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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24195/2414-4665-2017-11-24>**Olha Sannikova,***Doctor of Psychology, professor,**Head of the Department of General and Differential Psychology,**South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky,**4, Fontanska Doroha Str., Odesa, Ukraine***INDIVIDUAL-TYPICAL VARIATIONS OF NARCISSISM**

*In the period of global and large-scale socio-cultural changes, the desire for “free individualism”, for undesirable social manifestations referring to the extreme (subclinical) variants of the “norm”, to the growth of narcissistic tendencies increases. The urgency of the study is determined by the need to develop a theoretical and methodological substantiation of the issue of narcissism, its conceptualization as a psychological phenomenon, the need to study individual-typical variations of its features (components) and the features of their manifestations. The paper aims to present the results of investigating individual psychological features of non-clinical narcissism in persons who differ in emotionality. For the study of narcissism, “Test of Narcissism Assessment” was used. Emotionality was measured by “Psychodiagnostic Four-Modality Emotionality Questionnaire”. The presence of negative significant correlations between the emotional modality of Joy and the majority of indicators of narcissism was found, while the modalities “Anger”, “Fear”, “Sadness” correlate with the parameters of narcissism mostly positively. The individual peculiarity of the narcissistic traits within the limits of the mental norm, the variability of their individual combinations (qualitative and quantitative combination of indicators, characteristics of narcissism) are determined by the degree of dominance of one or another emotional modality.*

**Keywords:** *dark triad, non-clinical narcissism, emotionality, profiles of narcissism, individual-typical variations.*

**Introduction**

In modern societies, during the period of global and large-scale socio-cultural changes, the desire for “free individualism”, for undesirable social manifestations referring to extreme (subclinical) variants of the “norm”, in particular, to the growth of narcissistic tendencies, increases. This can explain a significant increase in scientific and practical interest in psychological constructs that form a certain worldview, sometimes discrediting moral guidelines.

Recently, the issue of the “Dark Triad” of the individual has been debated [2; 3; 4; 6; 15; 20; 23; 24, etc.] which includes *narcissism*. In the process of developing narcissistic problems, the need for empirical studies of narcissism as a mental phenomenon increases. At the same time, the growth of narcissistic tendencies in society raises the requirements for practice, designed to detect distortions in the ways of regulating the person's self-representations in a timely manner, and to correct violations of personal development for persons belonging to the contingent of the psychic norm.

*It is important to note that the psychoanalytic concept of narcissism as early as 1914 was proposed by Z. Freud. He understood narcissism as a concentration of human interest exclusively on himself/herself. Z. Freud considered this specific state both as a personal and clinical phenomenon [12]. Later it was refined and defined as a certain stable long-term state that arose on the basis of distortion of the ways of regulating self-representations of the personality, and as a personal trait which is characterized, first of all, by the demonstrated grandiosity [5; 6; 15, etc.]. In the psychology of individual differences,*

narcissism (“non-clinical narcissism”) is regarded as a stable personality trait that varies within the norm and affects the characteristics of interpersonal relationships and the success of activity [3]. However, *until now* narcissism as a concept has no generally accepted definition in modern psychology which indicates not only the interest of different sciences to this phenomenon, the diversity of approaches to its study, but also the complexity and ambiguity of the issue itself.

In scientific literature, there is information on the relationship of narcissism with the difficulty of identifying emotions, with low empathy [17]; with a pronounced demonstrativeness [16]; confidence in superiority over others, the need to be in the centre of attention, ill-will, hostility and, what is especially important for us, with the emotional sphere of the personality, in particular with aggressiveness and aggressive behaviour in the event of the slightest imaginary or real threat [18]; with emotional self-efficacy [22], etc.

Thus, *the relevance of the study is determined*, on the one hand, by the need to develop a theoretical and methodological substantiation of the issue of non-clinical narcissism and its conceptualization as a psychological phenomenon, on the other, the need to study the features of its manifestations, and to study individual-typical variations of its features (components).

