

# Personal Sovereignty as a Factor of Well-being and Self-realization

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Expert meeting “Virtues, values, and personality”  
October 28-30, 2009, Rome, Italy

**Moscow City University  
of Psychology and Education**

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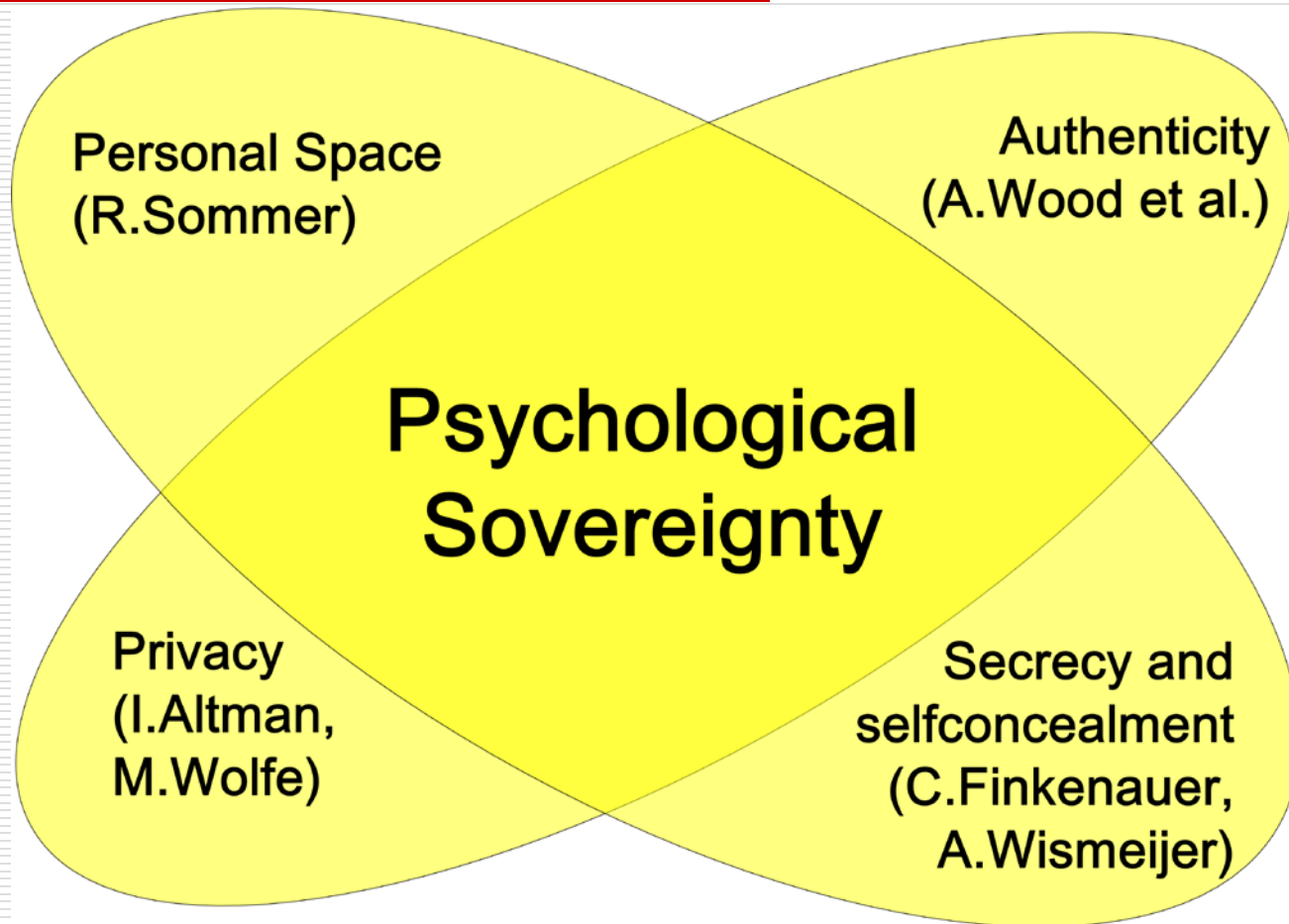
# Importance of research

