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**THE WORD AS A MEANS OF PREVENTING ADOLESCENTS'  
DEVIATIONS**

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***Abstract***

Adolescence as a period of personality formation needs values as benchmarks. The subject of the study is the spiritual and moral development of adolescents, taking into account the specificity of their worldview. The aim of the research is to specify the principles and methods of spiritually oriented dialogue with adolescents. Objectives of the study are as follows: the definition of modern approaches to psychological and pedagogical intercommunion with adolescents based on spiritually oriented dialogue by Tamara Florenskaya; working out of optimal methods and questionnaires for collecting empirical data on teenagers' values; the selection of literary works for inclusion in spiritually oriented dialogues with adolescents.

We study the prevention of deviance among adolescents by means of a word implemented even at the stage of diagnostic activities, the development dynamics analysis, and therefore use not only observations, but also questionnaires, expanding the respondent's subjective role. The research on the main features of the spiritual and moral development of modern teenagers living in different social and regional conditions, with more than 4 thousand respondents of different faith, required the questionnaire on basic social and spiritual values. True literature with high moral content shapes the teenager's style of speech, thinking, affects the way of life, leads through repentance to the transformation. The spiritually oriented dialogue with teenagers including masterpieces centered on human personalities' development makes prevention of deviations possible. Thus, an awareness of the human path takes place through the human word addressed to the soul.

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**Keywords:** Spiritual and moral development of adolescents, adolescents of rehabilitation charities (RC teenagers), spiritually oriented dialogue, questioning, deviation, literature.



## 1. Introduction

The word is one of the means of influencing the worldview. True literature forms a style of speech, thinking, and affects teenagers' way of life. The higher the moral content of the artistic work or even the text of the questionnaire, the more the word makes you think and go through repentance to the transformation.

The Man is a being who thinks and transmits his worldview on others, i.e. dialogical. Speech as a property of a person for association in communication is an expression of the inner world (the property of the personality of the individual), aimed at unification in opinions - a manifestation of love and dialogue. Clearly, the problem of conflicts, "non-dialogic" and aggressive behavior of some modern adolescents rises.

What is being out of the dialogue? Through the human word addressed to the soul the path of Man is realized, a vector of life is planned, as well as the need to go further to the transformation of the soul.

The purpose of the article is to outline the main directions of work with the word in the process of the spiritual and moral development of the modern teenager and the prevention of deviations in adolescents.

It would be possible to single out two main directions.

This is actually a speech addressed to a teenager in a dialogue: the teacher's speech; parents' speech; a speech, imprinted in works of art and addressed to descendants, i.e., to younger generations.

On the other hand, the word is also a means of diagnosing and determining the level of personal development of a modern teenager. It is clear that adolescence, as a period of the individual formation needs value orientations. This is the time of everyday communication, allotted for mental exercises. The potential of the word is unusually large in diagnosing the state of the adolescent, too. In our study, we turned to the possibilities of literature in the rehabilitation of adolescents and the prevention of deviations.

## 2. Problem Statement

The prevention of deviance among adolescents by means of a word should be implemented even at the stage of diagnostic activities.

- The questionnaire on basic social and spiritual values: the family and its hierarchy; attitude to eternal life; attitude towards love, lies, selfishness, towards one's fellow creature (humanism, tolerance) is required;
- When composing the text of the questionnaire, the philological peculiarities of the current situation in the youth environment, a whole series of "branches" of the "living Russian language" should be taken into consideration, otherwise, it would be difficult to interpret the results obtained.

## 3. Research Questions

What are the means for successful prevention of teenage deviations?

## 4. Purpose of the Study

The aim of the research is to specify the principles and methods of spiritually oriented dialogue with adolescents. The definition of modern approaches to psychological and pedagogical intercommunion with adolescents on the basis of spiritually oriented dialogue by Tamara Florenskaya.

- Working out of optimal methods and questionnaires for collecting empirical data on teenagers' values.
- The selection of literary works for inclusion in spiritually-oriented dialogues with adolescents.

## **5. Research Methods**

The spiritual and moral development of modern adolescents' personalities requires an analysis of the dynamics of this development, and therefore not only observations, but also questionnaires, taking into account the spiritually oriented dialogical method. In this case, the respondent's subjective role is realized. The relevance of the topic involved a large-scale study.

The study was conducted by Semyannikov (2017) for a number of years. The questionnaire was compiled and published in free access. Experts from the Educational Private Institution of Higher Education "Orthodox Saint Tikhon Humanitarian University" and the State Autonomous Educational Institution of Higher Education "Moscow City Pedagogical University" took part in the development the questionnaire texts.

Teenagers aged 8 to 18 living in families, orphanages and temporarily staying in charities of the Russian Federation took part in the questionnaire.