It is known that narcissism is an independent construct of the Dark personality triad, not reducible to its other two components – psychopathy and Machiavellianism. For the first time, the “Dark Triad” term as a syndrome of certain properties conventionally related to the “norm”, more precisely to its extreme subclinical variants

was invented and described by Canadian researchers Delroy L. Paulhus and Kevin Williams [21]. This triad the structure of which includes *non-clinical* narcissism, *non-clinical* psychopathy and Machiavellianism, characterizes the negative aspects of the personality: a disparaging attitude towards other people, to generally accepted norms of behaviour; manifestations of egocentrism, selfishness, ill-will, emotional coldness, a sense of self-superiority, and the like [ibid.].

It should be noted that recently Erin E. Buckels, Daniel N. Jones, Delroy L. Paulhus added to the “pantheon of dark personalities” the fourth member of this complex – “everyday sadism” [14] which like psychopathy and Machiavellianism goes beyond the framework of this research.

The history of the formation of ideas about the content of the characteristics of the Dark Triad and its place in the structure of the basic personality traits are detailed in the works of M.S. Yegorova [3]. In fact, negative features the importance of which was previously underestimated and even ignored by the basic structures of the personality (the Big Five, factorial personality models, etc.) are for the first time included in the circle of interests of scientists as a special subject of research. At the same time, E. Fromm noted that throughout his life a person was, to some extent, narcissistic, even with his/her normal development [13].

As the basis for searching for individual differences in the manifestations of narcissism, we chose emotionality which we consider as a stable property of individuality. Correlation of narcissism and emotionality was preceded by the following reasoning.

Firstly, in the HEXACO Model of Personality Structure, “Emotionality” is one of the six dimensions or human factors. The “Emotional Stability” factor was identified in the “Big Five” model. In many studies both these factors show inverse interdependence (an increase in the values of one leads to a decrease in the other) and, what is important to us, *correlate with narcissism*, albeit ambiguously (in an opposite way) [7], which indicates the relationship between narcissism and the emotional sphere of the personality.

Secondly, in the very structure of narcissism there are characteristics reflecting the characteristics of the affective sphere of the personality (see below) that convinces the correctness of the choice of the direction of research. At the same time, special attention should be paid to the interpretation of the concept of emotionality, since understanding of both our idea and the results of the research depends on this.

In the HEXACO Model of Personality Structure, emotionality factor (E) is interpreted as emotional hypersensitivity, sentimentality, fear, anxiety, vulnerability. In the “Big Five” model, the fourth bipolar factor (neuroticism – emotional restraint) also contains the characteristics of the affective sphere of the personality. Emotionality manifests itself in increased sensitivity to environmental influences, especially in stressful situations, predispo-

sition to anxiety and depression, tension, self-criticism. Emotional restraint, on the contrary, characterizes a person as inclined to show accommodativeness, slowness and self-sufficiency. In fact, these factors show the different levels of the emotional sphere (mostly negative emotions), reflecting its dynamic side (slowness, restraint) and character traits (carelessness, self-sufficiency, comfort, etc.).

Our understanding of emotionality is based on the works of V. D. Nebylitsin, A. Y. Olshannikova [8; 9]. Emotionality is considered as one of the most important, along with mental activity, stable characteristics of individuality which represents a whole complex of properties, embracing: the formal dynamic attributes of emotions (strength, intensity, duration, speed of flow, change, etc.); qualitative characteristics that contain information about the modality and the sign of emotional experience; the substantial characteristics of emotionality which are in the object of experience itself. Parameters characterizing the quality of emotional experience, namely, its modality (the patterns of joy, anger, fear, and sadness) and a sign (positive and negative) are considered to be the most important in the totality of all the signs of emotionality [8; 9; 10; 11].

