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## GOAL SETTING AS AN ACT OF INTENTIONALITY OF THE MOTIVATIONAL FIELD OF THE ACT OF VOLUNTEERING

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### INTRODUCTION

**Relevance of the research topic.** Goal setting is an important process in the motivational component of volunteer deed. This concept relates not only to the mechanism of achieving a result but also to the reflexive self-definition of the individual, who chooses and formulates their goals based on internal beliefs, values, and life aspirations. Goal setting gains particular importance in the context of volunteering, where motives and goals must have a social orientation and be aimed at achieving the common good. Goal setting as a phenomenon is closely related to the concept of intentionality, proposed by Austrian philosopher Franz Brentano, who defined it as the ability of consciousness to be directed towards an object. He argued that all acts of consciousness (thoughts, experiences, actions) are intentional since they always have an object and a goal, even if this object is abstract or non-existent [16].

**State of the scientific development of the topic.** In psychology and philosophy, there is a clear distinction between the concepts of “intention,” “purpose,” and “goal”, which are essential for understanding the motivational processes that determine the direction of human activity. Each

of these concepts has its own specific meaning, associated with different stages of the psychological process, from the initial orientation of consciousness to the realization of the set goal. For better understanding the differences between these concepts, we will conduct a thorough analysis of their content. Intention is a fundamental philosophical category that refers to the ability of consciousness to be directed toward a certain goal. It is the first link in the motivational chain and is often associated with an internal desire or aspiration to achieve something, which, however, does not always have a concrete form. Intention is defined as the conscious will and can remain potential, manifesting itself in thoughts or experiences that do not necessarily lead to concrete actions. For example, intention in volunteering can manifest as the desire to help others, but without a detailed strategy and actions, it does not come to fruition. Therefore, intention is externally organized as a psychological process that directs consciousness towards the realization of a goal, but does not guarantee the completion of the plans.

Purpose differs from intention by the complexity of its specification and structuring at the level of the conscious ability of the person, where the individual determine not only the goal of the action but also the ways and methods of

achieving it. It is a psychological construct that includes cognitive and emotional-volitional components and implies the desire to achieve a result by implementing an action plan that includes an assessment of possible difficulties and resources to overcome them. Purpose encompasses both the emotional and volitional components, which motivate the person to make a choice of action to achieve the desired goal. Purpose is also an important lever of self-regulation, as it enables the creation of appropriate motivational strategies and their realization. Moreover, an important feature of purpose is its connection to value orientations and beliefs, as well as the individual's self-assessment of their own abilities to adjust behavior during the process of achieving the personally chosen goal.

**The aim of the research** is the development of a theoretical model of goal setting as an act of intentionality in the motivational resources of the volunteer deed, with its **main task** to create a conceptual framework for the evolution of the forms of intentional-motivational unfolding of the motivational act-action of the individual's deed.

**The object of study:** the volunteer deed in its structural-canonical completeness and existential-whole personal integrity.

**The subject of study** is the motivational field of goal setting as an act of intentionality in the volunteer deed.

### **Presentation of the main research material**

Goal setting is traditionally considered a conscious act of intentionality, where a person formulates specific, complex goals that contribute to increasing motivation, self-regulation, and the effectiveness of their activity. An important contribution to the current research is the constructive analysis of Edmund Husserl's phenomenological approach [14], which made a significant contribution to the development of the idea of intentionality. The philosopher defines it as a characteristic of consciousness, which is clearly oriented toward a goal, which, in his understanding, cannot be the result of random factors or a primitive external stimulus, but is formed as a result of the internal meaning-creating act of consciousness, in which it emerges as the apotheosis of conscious orientation toward the future, organized through the prism of experiences, covital experience, and psychocultural contexts.

In Martin Heidegger's philosophy, a renowned representative of existentialism, goal setting takes on particular importance. In his work *Being and Time*, he introduces the concept of Dasein as a being's axis, where the individual has a defined projection for the future. He argues that human existence is a process in which the subject has a stable orientation toward the future, focusing on his/her own goals and desires [15, p. 55]. This process of constant self-determination through the future is an act of existential goal setting, where each choice of goal has deep ontological roots. From this approach, the future is not merely considered a temporal dimension but serves as an aspect of being's self-projecting. Moreover, Heidegger's philosophy extends the understanding of goal setting, marking it not only as a future goal but also as a means for a deeper understanding of one's existence [2]. This understanding opens new horizons for psychological research on goal setting, examining not only external motives but also interpreting goals through personally realized individual self-determination.

