

## ОРГАНІЗАЦІЙНА ПСИХОЛОГІЯ; ЕКОНОМІЧНА ПСИХОЛОГІЯ

УДК 159.964.2:33

DOI <https://doi.org/10.32840/2663-6026.2020.2.31>

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### PSYCHOANALYTIC STUDY ON PSYCHOLOGICAL FEATURES OF YOUNG MEN “MILLIONAIRES” IN MODERN PROVINCIAL UKRAINE

*The article is based on three cases of private psychoanalytic work with successful businessmen from central and northern parts of Ukraine. The research methodology was psychoanalytic theories devoted to the unconscious meanings of money and the role of money in the psychoanalytic setting, including object theory, drive theory, psychosexual development theory, narcissism theory, Oedipus complex, transference and resistance. What presents the interest of this study are the cases when those who grew up in poverty finally obtains such a desired object – money, wealth, however, something unconscious hinders this person to get satisfied by it and even to admit obtaining it. The presented clinical work was conducted as classic psychoanalysis in person with different duration: 5, 10 and 46 months. Men were asked to tell whatever comes to mind: thoughts, memories, dreams, phantasies, feelings etc. The role of psychoanalyst was to hear specific connections between patient's stories and to analyze them together with the patient. The cases presented highlight several psychological features of young men “millionaires” who suffer from their own success. 1. Sensitivity to Father's (real or symbolic) acceptance of their business and financial success. 2. Activation of unconscious Oedipus complex and Complex of castration because of the risk to dethrone the Father in reality, with experiences of guilt, fear and expectation of punishment. 3. Projection of their own envy, hate, wish to avenge and killing phantasies into external objects (friends, partners, psychoanalyst) with building individual defensive strategies from them. These psychological features were associated not only with suffering and psychopathological symptoms but also with impossibility to continue business development. In addition, the cases analyzed in the article show some difficulties in building business connected with the generations gap. Fathers from the USSR or the 90s teach their sons to act in the way that is not relevant for successful careers nowadays. This latent or manifested struggle between generations may be an important factor in abovementioned psychological features.*

**Key words:** psychoanalysis, psychoanalytic study, psychology of business, men studies, psychology of money.

**Introduction.** Nowadays Ukrainians have a variety of opportunities to start their business with customers from Ukraine and abroad. Statistic platform “YouControl” shows growth in the number of entrepreneurs during 2019 year by 4%. In psychological care service me and my colleagues [1–4] observe increasing interest to different psychological assistance from business owners and managers: counseling, coaching, training, psychological support, psychotherapy and psychoanalysis. My psychoanalytical work with businessmen in several cities from central and northern parts of Ukraine shows some tendencies associated with psychological difficulties in case when someone succeeds in business and becomes a “millionaire” (in hryvnia).

I would mark these troubles as experiences of guilt, shame, anxiety and fear. We should suppose that at least particularly such experiences are determined by distrust to government and economic development [5]. However, in specific cases some other reasons were discovered, connected with both unconscious processes and social conditions.

**Purpose of the Study.** The aim of this article is to share the results of psychoanalysis of psychological features of three young successful businessmen from provincial Ukraine (towns with less than 1 million citizens).

**Theoretical background.** Psychoanalysis has been attentive to the issue of unconscious meanings of money and wealth since S. Freud wrote his

famous “The interpretations of dreams” (1900) [6], “Character and anal eroticism” (1908) [7] and “Notes upon a case of obsessional neurosis” (1909) [8]. The detailed history of further psychoanalytic study on unconscious aspects of money was described by E. Bornemann [9]. However, to summarize several important points which were formulated from the beginning of psychoanalytic thought we would like to mention that K. Abraham [10], E. Jones [11], O. Fenichel [12], S. Ferenczi [13] and S. Freud [6–8] himself elaborated the conception of money for the unconsciousness as:

- an object of anal drive: to hold and to release [7; 8; 10; 11; 13];
- symbolic representation of potency, “Phallus”: to own (to be phallic) or to be castrated [7; 8; 12];
- an object of fetishism: to own, denying the absence [13];
- something symbolizing time and “debt” to the other [6];
- an object of oral drive: to support and be supported [12];
- a way of satisfaction of narcissistic needs by wealth: to be loved and to get self-regard [12].