#### **Aim and tasks**

The paper aims to present the results of studying the individual psychological features of non-clinical narcissism in persons who differ in emotionality. To achieve the aim of the study, it is necessary to solve the following tasks: to identify and study the specifics of the relationship between the indicators of emotionality and narcissism; to identify steadily manifesting combinations (types) of qualitative characteristics of emotionality; to identify representatives of these types and to study the peculiarity of manifestation of their non-clinical narcissism.

Coming to the study, we assumed that the individual originality of the narcissistic traits within the psychic norm, the variability of their individual combinations (qualitative and quantitative combination of indicators, characteristics of narcissism) are determined by the degree of dominance of one or another emotional modality.

#### **Research methods**

For the study of narcissism, the “Narcissism Assessment Test” was used. It is a clinical-psychological test technique developed by F.-W. Deneke and B. Hilgenstock and adapted in 2003 in Bekhterev Institute by N.M. Zalutskaya, A.Ya. Vuks under the leadership of V.D.Vida, which consists of 163 items and includes 18 scales [4]. Using this technique, the following indicators are diagnosed: H1 – impotent Self, H2 – loss of control of emotions and motivations, H3 – derealization, depersonalization, H4 – basic hope potential, H5 – minor Self, H6 – negative bodily Self, H7 – social isolation, H8 – archaic departure, H9 – grandiose Self, H10 – aspiration for the ideal Self-Object, H11 – thirst for praise and affirmation, N12 – narcissistic rage, N13 – Ideal of self-sufficiency, N14 – depreciation of the object, N15 – ideal of values,

N16 – symbiotic Self defence , H17 – hypochondriac protection alarm, H18 – narcissistic gain from illness, H19 – total narcissism. A detailed description of the dominant scales is given below when describing profiles of narcissism.

The study of emotionality was conducted with the help of the “Psychodiagnostic Four-Modality Emotionality Test” [1], aimed at studying its qualitative indicators, characterizing a stable (non-clinical) propensity to experience: the emotions of a “Joy” pattern (J – joyful mood, good mood, sense of satisfaction with the world, people, self-satisfaction); emotions of “Anger” pattern (A – Irritability, incontinence, a tendency to roughness, anger, etc.); emotions of “Fear” pattern (F – timidity, anticipation of dangers, shyness, alertness, fear of everything new, unknown, anxiety, etc.); emotions of “Sadness” pattern (S – low mood, feeling of uncertainty, loss, de-

pression, propensity to depression, etc.).

The study was conducted on the basis of the South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky. 173 people took part in it: 60 students and post-graduate students (aged from 18 to 30) and 113 students of the post-graduate department (aged from 28 to 45). The processing of the obtained data was carried out with the help of quantitative (correlation) and qualitative (methods of “aces” and “profiles”) data analysis, as a result of which general patterns and individual differences in the manifestations of non-clinical narcissism were revealed.

**Research Results**

The results obtained in the course of the correlation analysis of the emotional and narcissistic personality indicators are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.

**Significant Correlation Between Qualitative Indicators of Emotionality and Characteristics of Narcissism**

Emotionality	Indicators of narcissism								
	H1	H2	H3	H4	H5	H6	H7	H9	
J	-313**		-152*	200**	-273**	-315**	-405**	234**	
A	410**	494**	172*		364**	253**	279**		
F	267**	250**			242**		373**		
S	568**	444**	211**	-269**	475**	411**	286**	-163*	
	Indicators of narcissism								
	H10	H11	H12	H14	H16	H17	H18	H19	
J	198**		-200**	-230**			-229**	-176*	
A	177*	310**	539**	219**	243**	267**	319**	397**	
F			196**			156*		179*	
S		156*	392**	301**		242**	295**	394**	

Notes: 1) N = 173; 2) zeros and commas are omitted; 3) the notation "\*" shows the connection at the level of 5% (p<0.05), the symbol "\*\*" - at the level of 1% (p < 0.01); 4) conditional abbreviations are given in the text; 5) some indicators of narcissism (H8, H13, H15) in Table 1 are not represented, so, significant links with the indicators of emotionality are not identified (at the level of trends).

