forget about failures and sad experiences. That is why, a useful remedy to prevent a teenager from getting into the world of addictions is work. The work develops a sense of dignity, independence and also forces to improve qualifications. What is more, it teaches to use the free time well and not to waste it. The work becomes the value, which everyone should care about not to lose it.

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