In addition, attitudes to money and wealth were widely analyzed by mentioned psychoanalysts through the specific unconscious processes: drives functioning, principles of pleasure and reality, anal-erotic conflict, castration complex etc.

Another important aspect of the meaning of money is its place in psychoanalytic clinical work, especially transference-countertransference area and resistance. As authors highlighted a psychoanalyst should pay attention to the process of setting fees and establishing some special payment arrangements as significant markers of transference [14; 15; 16; 17]. What is not less important is breaching these arrangements, such as forgetting to pay in general or on time, attempts to pay extra or to pay ahead for a number of sessions, changes in methods of payment (either in cash or via bank transfer). It is also useful for psychoanalyst to understand his or her own attitudes to money before theorizing this concept in the context of a specific clinical case or metapsychology in general because, as M. Dimen once wrote, “As psychoanalytic pockets slowly emptied, psychoanalytic journals began to fill up with articles on money” [16, p. 75].

What presents the interest of this study are the cases when someone who grew up in poverty finally obtains such a desired object – money, wealth, however, something unconscious hinders this person to get satisfied by it and even to admit obtaining it.

**Method and procedure.** Here classic psychoanalytic study was used, namely, psychoanalysis on a couch 4 times a week with different duration: 5, 46 and 10 months. Men were asked to tell whatever comes to mind: thoughts,

memories, dreams, phantasies, feelings etc. The role of psychoanalyst was to hear specific connections between patient’s stories and to analyze them together with the patient. To avoid premature generalizations, conclusions of these observations were formulated as separate cases. In order to keep confidentiality personal information about each patient was concealed. Patients were informed on the first session about the possibility of being published as anonymous.

**Results.** Mr. A (22 years old) asked for psychoanalysis because of panic attacks and anxiety while traveling by planes, trains or buses. He grew up in a full family with one elder brother and always spoke about parents with respect and gratefulness.

Mr. A made his first web-site while studying at school. After entering the university at the Faculty of Programming he succeeded in making online shops. Since the third semester (~ 19 years old) he was selling cheap copies of expensive clothes to Internet users by his own online shop. As he was his only manager, accountant and programmer Mr. A soon failed his exams and left the university with no regret. Interestingly, several years earlier his brother had dropped out of the same faculty. Their father, a simple worker, was very upset because of that.

Next year Mr. A had a great success and helped several friends to start their online-business. His income increased significantly so at the age of 20 he moved with his friends to the capital of a neighboring state. They rented an expensive apartment, bought a fancy car (“Mustang”), had a lot of fun and sex. By the end of the year Mr. A felt bored and his friends started to take drugs. That is when his anxiety begun. Seeing the danger in such a way of life Mr. A started a physical training program at the gym (like his father does), however, as soon as he succeeded to build muscles the first panic attack occurred. At that moment he made a decision to go back to the motherland. He rented there an apartment close to his parents and started a relationship with a young woman whom he did not love. Mr. A spent less time with his work and his income stopped increasing. He had enough money for traveling but became afraid of planes, trains and buses. Moreover, it was important that he tried to keep in secret from parents how much money he had and to avoid making expensive gifts.

Psychoanalytic study of this case showed very clearly how Mr. A avoids situations when he looks smarter, richer, stronger or more successful than other men: his elder brother, friends and especially his father. Such situations cause anxiety and, lately, panic attacks. To cope with these feelings and symptoms he used “acting out” by interruptions of activities and deleting differences between him and others. He succeeded in this defensive strategy until his friends started taking drugs, thus, they made the difference, where he looked better. In psychoanalytic terms, he was busy

with supporting the Other to be potent, “Phallic”, “non-castrated” [18; 19]. And when the mission could fail Mr. A felt anxiety as if it could dethrone or kill his father in reality [19; 20]. So, the last thing that could keep him calm was to settle near the father to be sure that he was alive and still “phallic”. Growing objective financial difference between them made him afraid to lose an “ideal father”. After working out these phantasies through psychoanalysis his panic attacks and anxiety disappeared. He started to travel to neighboring towns and created new ideas for his business.