Table 1 shows a significant number of correlation relationships which indicates the competence to compare the qualitative characteristics of emotionality with the indicators of narcissism. Secondly, the correlation coefficients are divided into two poles – positive links of the parameters of narcissism with the modalities of A, F, S and negative with the parameter J are revealed. It reflects the opposite of the poles of emotionality, on the one hand, the modality of J (the carrier of the positive sign), on the other - modalities of A, F and S (carriers of the negative sign of emotions). The exceptions are the indicators of narcissism H4 - the basic potential of hope, H9 - the grandiose Self, H10 - the pursuit of an ideal Self-Object which do not correlate with emotionality.

In general, it can be argued that the negative emotions of A (anger), F (fear) and S (sadness) are directly proportional to the majority of the indicators of narcissism, and the modality of J is inversely proportional. In other words, the manifestations of narcissistic tendencies are to a great extent accompanied by negative emotions, while the modality of J narrows the signs of narcissism.

It can be assumed that persons with negative emotional disposition are more prone to narcissism. To test this assumption, and in accordance with the purpose of our study, we studied the individual psychological characteristics of non-clinical narcissism in persons who differ in emotionality. To do this, on the basis of data obtained with the help of the “Four-Modality Emotionality Test” [1] with subsequent application of the “aces” method groups of subjects were identified, characterized by the extreme dominance of one of the emotional modalities (mono-modal types of emotionality): J (joy, N = 15), A (anger, N = 11), F (fear, N = 9), S (sadness, N = 12) against the background of weak expression of the rest. The features of narcissism were identified using the profile method presented in Fig 1. On the OX axis the indicators of narcissism are marked, on the axis OY – percentiles. The preliminary conversion of raw scores into percentiles is caused by the need to reduce all empirical distributions (for each scale) to a normal model in the absence of test standards.