The analysis of the main features of the spiritual and moral development of modern teenagers living in different social and regional conditions, based on the results of the questionnaire of more than 4 thousand people of different faiths, required the development of a questionnaire that determines the significance of the basic social, spiritual and moral values:

- a family and its hierarchy;
- attitude to eternal life;
- attitude towards love, lies, selfishness, neighborliness (peace, tolerance).

When composing the questionnaire texts, the philological features of the current situation in the youth environment, a whole series of "branches" of the "living Russian language", corresponding to youth subcultures, which do not allow the dialogue to be adequately constructed, were taken into account, because adolescents are consciously isolated by language. Otherwise, it would be difficult to interpret the results obtained. On the other hand, the need to cultivate a culture of speech was taken into account, promoting the formation of a culture of thinking, developing dialogue in the personality, stimulating thought processes.

An example is practically any questionnaire, including "free answers", helping understanding of the respondent's thoughts more accurate. Many points of the questionnaire are related to the dialogic nature of the teenager's inner world. The results are presented on the resource (<http://podrostki.today/>).

The texts of the questionnaire verbally formulate what the teenager thinks about finding his way in life. For example: about the most precious thing in the world; about the purpose of life and the ideal of life; about what is valued in a person most of all; about the attitude toward oneself and others; about representing oneself better (what qualities would you like possess); about the attitude towards the family.

From the point of view of preventing deviations, it seems to us important that the words "love", "family", "what is more expensive", "ideal", "willpower" are there in the questionnaire. These words help in positive thinking and present not only the direction of the life movement towards finding love and spiritual values, but also determine the means of achieving the result - "will power", "discipline". At the

same time, the questionnaire texts help us to think over the meaning of the words "selfishness", "resentment", "anger", and allow us to talk calmly about the questions "what will you do if you get angry?" and "if you are lied to?". It is not only choosing of one's own behavior model in such a situation, but also the reaction to the behavior of other people.

The questionnaire has been conducted in several charities at Moscow region. The results make it possible to conclude that the adolescents of both groups (adolescents of the family and of rehabilitation charities, or RC) have many similar features inherent in their age and set forth in the classical works on psychology and pedagogy: sharp mood swings; increased emotionality; impulsiveness; restlessness; poor concentration of attention; irritability, etc.

At the same time, the conditions of being in a negative environment impose their own imprint on all these phenomena, which often leads to hypertrophy and an ugly distortion of all these features of personal development. This is facilitated by wider technological capabilities such as mobility, increased flow and quality of information, the emergence of cyberspace with its specifics, which in their own way transform the world outlook of modern adolescents (and the whole society) and make it different even in comparison with the adolescents of the late XX century.

An example might be the results of the study of the relationship of a teenager to his inner world.

The significant difference in the attitude of adolescents of the RC to their inner world in comparison with their peers, who are brought up in families, is revealed. Such a discrepancy is consistent with the research of Istratova (2006) and Zmanovskaya (2004). As a result of a number of negative phenomena in their life, most social orphans have an inadequate self-esteem: it is overestimated or underestimated. This leads to inadequate behavior as a means of compensating deprivation. This is facilitated by forced limitedness in external social contacts, conditioned by the specifics of the internal regulations at the charities.

This tendency is especially pronounced in such a phenomenon as a small activity or, according to Furmanov, passivity (Furmanov, Aladin, & Furmanova, 1998). This is expressed in a complete life apathy, lack of initiative and imagination of RC teenagers, who are not able (and are afraid) to adequately build and declare an elementary scale of their values in such an internal state. They give, for the most part, short answers on the call of the questionnaire to reveal their inner world to the researcher. In their responses, the RC teenagers' aspiration to give only one type of response is obvious. The remaining steps of the scale are often ignored, and they get the minimum possible score.

As an exception to this rule, there are a number of concepts that are traumatic for this period of their internal struggle, causing pain, forcing to give detailed answers in the form of a more complete scale. This kind of reaction is often expressed in the form of a provocative, aggressively protesting free response, consisting of crude and vulgar abuse and profanity, designed, apart from self-assertion, to rebuff, to end an unpleasant dialogue, which is consistent with the data of theoretical studies. (eg (Furmanov, Aladin, & Furmanova, 1998).

The control group – adolescents, living in families at the suburbs and attending the same educational and training institutions as the group under study – RC teenagers, expresses their life position much more fully and actively. The average score of their scale of values is obviously higher than the same index for the group under study. Figuratively this situation can be characterized as follows: adolescents living in the family express their opinion frankly and without compulsion. They themselves are seeking a dialogue in

order to declare their opinion. Adolescents at rehabilitation charities evade from outside communication as from potential traumatism. They are afraid to express their opinion in an ordinary dialogic way. Their "way of self-expression" is more harsh and hypertrophied compared to their "family" peers. This internal state is combined with various types of trauma (mental, psychological, physical), received during residence in a negative family situation.