The detailed characteristics of goal setting are present in the works of Jean-Paul Sartre [5], who examined it in the context of existential freedom. This prominent thinker defines the individual as a "creator of goals," so their freedom in choosing goals stands as the fundamental principle of human existence. Thus, goal setting is interpreted by Sartre as a way of involving all the psychological mechanisms inherent in existentially full personal being, the result of which is the mental act of choosing a goal that gives meaning to further activity as an deed.

The well-known Austrian psychotherapist Viktor Frankl noted that goal setting is a way of overcoming existential vacuum [6], i.e., the formation of representations of the final result in professional, domestic, creative, and many other activities, contributing to self-determination and the discovery of new life meanings. In volunteering, goal setting is not only an instrument for achieving specific results but also a process of creating meaning through social interaction. By realizing the volunteer deed, the subject sets goals aimed at achieving a result and serves as a means of expressing their value sphere, which is based on the desire to help others and be useful to society. This is not a utilitarian process, as it is imbued with deep philosophical and psychological content. Defining goals, especially under extreme circumstances, allows a

person to move out of a state of hopelessness and find guidelines for future progress, since the lack of meaning can lead to a psychological crisis manifested in depression, apathy, anxiety, and other mental disorders. In this analytical framework, the importance of goal setting as a mechanism is emphasized, as it helps the individual restore psychological stability, fosters adaptation, and helps find new life orientations.

It is worth noting that, when researching intentionality as an essential feature of the meaning-of-life being of the individual, A.A. Furman states that it serves as “a fundamental function and an attributive feature of consciousness and the form of intellectual effort of a person, the essence of which lies in the rational organization of perception, comprehension, interpretation, and construction of reality with the subsequent mobilization of personal resource opportunities in the broad internal space of action activity” [8, p. 120]. This interpretation of intentionality emphasizes the ability of consciousness to be directed toward objects of cognition or activity and defines the regularities of motivation formation in the individual’s pursuit of desired results, thus detailing the organization of the motivational process.

The motivational of the volunteering deed is an integrated phenomenon based on internal impulses inherent in human nature, which can have biological, social, ethical, and/or purely psychospiritual origins. At the same time, we emphasize that the foundation for intentional action is the value-sense sphere of the volunteer’s personality, the fundamental components of which are prosocial terminal values such as the desire for the common good, humanity, freedom of will, as well as moral instrumental values, including honesty, justice, responsibility, tolerance, and effectiveness in everyday matters. Value orientations play a decisive role both as regulators and determinants of motivation. They deeply influence and direct the individual’s actions, affecting the set goals and the level of effort they are willing to exert to achieve them. The conceptual analysis of the sense-making sphere of the individual has been thoroughly carried out in the works of A.A. Furman, who reveals an integrated and dynamic system of views on the fundamental aspects of human existence. Reflecting on the content of the section of the monograph “Meaningful Being and Life Meaning as Framework Conditions for Personal Development,” we conclude that mea-

ning is actively constructed by the individual in the process of their life relationships and under the influence of the motivational-value system [7, p. 174]. Here it is important to emphasize the significance of values, which undergo an evolutionary path from emotional reactions to deeply internalized motivational forces that determine not only behavior but also worldview and the feeling of life’s meaning. The value orientations that arise from reflected attitudes serve as internal regulators of behavior and reflect the personal significance of various aspects of existential reality. N.F. Shevchenko has made a significant contribution to the development of ideas about the category of “meaning” in psychological theory of activity, examining the fundamental works of the classics of psychological theory and summarizing that there is a certain difficulty in forming a conceptual interpretation due to the multidimensional structure of meaning. She notes that having a well-formed personal meaning is a fundamental prerequisite for successful activity, as it is a predictor of effective deed and its regulator, being an inner driving force [13, pp. 85-88].