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It seems to be promising  
to study psychological well-being  
of the person  
as a personal freedom  
to maintain  
and to keep borders between  
him/herself and the world

# Psychological Sovereignty in the system of close concepts

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# Background

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- ❑ **Classical theories of the personality** (W. James, K. Levin, F. Perls, K.G. Jung, D.N. Uznadze);
- ❑ **Ethology and environmental psychology** (K. Lorenz, N. Tinbergen, J. Wohlwill, U. Bronfenbrenner, A. Lang);
- ❑ **Theory of Privacy** (I. Altman, M. Wolfe);
- ❑ **Researches of autonomy and social conformity** (S. Milgram, A.T. Beck et al.);
- ❑ **Author's experience as a psychotherapist.**

# Mechanisms of making reality «subjective»:

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- **Signification**  
(C.Peirce, A.Lang)
- **Personalization**  
(M.Hejdmets, V.Petrovsky)

# Psychological Space of the Person (PSP)

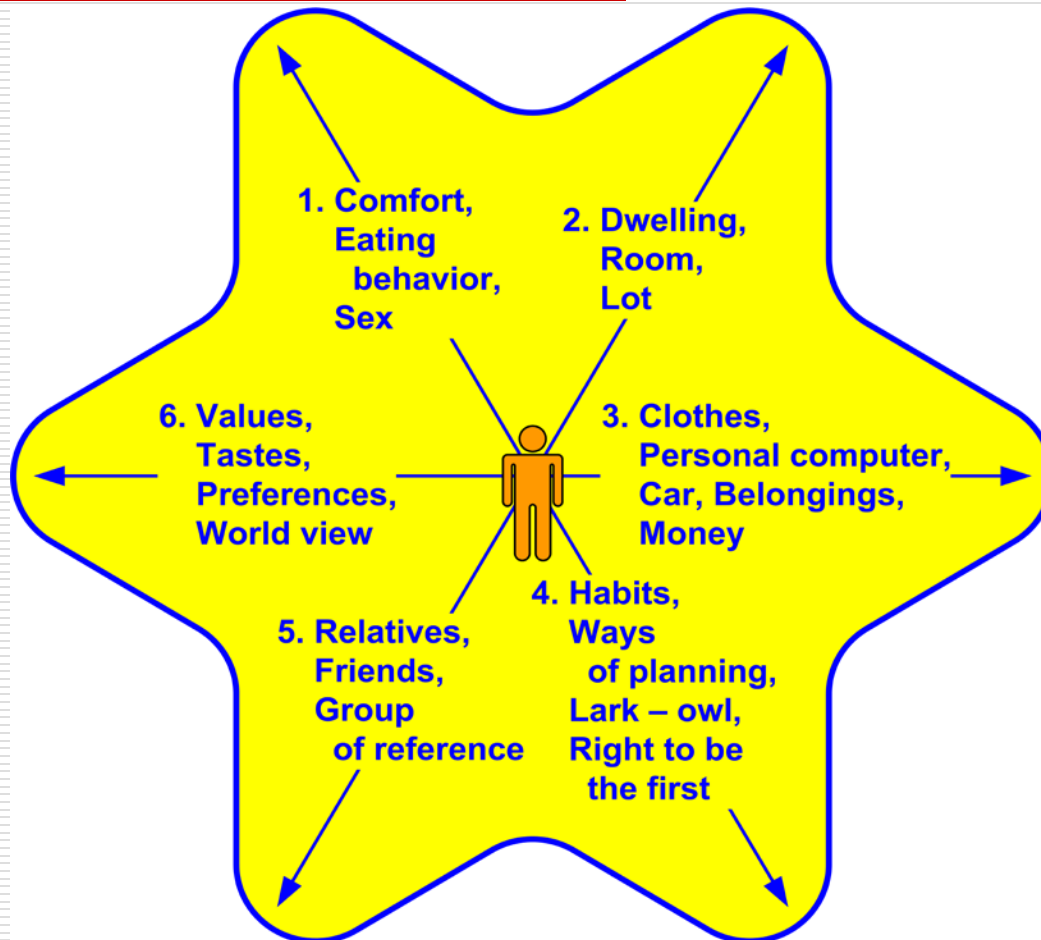
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A fragment of reality which

- is significant for a personality;
- determines its actual activity and life strategy;
- includes a complex of physical, social and psychological phenomena with which a person identifies him/herself.