Mr. B (37 years old) asked for psychoanalysis to improve his relationships with other businessmen. He felt shy and incompetent at business conferences and could not get acquainted with someone because of fear of being ridiculed. He had several technical services and a plant, producing building materials, though he grew up in a rather poor family. His father, a military man, talked much about shame in Mr. B’s childhood: “It would be a shame if my son created a family without his own house”, “It is a shame to be lazy or greedy”, “It is a shame if you do not help your younger siblings”. Mr. B has been taught that he should work hard, be modest in wishes and give his siblings all he can. His mother was a housewife when he was a child (often pregnant or nursing) and then worked as a secretary.

Mr. B spoke much about his “bad sides”, limitations and how expert other people are. He often looked for someone “knowledgeable” whom to listen to and was disappointed in himself when failed to follow the advice. He had four sons, tried to be a good, loving father for children and still helped his adult younger brother. But Mr. B could never accept his own success: in business, relationships and even parenting. When something went wrong the other never was guilty. There was a question in psychoanalysis: why it is so important for him to insist that it is he himself, who loses, fails and makes mistakes?

The answer was found through the analysis of transference. We discovered a fear that the psychoanalyst will punish or abandon him. Later he admitted he had a very expensive car and parked it far from my office, like he did with some other people: sometimes he borrowed his brother’s car (a cheaper one). He was sure that no one wants him to succeed and expected envy, hate and wish to avenge him because of his achievements. And his associations about it brought him to the image of the father every time.

On the one hand it was about the denied side of father’s personality; being a man “from the USSR” father hated rich people, called businessmen “speculators”, despised “easy” money, but insisted that everybody should work and earn enough money for his family (that is now not quite realistic without making business). And there was a conflict between a desire to be like his father said and a fear to become someone

whom father would hate. That is why in phantasies Mr. B always was “not so rich”, “not so smart” etc. On the other hand, we see here results of splitting and projection, where his own envy, hate, wish to avenge and killing phantasies are placed into the object [22], and he has to atone guilt all the time because of fear of punishment [18]. By the last year of psychoanalysis, he had built more realistic relationships with his parents and allowed himself to compete more in his business. Eventually, he has extended his business for other regions and foreign countries.

Mr. C (25 years old) came to psychoanalyst because of drinking much alcohol every weekend since he was 16. He could not build close relationships because of anxiety and met women only for sex and exceptionally when he was drunk. We discovered later that all women he chose for attempts to build a relationship were from other cities. Besides, when he was stressed he felt a desire to go somewhere from his native town. We have analyzed that this desire was based on a fear of being caught. In his phantasies someone criminal or governmental could notice him in the town because of his bright and very expensive car and would be interested how such a young man could afford it. From Monday to Friday Mr. C was alone, managing his business, playing music and visiting a teacher of literature. He avoided appearing in public places and could only come for a few minutes to a cafe just to buy a cup of coffee and go out. That was also about his fear of being caught. Nevertheless, on the weekends he spent time with friends by drinking. He even bought good cars for these friends with rational explanation: to help himself with business or to make business for friends. But they just took cars and continued to spend his money.

Associations about the topic of drinking alcohol were about Mr. C’s depressed mother and successful step-father, who was a businessman. The step-father always told Mr. C that he had stupid business-ideas, so it would be better to learn a simple worker’s profession. That was a man, who made business in the 90s and believed in cheap goods and local criminal support as the best base for gaining money. From 16 to 22 years Mr. C brought his business-ideas to the step-father to discuss and to get advice, but heard the same. After this period, he finally starts his on-line business and ceases any communication with a step-father. He has never seen his real father because his parents broke up during the pregnancy and the only information he had about his father was his name and that he lived in the same town.