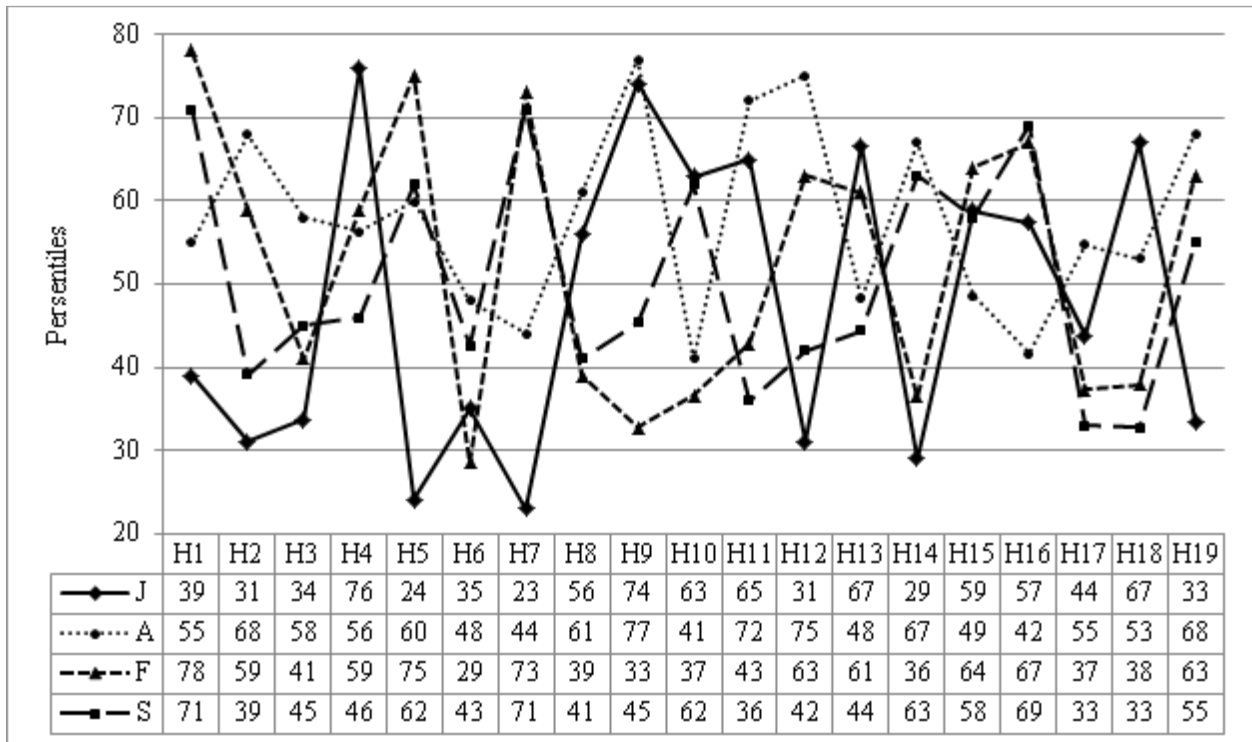


Fig 1 Profile of Narcissism of Groups of Subjects with Different Emotional Disposition

Profiles represent the average value of each indicator of all representatives of each group. It is important to note that very high and extremely low values for none of the profiles were found which indicates that the representatives of this sample have no narcissistic pathology.

Let us first analyze the profile of narcissism of each group of subjects separately, and then compare them with

each other. Indicators of narcissism can be considered as a bipolar continuum, each pole of which is characterized by opposite qualities. Therefore, we pre-rank the parameters of narcissism relative to the midline of the series (50 percentiles) from a larger deviation of the value to a smaller one (see Table 2). So one can identify the dominant trends in the manifestation of narcissistic features.

Table 2.

**Ranking of Indicators of Narcissism of Groups of Persons with Mono-Modal Type of Emotionality**

Rank	Groups with different types of emotionality			
	J-type	A-type	F-type	S-type
1	H4+	H9+	H1+	H7+
2	H7-	H12+	H5+	H1+
3	H5-; H9+	H11+	H7+	H16+

Note: 1) the indicators are presented in order of decreasing absolute values from the centre line of the series; 2) the sign "+" – the positive pole, the sign "-" – negative.

**Group J.** Representatives of this group are characterized by an attitude toward realizing their personal resources in spite of possible difficulties, optimism, self-reliance in any situation, self-love, the hope for changing the situation for better, the ability to overcome the crisis by mobilizing their own reserves of resistance and strength (H4+ basic hope potential). Such people can be described by high sociability. They easily cope with socially dangerous situations, are socially open, do not hide their feelings, easily establish social contacts, are effective in recognizing positive assessment that the surrounding people give to them, are not socially strained which makes it easier for others to establish contact with them (H7- social isolation). People prone to experiencing joy

have a sufficiently high self-esteem, are self-confident (H5- minor Self), and appreciate their leadership qualities. At the same time, they adequately perceive the limits of their abilities, as well as the possible superiority of other people over themselves by some parameters (H9+ grandiose Self).

**Group A.** Representatives of this group have a sufficiently high self-esteem, a high attitude toward success, they believe in their social effectiveness. However, they painfully accept the limits of their abilities and attractiveness, as well as the possible superiority of other people over themselves by some parameters (H9+ grandiose Self). People prone to experiencing anger often experience negative emotions associated with resentment,

shame, humiliation, disappointment which can cause their fury and revenge in response. At the same time, retaliatory aggression increasingly loses its protective, constructive function, quantitatively increasing and qualitatively transforming into destructive one. This can include an individual's uncontrolled vicious cycle of Self-system destabilization. However, if a constructive version of aggression occurs, by the control of behaviour, affect and motivations “stabilization of the Self-system takes place, which protects the individual from narcissistic shock and loss of his/her value” (H12+ narcissistic rage). That is why, in our opinion, such personalities often need praise, which gives them confirmation of acceptance by others. They tend to be in the centre of attention and are annoyed if they are ignored (H11+ thirst for praise and affirmation).