# Structure of the Psychological Space of the Person

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# Features of PSP:

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- ❑ It is a value for the person.
- ❑ Everything inside the space should be supervised and protected by the person.
- ❑ It exists naturally and is not reflexed outside problem situations.
- ❑ It is capable of self-compensation by virtue of interchangeability (symbolistic nature) of its dimensions.
- ❑ The major characteristic of PSP is integrity of its borders.

# Personal Sovereignty

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- ❑ State of PSP boundaries (psychological markers which separate an area of one person's control from area of another person's control).
- ❑ A person's ability of supervising, protecting and developing his/her psychological space.

# Sovereignty appears as

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- experience in authenticity of one's life;
- sensation of his/her relevance in life circumstances.

# Deprivedness appears as

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- ❑ passing through subordination;
- ❑ estrangement and Self-alienation;
- ❑ fragmentariness of person's life;
- ❑ problems in searching for objects of identification.

# Hypothesis:

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**Personal sovereignty  
is positively connected  
with psychological well-being  
of the person**

# Psychological well-being is

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- ☐ real success;
- ☐ absence of anxiety;
- ☐ a feeling of having achieved something with one's life.

# Theory of psychological sovereignty

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1. **Aims.** The evolutionary and social aim of the psychological sovereignty is the maintenance of self-control by means of influences selection from outside.
2. **Structure.** The sovereignty is established in relation to six listed above dimensions of psychological space.
3. **Dynamics.** Every person aspires to keep or increase a level of personal sovereignty and develops it in life cycle.
4. **Phenomenology.** Psychological sovereignty depends on objective environment; goes back to the territorial instinct and is the social form of biological programs realization.

# Methods and techniques:

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- a questionnaire Personal psychological sovereignty (PPS);
- case-method (describing clients' stories).

# Examples of PPS-items

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- 6. It was at common that my parents switched TV from my range to another while I was watching it (RHS).
- 8. Even as a child I was sure nobody touched my toys when I was absent (TBS).
- 11. I often felt offended when adults punished me with slapping and cuffing (BS).
- 24. Offended I got used to lock myself in the bathroom or in the lavatory (TS).
- 26. If my friends proposed that I spent the night with them, my parents usually didn't mind (SCS).
- 27. I usually succeeded in having a children's holiday as I liked (TVS).
- 28. I often was offended when adults began a critical conversation and sent me out into another room (TS).

# Module 1

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Sample: Moscow adolescents  
(N= 174, mean age of 13.7 years, SD= +1.20)

“Adverse”: inhabitants of orphanage,  
young prisoners and pupils of the special  
school for the difficult teenagers  
(76 boys, 29 girls)

“Successful”: teenagers who went to the  
prestigious elitist schools (33 boys, 36 girls)