**Empathy, altruism, justice, charity** are the values that define the volunteer’s motivational strategy, directing their activity in a specific direction. Thus, the intentionality of the volunteer, oriented toward these values, forms internal motivational structures that determine the method and outcome of their social activity. Motivation through the value-sense sphere of the individual helps the volunteer overcome difficulties in the process of moving toward goals and supports them on their path to achieving significant existential results. Among the main aspects of intentionality in the context of motivation, we highlight the following: a) support for volitional efforts, which allow the individual to maintain the focus of purposeful activity; b) the formation of meaningful goals through the interpretation of specific life situations and values that are important for achieving results; c) the emotional component of motivational strategies, which determines the level of emotional involvement in the achievement of goals. Thus, intentionality is the determining driving force of motivational processes, influencing values and orienting behavior toward achieving goals that are significant to the individual, which are realized through the creation of relevant actualization strategies, involving both cognitive and emotional-volitional components.

**Psychological analysis** of intention and purpose is crucial for understanding the process of goal setting, as it represents the transition from potential desire or striving to an actual action plan. This transition, according to Albert Bandura [1], is possible only if self-efficacy is present, i.e., the individual's belief in their ability to achieve the goal. A reflective study of the works of this prominent scholar indicates that belief in one's own abilities significantly influences goal setting, the choice of methods for achievement, and the ability to overcome difficulties along the way. In any case, goal setting implies a transition from potential intention to an operationalized action plan, which serves as the foundation for effectively achieving the set goals.

In psychology, a goal is defined as a conscious image of the future result, to which activity is directed. Goals are not only the final points of action but also the reference points that structure, organize, and motivate the individual's behavior. They are important psychological constructs that contribute to the organization of cognitive, emotional, and volitional processes. In this context, goals are rightly viewed as mental constructs that regulate the individual's activity, setting the direction of their efforts and influencing the formation of self-identity and self-esteem.

According to **George Kelly's theory of personal constructs**, a goal is a meaningful reference point that organizes experience and determines the interpretation of situations. The scientist defines personal constructs as stable patterns of evaluation and interpretation of events, allowing an individual to predict future situations and form goals based on their psychospiritual understanding [18]. Thus, a goal is a more complex structural unit than the motive for activity, as it serves as a central component of the cognitive system, enabling the planning and realization of behavioral acts while considering the contextual field of external circumstances and the individual's psychocultural maturity.

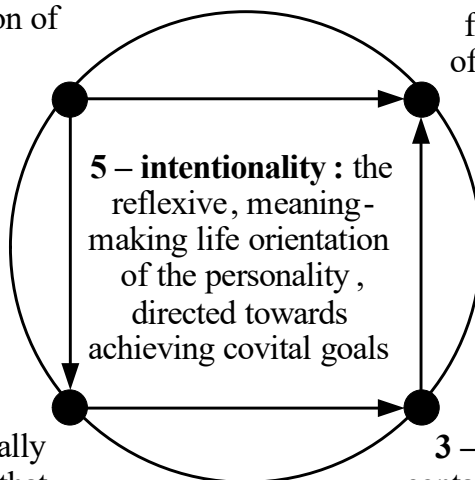
Goals are usually associated with choice, thus they have not only a cognitive but also an emotional and volitional component. Need, as a basic psychophysiological phenomenon, manifests in primitive motivational mechanisms, which have a natural and biological character and do not always contain complex cognitive constructions. In contrast, a goal is a much more complex and mentally richer motivational unit, which requires deeper analysis, interpretation, and prediction of outcomes.

A **goal-directed action** differs from impulsive action in that it involves a hierarchy of goals. Establishing this hierarchy, as well as the ability to plan and assess distant results, are key characteristics of goal setting. After conducting a systematic review of modern approaches to studying the problem of self-regulation, M. Inzlicht and colleagues emphasize that activity aimed at achieving distant goals requires constant adjustment of actions and self-control, which justifies the development of self-regulation as a mechanism for the individual's adaptation to changing external conditions [17]. Unlike impulsive actions, which are oriented toward immediate satisfaction of needs, goal-directed activity requires long-term planning, personal adaptability to possible difficulties, and obstacles on the way to the goal. This is what allows us to consider goal setting as a mechanism that actively regulates behavior, determining the existence of internal motivation and defining the way it is subjectively realized.