Psychoanalytic study of Mr. C’s fears, acts and wishes allowed to discover that there was an unconscious phantasy about someone very powerful and all-seeing, who will notice him, catch and become mad because of his success. It was supposed that this object is the Father’s name [19], made by an

example of the step-father, but symbolizing his real biological father: very strong, powerful and attentive to everyone who will dare to compete with him. On one session he told about a young woman from Mr. C's native town whom he liked, but could not start a relationship with her because of irrational anxiety. The interpretation which had a strong influence was: "Of course! Till you are not acquainted with your father and know nothing about him, every girl in this town could be his daughter". The father you do not know can be ideal, very potent and attentive, watching you stealthily. It is a great pleasure to be a son of such a father and a big fear: you cannot do business in "his" town, show your talents, chose women etc [18; 20; 21]. Drinking alcohol allowed Mr. C to risk and go to public places, act brightly in the town, and after that he waited all the week when someone would come to catch him (that was an unconscious desire to meet his father). By Friday he felt depressed and disappointed and tried once more.

After working out this topic through psychoanalysis, he finally met his biological father and his family, stopped moving to different towns and started one more business, a local one. Interestingly, he purchased an even brighter and more expensive car.

**Conclusions.** The cases presented here highlight several psychological features of young men "millionaires" who suffer from their own success:

- Sensitivity to the Father's (real or symbolic) acceptance of their business and financial success.
- Activation of Oedipus complex and Complex of castration because of the risk to dethrone father in reality, with experiences of guilt, triumph, fear and expectation of punishment.

- Projection of their own envy and aggression into external objects (friends, partners, psychoanalyst) with building individual defensive strategies from them.

These cases also show some difficulties in building business connected with the generations gap. Fathers from the USSR or the 90s teach their sons to act in the way that is not relevant for successful careers nowadays. This latent or manifested struggle between generations may be an important factor in abovementioned psychological features.

In addition, we consider it promising to explore these psychological tendencies also from social and economic points of view, reinforcing them with a psychoanalytic approach to the psychology of wealth, success and money in general, as D. Bennett suggested [23].

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**Великодна М. С. Психоаналітичне дослідження психологічних особливостей молодих чоловіків «мільйонерів» у сучасній провінційній Україні**

У статті розкрито тему психологічних особливостей сучасних українських чоловіків-бізнесменів із невеликих міст центральної частини України у разі досягнення ними фінансового успіху. Як теоретичне підґрунтя використано психоаналітичні дослідження значення грошей для позасвідомого суб'єкта та для здійснення клінічної психоаналітичної роботи. Інтерес цієї роботи був побудований довкола випадків, коли суб'єкт, що зростає у бідності, отримує бажаний об'єкт – гроші, але має труднощі не лише в отриманні задоволення від цього, а й у визнанні свого статку. В емпіричній частині авторка наводить три випадки роботи з чоловіками у приватній психоаналітичній практиці, що проходили методом класичного психоаналізу на кушетці з різною тривалістю: 5, 46 та 10 місяців. Чоловіки зверталися до психоаналітика у зв'язку з переживанням тривоги, панічних атак, страхів перед іншими, алкоголізацією. На основі аналізу цих випадків загалом та індивідуальної симптоматики кожного аналізанта було сформульовано низку виявлених психологічних тенденцій у чоловіків «мільйонерів»: 1) чутливість до прийняття власного соціального чи фінансового успіху з боку реального або символічного Батька; 2) активація Едипального і кастраційного комплексів через ризик перемогти батька, з відповідним почуттям провини, триумфу, страху і очікування покарання; 3) проекція власної заздрості та агресії на зовнішні об'єкти з побудовою індивідуальних стратегій захисту від них. Показано, що виявлені тенденції не лише лежать в основі страждань та симптоматик, але й обмежують суб'єкта у подальшому розвитку бізнесу. Підкреслено роль різниці поколінь як одного з можливих чинників формування описаних психологічних труднощів: батьки з досвідом із СРСР та з 90-х дають своїм синам протирічні настанови, які не є актуальними для досягнення успіху сьогодні. Інстанція Над-Я, сформована під впливом цих настанов, створює додатковий тиск на суб'єкта як на «спекулянта» чи «бандита» через власну заможність. Отже, виявлені особливості можна розглядати не тільки в контексті психодинаміки суб'єкта, але й у дискурсі соціального.

**Ключові слова:** психоаналіз, психоаналітичне дослідження, психологія бізнесу, психологія грошей, чоловічі дослідження.