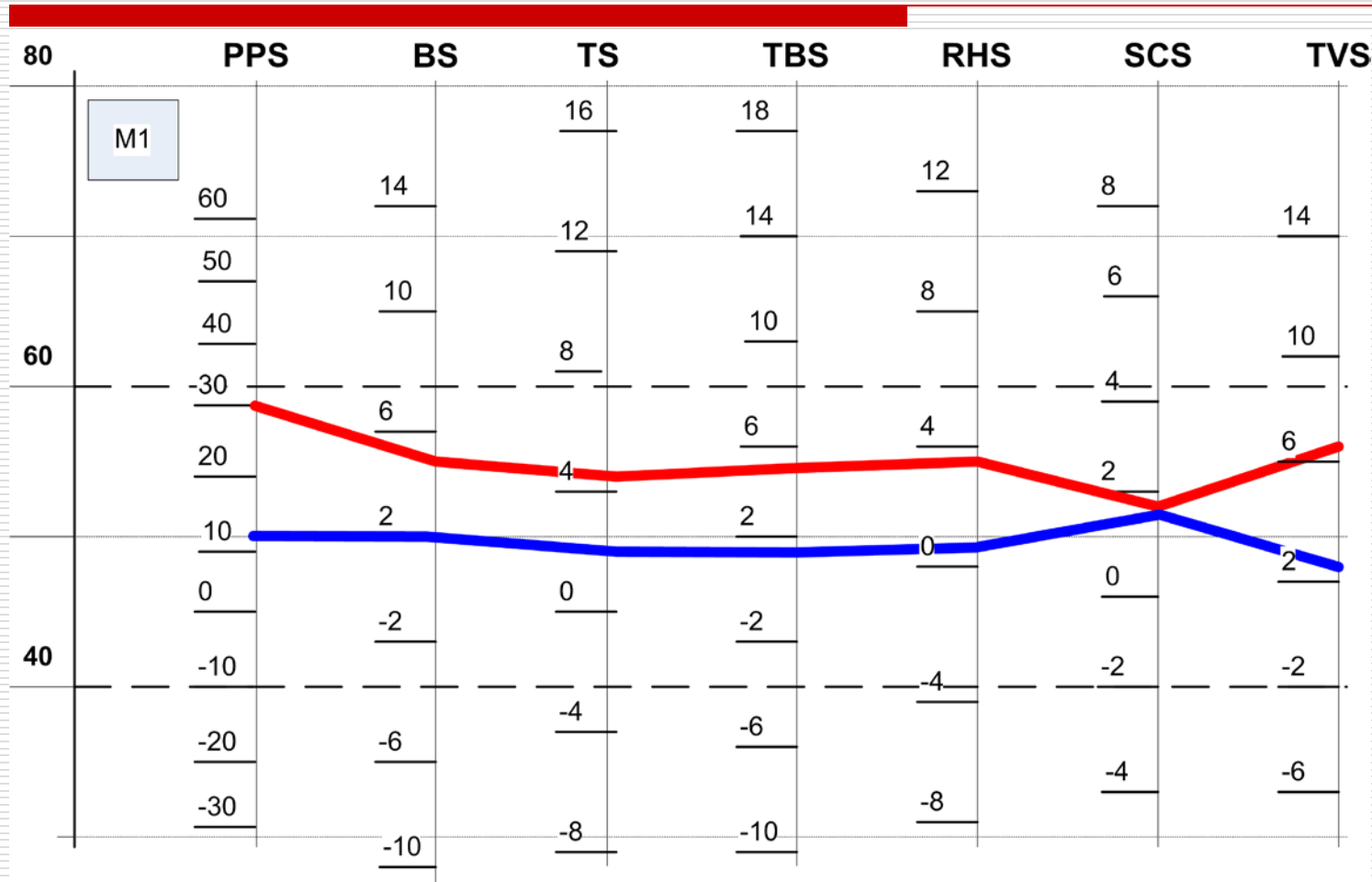
Computation of the non-parametric U by Mann-Whitney proved the difference between groups both for boys and girls in the most subscales

# Meanings of PPS-scales in the contrast groups (boys)

	Scale	PPS	Body	Ter.	Th. and Bel.	Regime habits	Soc. connect.	Tast. And Val.
Successful n=29	<b>M</b>	30,1	4,4	4,3	5,3	3,7	1,8	6,6
	<b>SD</b>	21,3	4,7	5,1	5,9	5,4	3,2	5,1
Adverse n=76	<b>M</b>	10,8	1,9	2,2	1,8	0,9	1,9	2,2
	<b>SD</b>	22,9	5,9	5	5,3	5,2	3	5,4
Mann- Whitney U		<b>725,5</b>	<b>810,5</b>	858	<b>710,5</b>	<b>756,5</b>	1071	<b>599</b>
p-level		<b>0,006938</b>	<b>0,035583</b>	0,078633	<b>0,004743</b>	<b>0,012708</b>	0,821482	<b>0,000289</b>

Note. Significant meanings are in bold.