**Table 01.** Results of the respondents' answers: **CG** - the control group of adolescents who are brought up in the family; **IG** - the investigation group of adolescents of rehabilitation charities.

<b>What is extremely important to me?</b>		
<b>Answers</b>	<b>CG</b>	<b>IG</b>
My family	4,6	4,6
My friends	3,8	3
Schooling	3,7	3
My hobby	3,5	2,5
Myself	3,4	2,5
<b>The main goal of my life is ...</b>		
<b>Answers</b>	<b>CG</b>	<b>IG</b>
Creating a family	4,1	3,5
Caring for parents	4,3	3,6
Education	3,8	3,2
Employment	4,0	3,0
Acquisition of material wealth	3,8	2,4
The goal of every person's life is the desire for comfort and pleasure	3,7	2,3
<b>The ideal to which I will strive in my life is ...</b>		
<b>Answers</b>	<b>CG</b>	<b>IG</b>
Love	4,1	3,6
Diligence	4,1	3,3
Self-realization	4,1	2,8
Material wealth	4	2,6
Power and glory among people to achieve my goals	2,9	2,2

Adolescents of the control group frankly declare their desire for such socially important goals as love, employment, self-realization and material prosperity, without hiding their healthy, energetic and fervent teenage ambitions. It is an important fact that adolescents of the family and adolescents of rehabilitation charities are the same teenagers who lived in the same courtyard-world yesterday, and today some of them just have come to a completely different, shocking world - the world of a rehabilitation charity, almost a prison in their understanding. This stress is superimposed on the trauma, already existing in the psyche and physiology of the adolescent from life in unsuccessful family conditions, and as a result, the very outlook of RC teenager is obtained, which we note in the results of the study (the study of Semyannikov (2017) as well as Romashina, & Semyannikov (2016).

Readiness and desire for dialogue, the need to express oneself opinion to others - this is the distinguishing feature of the adolescents of the family in comparison with the adolescents of the RC. This shows the degree and desire for further socialization of the adolescent, his active, dynamic life position, which is consistent with the findings of other researchers (Mustafina, 2015). Opposite to control group, the life position of the teenager of the rehabilitation center is acquired and clearly declared, but it is fragile and not rooted in the inner world. We can say that the adolescents of the family express an opinion, and the RC teenagers express their pain. This is confirmed by examples of personal communication and observation. The internal struggle of these two worldviews gives us a picture of the world outlook of a teenager of RC, a social orphan.

From the point of view of the psychology of the dialogue, the situation of the self-isolation of RC teenagers characterizes their negative state of mind, expressing the conflict between their present self and the ideal Self (Florenskaya, 1991), which contradict each other. The lack of the dialogue in their inner world (the dialogue of consciousness and conscience) entails the absence and fear of any dialogue with the surrounding world, expressed in the results of the questionnaire. It is important to note here that the dialogue implies at least a desire for mutual understanding. Mutual understanding, acceptance of the position of one another is the beginning of the path to love, harmony and unification, and not to proud solitude. Isolation and the lack of communication, characterized by a number of researchers as a depleted information environment, on the contrary, lead to a decrease in the variability of the social development situations (Prihozhan, & Tolstyh, 2005), impoverish and coarsen the system of significant interpersonal relationships and complicate the path of adequate socialization of the individual. Therefore, the lack of openness, the desire for communication, and dialogue characterizes the situation of RC teenagers as requiring a drastic change.

The second type of behavior of adolescents in this situation is expressed in an easygoing, aggressive desire for leadership. The behavior of adolescents who do not have a high level of intellectual development, worldly experience and sufficiently strong will qualities is reduced to insolence in the classroom, rudeness with the surrounding and, as a rule, aggressive and cynical behavior towards those who cannot resist (Furmanov, Aladin, & Furmanova, 1998).

**Table 02.** Results of respondents' answers: CG - the control group of adolescents who are brought up in the family; IG - the investigation group of adolescents of rehabilitation charities.

<b>Do you have the willpower? How does it manifest itself? (Single Choice)</b>		
<b>Answers</b>	<b>CG</b>	<b>IG</b>
Yes, there is. The will manifests itself in working over myself.	50,4%	38,8%
No, but I want to have it, and I try to develop this quality in myself to become better.	28,8%	28,2%
Yes, there is. I show it to others in every possible way, so they know about it.	4,0%	5,9%
No, and I do not want to change anything.	1,9%	9,4%
I do not know yet	6,6%	7,1%
I do not want to answer this question	4,8%	5,9%
Other answers	3,5%	4,7%

The attitude to own will-power qualities in the worldview of RC teenagers has its own peculiarities: 9,4% of them (in the control group it is 1,9%) admit the lack of this quality in their character, while only 38,8% recognize its presence (50.4% CG).