**Group F.** Representatives of this group are characterized by a state of helplessness, lack of goal-setting, negative self-esteem, violation of self-organization and self-regulation of behaviour, a sense of own impotence which sometimes manifests itself in physical aggression against oneself, intense fear, uncontrollable anxiety, destructive motives with the appeal of aggression against oneself (H1+ impotent Self). They tend to exaggerate the negative assessments of others, often experience feelings of shame and uncertainty, doubts about the value of their own personality and constantly experience the fear of disclosing their inferiority by others. At the same time, such persons still achieve a certain level of stabilization (H5+ minor Self). People prone to experiencing fear are also characterized by social avoidance, barriers in communication, often they do not cope with dangerous social situations, do not tend to disclose their feelings to others, are tense, they feel uncomfortable with strangers, avoid social contacts to protect themselves from narcissistic traumatization (N7+ social isolation).

**Group S.** People prone to experiencing sadness, as well as representatives of group C, often have barriers in communication, they do not want to communicate with strangers. They are prone to solitude, often disappointed in people. They are not afraid of social contact and, if necessary, know how to respond to it, if necessary, but the representatives of this group are characterized by their own selectivity in choosing a partner which allows them to find an adequate distance in communication (H7+ social isolation). Representatives of group S also tend to reduce the sense of their mental integrity, a direct, subjectively perceived sense of weakness of the personality; the experience of anxiety and a sense of loneliness in the face of social failure, therefore such individuals cannot always use the society for their existential protection. They often have intense depressive experiences of meaninglessness, aimlessness of life, cowardice, inner emptiness, impotence, hopelessness, from which a person cannot defend himself/herself (H1+ impotent Self). These personalities are in many respects psychologically dependent on significant persons, from someone else's, even authoritative opinion, they tend to dramatize non-observance of loyalty

on the part of a significant person and do not find any support in themselves. They expect stable relations, guaranteed from disappointment and loss, and without getting this, activate “fantasy as protection from loneliness, helplessness and despair” [4] (H16+ symbiotic Self defence).

### Discussion

Specificity of the composition of narcissistic parameters in individuals who differ in emotionality can be explained by referring to the psychological essence of each emotion. It is known that emotions of various qualities differ from each other in *relation to the object* which is expressed in the sign of the dominant emotions (positive or negative), *the orientation* (to or from the object) and *the way of interaction* with it (active or passive). If positive emotions (the emotion of “joy” pattern) are characterized by a positive attitude toward the object, an orientation toward the object and active interaction with it, then negative (mainly patterns of emotions of fear and sadness and partly anger) – rejection, directivity from the object and, mainly, passive ways to interact with it. Consequently, the quality of emotions can determine the global forms of interaction with the surrounding reality, with mental phenomena, and therefore with certain personality traits, including narcissism.

For example, the meaning of emotion of joy is concretized in the signal and resource-saving functions. As a signal emotion, it is an indicator of the successful course of satisfying needs, signals about well-being, because it represents a feeling of psychological comfort, acts as an emotional component of satisfaction. A person has a sense of harmony with the world and a more holistic vision of himself/herself and the surrounding space, the susceptibility to reality becomes more acute [8; 9; 10; 11] which both arrest and even exclude the narcissistic personality traits. Negative emotions have opposite tendencies.

### Conclusion

1. The article presents the results of studying the individual psychological features of non-clinical narcissism in persons who differ in emotionality. Significant interrelations of qualitative indicators of emotionality and narcissism were found. Positive connections of the indicators of narcissism with modalities of anger (A), fear (F), sadness (S) and negative ones with modality of joy (J) were revealed.