# PPS-means of boys from different social groups

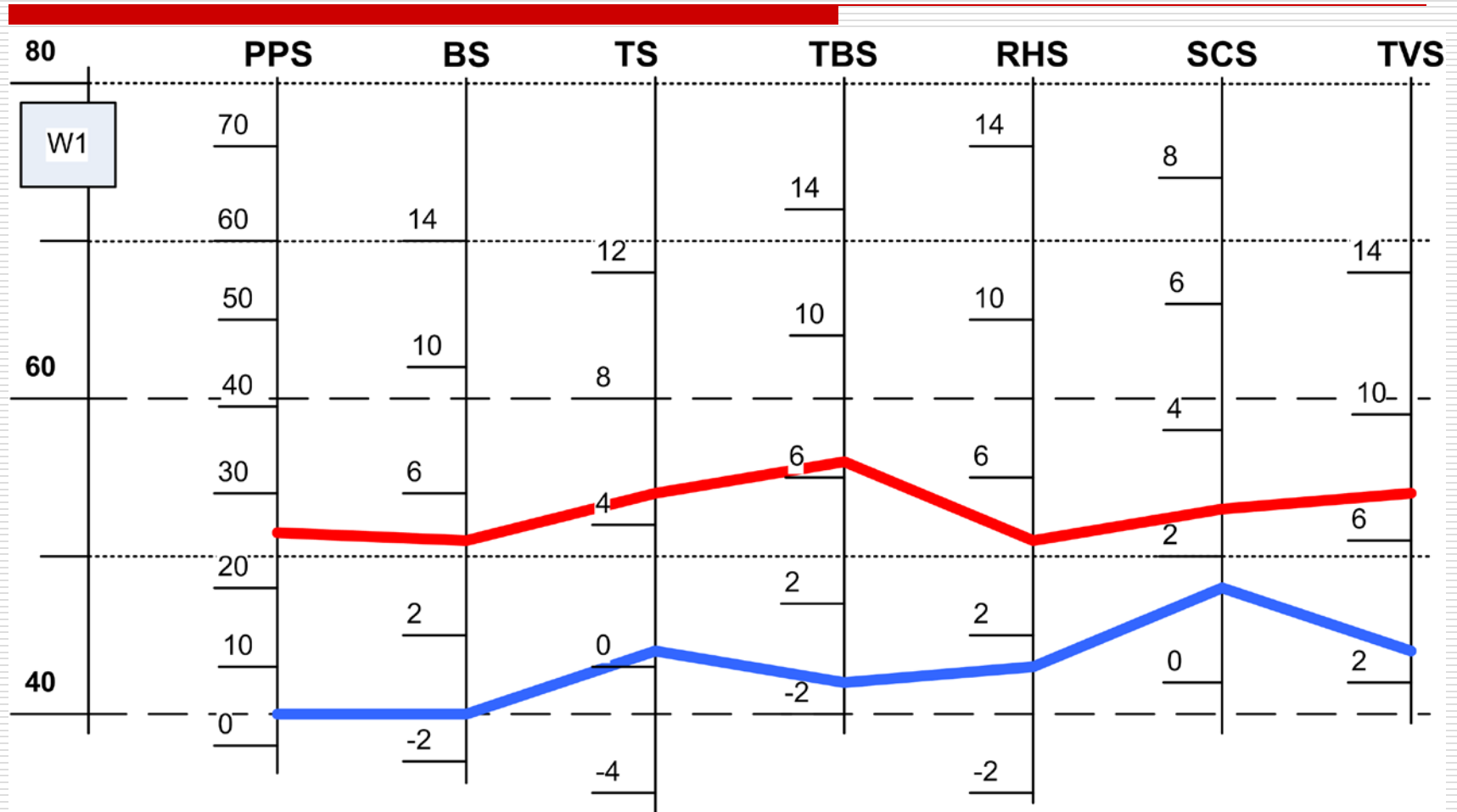


# Meanings of PPS-scales in the contrast groups (girls)

	Scale	PPS	Body	Ter.	Th. And Bel.	Regime habits	Soc. connect.	Tast. And Val.
<b>Successful n=29</b>	M	26,1	5,2	4,7	6,5	4,3	2,4	7
	SD	19,5	3,7	5,1	5,2	4,8	2,1	5,1
<b>Adverse n=76</b>	M	4,7	-0,6	0,3	-0,8	1,5	1,6	2,3
	SD	18,3	4,6	4,4	5,9	3,9	3	5,5
<b>Mann- Whitney U</b>		<b>196</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>216,5</b>	<b>376</b>	509	<b>308,5</b>
<b>p-level</b>		<b>0,000002</b>	<b>0,000002</b>	<b>0,000372</b>	<b>0,000005</b>	<b>0,008274</b>	0,294718	<b>0,000559</b>

Note. Significant meanings are in bold.

# PPS-means of girls from different social groups



# Module 2

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Sample: 42 students  
of Moscow City University  
of Psychology and Education  
(10 males, 32 females),  
mean age of 18,9 years,  $SD=1.8$ .

Comparison of the scores *PPS*  
and Neuroticism in Russian version  
of NEO-RI-R by Costa and McCrae  
has shown significant negative connection.

# Connection between facets of Neuroticism in NEO-RI-R and PPS-score

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	Neuroticism	Anxiety	Angry hostility	Depression	Self-consciousness	Impulsiveness