The solution of these problems requires the development of adequate and effective technologies for the spiritual and moral support of adolescents from dysfunctional families through synergistic dialogical work in rehabilitation charities. An adequately compiled questionnaire makes the work purposeful.

## 6. Findings

The basis for the prevention of deviant behavior and the continuation of the course of thought set by the questionnaire is the building of a dialogue based on what has been read.

It is clear that it is rather difficult to offer reading to a modern teenager. Thus we give examples of works of different volumes, different genres. All of them will have the potential to use the word as a means of preventing deviant behavior.

Let us dwell on the miniature "The Blue Shadows" and the story "The Pantry of the Sun" (fairy-tale) by M.M. Prishvin, the fairy tale "The Fairy in the Bear's Den" by L. Charskaya (Borovskaya, & Poshina, 2010).

These works allow us to build a dialogue about the meaning of human life, the values of World and Man, the way of any human, random and nonrandom meetings and interaction of people with each other. It is about the influence of works of art on the human soul, on the course of thought and spiritual and moral development. In psychology, the artistic word is actively used along with music and paints in the art therapy.

Miniature "Blue shadows" by M.M. Prishvin from the series "Forest Drops" can be shown in full.

### *BLUE SHADOWS*

*The silence resumed, frosty and bright. Yesterday's snow lies on the crust, like a powder, with sparkles. The snow crust does not fail anywhere, and in the field, in the sun, keeps even better than in the shade. Each bush of the old wormwood, burdock, and a blade of grass looks into this sparkling powder as in a mirror and sees itself blue and beautiful.*

*It is interesting to admire the world of nature, peering into details. The above - ground parts of the plants named look like brown blades and dry sticks. And they see themselves here on earth, at first the same, but in this magic mirror the shadows are not gray or brown, but blue, as a reflection of the world of heaven. Each bush "as in a mirror, looks into this sparkling powder and sees itself blue and beautiful."*

This ability to discern his ideal image is very important for the RC teenager.

The tale "Pantry of the Sun" by M.M. Prishvin (1945) allows us to talk about the path of a person, remember the plot of the parable of the prodigal son, who always has the opportunity to change for the better, return to the home of his heavenly Father. It is important here to overcome the greed of Nastenka, and the pride of Mitrasha, to find a way of salvation in the Blud (astray) swamp, in which each of us can turn out. It is necessary to understand correctly the treasures of the Palestine the children are looking for. Not only cranberries and peat are hidden in the swamp as a "pantry of the sun", but friendship, kinship, love, a path to oneself better ( cited in Borovskaya, & Poshina, 2010).

The fairy tale "Fairy in a Bear Den" by Lydia Charskaya, from the collection "Fairy Tales of the Blue Fairy", is suitable for different age groups of readers. The main character, "a gray shaggy Mishka",

who "did not have anybody", "was completely alone in the world ", "did not do anything to anyone and was scared just because he was alone ... <...> People took away his bear-wife and children-bear cubs, killed them, and he himself was wounded with a bullet. This bullet, firmly entrenched in a thick bearish skin, reminded him that people are his enemies, and that they made him unhappy for life" (Charskaya, 2015, pp. 26-27). It is clear that a suffering hero of this type and experiences will be consonant with RC teenagers. A little fairy Liana accidentally flew into his den and rescued him from his loneliness.

"The evil, terrible, sullen bear has become kind and gentle since the little fairy appeared in his sullen den, and he fell in love with the fairy, cared for her and did not want to part with her" (Charskaya, 2015, p. 42). Using the dialogue, we can discuss random and non-random encounters in our life, the sense that we are close to the suffering being and can give him the hope of life with love. We prepare the soul of the teenagers for a meeting with the good, sincere feelings, and for self-determination: the fairy had to return to her congeners, and the bear - to learn to live further, choosing the right path.

We see the guarantee of successful work with adolescents, the basis for building a spiritually oriented dialogue in the emotional component of the discussion on the masterpieces. The guidelines for the forthcoming conversation with the world, outlined during the questionnaire, are fully supported by the correctly arranged further work with the adolescents.

## 7. Conclusion

The word has undoubted potential for carrying out a spiritually - oriented dialogue in the large work on the rehabilitation of adolescents. It is possible to attract this potential of speech and rehabilitation in the prevention of deviant behavior at different levels.

First, this is joint reading and discussion of works of Russian and foreign literature; we examined texts accessible to RC teenagers - small in volume with huge potential for reasoning. Works of fiction help to organize spiritually oriented dialogue with a teenager, because many problems are easy to understand examining the characters' behavior and performing their deeds in mind.

Finally, the potential of the word in the prevention of deviant behavior can be invoked also in the composition of a questionnaire determining the value orientations of adolescents. The texts of questions and possible answers are stimulating reflection of the meaning of life, the values of time and eternity, the further vector of the life path. Using of the questionnaires makes literature selection and further discussions personally oriented.

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