2. Stable combinations (types) of qualitative characteristics of emotionality are revealed and studied; groups of individuals – representatives of these types were identified and the peculiarity of the manifestation of non-clinical narcissism peculiar to them was studied. The profiles of narcissism are examined and, on this basis, its specificity is studied in representatives of mono-modal types of emotionality; differences in the structure and manifestations of narcissism between representatives of different types of emotionality are established.

3. The manifestations of narcissistic tendencies are to a great extent interconnected with negative emotions, while the modality of Joy suppresses these signs. It is

proved that a definite qualitative-quantitative combination of the parameters of narcissism corresponds to a certain type of emotionality. Individual differences in emotionality are characterized by a unique composition of the elements of the entire composition of the indicators of narcissism, the degree of their integration, the repertoire

variety of possible manifestations. Consequently, the quality of emotions can determine the global forms of interaction with the surrounding reality, with mental phenomena, and therefore with certain personality traits, including narcissism.

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### ІНДИВІДУАЛЬНО-ТИПОВІ ВАРІАЦІЇ НАРЦИСИЗМУ

У період глобальних і масштабних соціокультурних змін збільшується прагнення до «вільного індивідуалізму», до небажаних соціальних проявів, що відносяться до крайніх (субклінічних) варіантів «норми», до зростання нарцисичних тенденцій. Актуальність дослідження визначається потребою в розробці теоретико-методологічного обґрунтування проблеми нарцисизму, його концептуалізації як психологічного феномену, необхідністю дослідження індивідуально-типових варіацій його ознак і особливостей їх проявів. Метою статті є виклад результатів вивчення індивідуально-психологічних особливостей неклінічного нарцисизма в осіб, які різняться за емоційністю. Для реалізації мети дослідження вирішувалися такі завдання: виявити й вивчити взаємозв'язок між показниками емоційності й нарцисизму; виявити усталені сполучення якісних характеристик емоційності (типи); виявити представників цих типів і вивчити властиву їм специфіку прояву неклінічного нарцисизму. У психології індивідуальних відмінностей неклінічний нарцисизм розглядається як стабільна риса особистості, що варіює в межах норми, впливає на особливості міжособистісних відносин і успішність діяльності. Як підставу для пошуку індивідуальних відмінностей у проявах нарцисизму обирається емоційність, яка, на відміну від розуміння її в «моделі особистості НЕХАСО» і в моделі особистості «Велика П'ятірка», розглядається у цій роботі як стійка схильність до переживання емоцій певної якості (знак і модальність домінуючих емоцій). Для вивчення нарцисизму використовувалася клініко-психологічна тестова методика «Тест оцінки нарцисизму». Емоційність вимірювалася «Психодіагностичним чотирьохмодальнісним тест-опитувальником емоційності». Виявлено наявність від'ємних значимих зв'язків між емоційною модальністю «Радість» і більшістю показників нарцисизму, у той же час модальності «Гнів» «Страх», «Печаль» корелюють із показниками нарцисизма переважно додатно. Розглянуто профілі нарцисизму осіб, що різняться за емоційністю (стійке домінування однієї з емоційних модальностей); вивчено «психологічні портрети» нарцисизму і його специфіку у представників моноmodalних типів емоційності; встановлено відмінності в структурі й проявах нарцисизму між представниками різних типів емоційності. Показано, що прояв нарцисичних тенденцій у великому ступені супроводжується негативними емоціями, у той час як модальність Р компенсує ці ознаки. Доведено, що певному типу емоційності відповідає певна якісно-кількісна комбінація показників нарцисизму. Установлено, що індивідуальні відмінності з емоційності характеризуються унікальною композицією елементів усього складу показників нарцисизму, ступенем їх інтегрованості, репертуарною різноманітністю можливих проявів. Якість емоцій визначає глобальні форми взаємодії з навколишньою дійсністю, із психічними явищами, з деякими властивостями особистості, у тому числі й з нарцисизмом.

**Ключові слова:** темна тріада, неклінічний нарцисизм, емоційність, профілі нарцисизма, індивідуально-типові варіації.

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