Rs	<b>-0,36</b>	-0,22	<b>-0,31</b>	<b>-0,33</b>	<b>-0,31</b>	<b>-0,34</b>
p-level	<b>0,02</b>	0,16	<b>0,04</b>	<b>0,04</b>	<b>0,04</b>	<b>0,03</b>

Note. Significant meanings are in bold.

# Module 3

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Sample: 59 adolescents  
(31 boys, 28 girls),  
aged of 14,1 years,  $SD=1,1$ .

There were also revealed negative connection of PPS-subcales with Neuroticism in Russian version of Eysenck's Personality Inventory ( $R_s=-0,32$ ,  $p<0,01$ ).

# Connection between Neuroticism in EPI and PPS-subscales

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	PPS	Body	Ter.	Th. and Bel.	Regime habits	Soc. connect.	Tast. and Val.
Boys (N=31)	<b>-0,36</b>	-0,12	<b>-0,36</b>	-0,29	-0,2	-0,25	-0,3
Girls (N=28)	<b>-0,4</b>	-0,16	-0,27	<b>-0,47</b>	-0,21	<b>-0,41</b>	-0,35

Note. Significant meanings are in bold ( $p < 0,05$ )

# Module 4

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Sample: 40 adolescents  
(20 males, 20 females)  
of average age 22,3, SD=1,2.

There was undertaken comparison  
PPS-scores with meanings  
of Russian version  
of Purpose-in-Life Test  
by Crumbaugh and Maholick.

There were some positive tendencies  
and one significant connection revealed.

