

From the Editors

A bloody, pointless, devastating war is still going on in Ukraine. We ask ourselves about the nature of evil. Why do young people, who are somebody's sons, husbands, fathers rape, torture, rob, and kill innocent civilians in cold blood? Why do they boast about their cruelty? Why are they not touched by the infinite suffering? Psychiatrists have been asking these kinds of questions for years. Social psychology finds the sources of evil in external conditions – it is the situation that turns an ordinary person into a monster, ergo each of us, under specific conditions, may become a murderer. On the other hand, research on psychopathy tries to explain the genesis of evil: there are individuals deprived of empathy, characterized by a combination of high impulsivity, a high level of instrumental aggressiveness and a low level of emotional reactivity [1], capable of extremely immoral and cruel acts. These two approaches do not contradict each other, and neither of them fully explains the genesis of these inhuman (or perhaps, unfortunately, human) behavior.

Just as we are witnesses of cruelty, we also observe an abundance of selfless help, sacrifice or even heroism. These attitudes are also the subject of reflection for a psychiatrist. Professor Antoni Kępiński, whose 50th death anniversary is going to be celebrated June this year, devoted a lot of space in his works to this attitudes. According to his views, the potential freedom and value system related to the ability to make choices as the basic characteristics of self-steering are essential in the analysis of heroism. Biologically, the value system is shaped by the action of both phylogenetic (heredity) and ontogenetic (experiences acquired during an individual life) memory. There is also a part which is undetermined by species and individual past – a field for freedom and unpredictability [2]. Heroism is not always needed – most often a fraction of the ordinary good is enough. By helping our brothers and sisters from Ukraine, we help each other. In order not to succumb to fear, not to fall into the black abyss of sadness, we need a sense of even a small agency. As Professor Bogdan de Barbaro teaches us in many of his lectures, referring to Marcus Aurelius: when I see evil, I should find myself a good piece of action. Such a part of good is the activity of many Polish psychiatrists and people associated with the psychiatric community. Polish Psychiatric Association created a sub-account where money is collected to help Ukraine, and the Association immediately allocated a large sum of money to buy the most necessary things. Meetings of the representatives of the Polish Psychiatric Association Management Board with colleagues from Ukraine, who report on the current situation of psychiatric care facilities and present the most urgent needs, are organized every two weeks. These meetings on the part of Ukrainian psychiatrists are coordinated by Jurij Zakal from Lviv – a friend of Polish psychiatrists, a frequent guest of our conferences and scientific meetings. From the very beginning of the Russian invasion, Doctor Maciej Kuligowski from Przemyśl together with the director of the Provincial Specialist Hospital in Opole, Krzysztof Nazimek, who has been cooperating with Ukrainian psychiatrists for many years, has been providing great help to his colleagues from Ukraine. Psychotherapeutic and psychiatric counseling and assistance centers for refugees are springing up all over Poland, psychiatrists are involved in organizing trainings and workshops for teachers, psychologists and volunteers. These are just a few examples of the multiplication of good in these bad times, of inciting light in the darkness around us.

The fact that we are able to mobilize ourselves to help the weak, the sick and the defenseless has already been shown during the pandemic. Not only infectious disease specialists, pulmonologists, internists, and anesthesiologists, but also psychiatrists are on the front lines of the fight against SARS-CoV-2, often suffering emotional consequences [3, 4]. In the current issue of *Psychiatria Polska*, we publish data on the impact of the pandemic on the mental state of health care workers. Anxiety or trauma-related disorders [5, 6] did not bypass people professionally involved in mental health care. Medical staff in inpatient psychiatric wards faced COVID-19 infection among hospitalized patients. We encourage you to read the Letter to the Editor, the authors

of which share the observation of patients treated with lithium. This observation is interesting because of the antiviral and immunomodulating effects of lithium known for many years [7].

Despite the difficult times of the pandemic and now the war, the community of Polish psychiatrists is involved in the reform of the psychiatric care system. As mentioned by Anczewska et al., the history of psychiatric health care in developed countries is divided into three historical periods: the emergence of psychiatric hospitals, the decline of psychiatric hospitals, and the development of decentralized community psychiatry, embedded in the local community. The authors suggested that when evaluating the pilot program, attention should be paid to two aspects: the change in the financing of services, which consists in the fact that a Mental Health Center receives the so-called lump sum per population – global budget, which is the product of the rate per capita and the number of inhabitants of a given area, as well as the resources of specialists and the availability of various forms of care in a given area [8]. In the current issue of our journal you will find a preliminary assessment of the pilot model implementation process. Mental Health Centers are to ensure optimal care for patients. This modern treatment model is especially beneficial for patients with schizophrenia. We know how important it is to identify prodromal symptoms and to start treatment as early as possible, and how different the fate of patients may be depending on their initial level of functioning [9]. Currently, you have the opportunity to see the next parts of the 45-year follow-up of people who developed schizophrenia in adolescence [10, 11].

The articles mentioned above do not cover the rich diversity of topics of the spring issue of *Psychiatria Polska*. We wish all Readers a fruitful reading,

**Dominika Dudek – Editor-in-Chief,
Jerzy A. Sobański,
Katarzyna Klasa**

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