# Connections between PPS-subscales and PIL-Test

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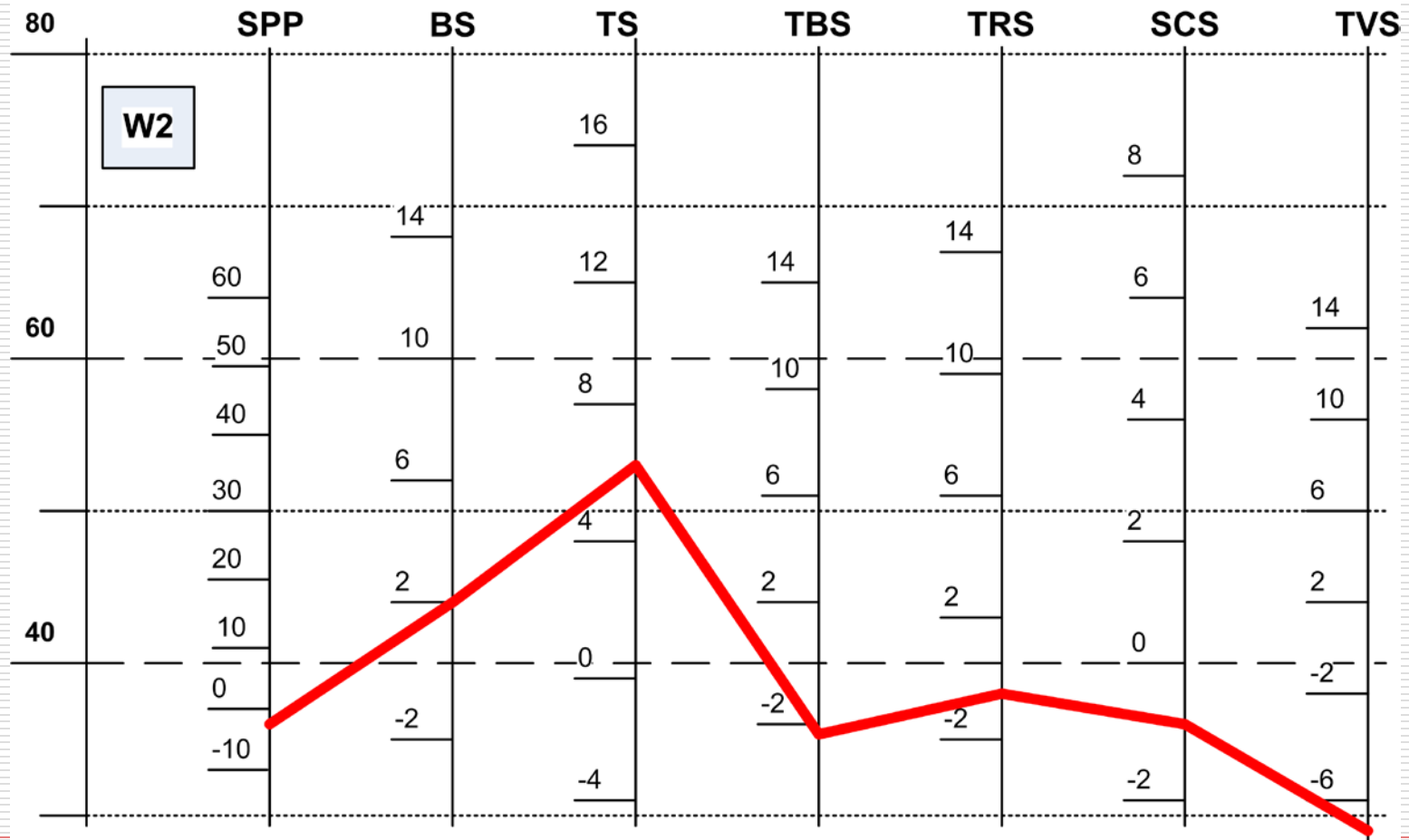
	PPS	Body	Ter.	Th. and Bel.	Regime habits	Soc. connect.	Tast. and Val.
Rs	<i>0,28</i>	<i>0,34</i>	0,15	0,17	0,03	0,16	<b>0,37</b>

Note. Significant meaning is in bold ( $p < 0,05$ ), tendencies are in italic ( $p < 0,1$ )

# Module 5

Included analysis of psychotherapeutic clients' stories

**PPS-Profile of psychotherapeutic client A.B.** (female, aged of 38)



# Limitations

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sample size  
the lack  
of investigated variables

# Prospects

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- ❑ to study connection between Sovereignty and positive phenomena (belief in just world, moral judgments, authenticity);
- ❑ to associate sovereignty infringements with psychological deviations and addictions;
- ❑ to investigate natural (non-medical) skills of the self-help (journeys, eating behavior, animal-assisted therapy, shopping, sport, arts and so on);
- ❑ to study more fully level and strategies of Self-realization in groups of deprived and sovereign persons.

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**Thank you for attention!**