During examining the issue of intentionality and goal setting, it is relevant to refer to the works of U. Peters, who emphasizes that personality manifests in a system of motivational formations, which always has a teleological nature [19]. Teleology of motivation, as is known, indicates that human activity always has a certain goal, and this goal is the main driving force that determines the direction of actions and development. From this, it logically follows that goal setting should be viewed as a psychological mechanism that sets the direction and meaning of human activity. Teleological orientation provides a certain stability in the individual's perception of themselves and the world, enabling them to respond meaningfully to life's challenges, understand their place in it, and build a behavioral strategy aimed at achieving significant goals. Moreover, goal setting is not only an intellectual process but also an emotionally and sentimentally charged act. In this regard, it should be noted that personality is shaped through its motivational formations and action vectors, where emotions, desires, and goals are closely intertwined, creating a unified complex. Thus, goal setting serves as a regulator of behavior and also determines the emotional orientation of the individual during their interaction with the world. The process of setting goals is often accompanied by experiences related to the sense of success or failure, which influences further motivation strategies, the individual's choice of motivational field vectors, and ulti-

**1 – intention:** the impulse-direction of consciousness characterized by the formation of an aim of the deed

**4 – goal setting:** a complete psychological process of forming a holistic conception of the individual regarding the outcome of the deed



**5 – intentionality:** the reflexive, meaning-making life orientation of the personality, directed towards achieving covital goals

**2 – motive:** the set of externally triggered internal conditions that actualize a need, thereby prompting conscious activity and determining its orientation

**3 – purpose:** a consciously self-contained internal act transitioning from intention and motive to the creation of a detailed, step-by-step action plan

*Figure:*  
**Evolution of the forms of intentional-motivational unfolding of the motivational act-action in the deed of the personality**  
(authors A.V. Furman and Y.O. Dykyi, created on May 12, 2025, first published).

mately, the effectiveness of self-regulation.

Justifying the concept of motivational psychosocial forms, Furman A.V., Furman O.Ye., and Tkach Yu. point out that when studying the motivational fields of the individual, in addition to the well-known three motivational states, namely, internal and external motivation and amotivation, the state of polymotivation must also be considered. It is worth noting that the authors of this article offer a substantive interpretation of this concept. They mention that “the polymotivational state is characterized by the variety of structured motivational forces in deed actions, which are characterized by the simultaneous presence of various stimulating factors, functions, and mechanisms and cause a variety of forms of behavioral action and methods of carrying out several activities, giving them substance and meaning, orientation, and purpose” [11, p.11]. In view of this, studying the problem of motivation in volunteer actions through the prism of polymotivation as a stimulus for action requires considering the cyclical continuity of four spheres: cognitive, practical, mental, and self-improvement, which are thoroughly presented and analyzed in Furman O.Ye.’s monograph [12, pp. 191-238].

The essential foundation and significant feature of a moral deed, according to V.A. Romeynets, is self-sacrifice [4]. The application of the methodological procedure of psychosocial detailing will enable the realization of a micro-event analysis and the social-mental organization of the volunteer’s motivational activity, revealing the fullness of their polymotivational field [3]. The psychological details that will serve as indicators of the motivational action itself are prosocial terminal and moral instrumental value orientations, and their dominance in the hierarchy of the individual’s value system will indicate the presence of an intentionally directed predictor of volunteer action, which represents the manifestation of self-sacrifice, as it implies the volunteer’s self-sacrifice of their time, physical, and intellectual efforts for the achievement of humane and altruistic goals.

Psychological interpretation of intentionality as an act of goal setting in the motivational component of the volunteer deed should be interpreted through the cyclical-action approach and the principle of quintessence, which are substantiated by A.V. Furman and involve the identification and characterization of basic components [9; 10]. There are reasons to believe that such

components include intention, motive, purpose, goal setting, and intentionality (see the *figure*).

For a more detailed psychological understanding of each of the listed terms, we offer their author's interpretation, taking into account the context of the motivational development process in volunteering. Thus, intention is the initial level of the individual's mental activity toward something specific, a conscious impulse, as a result of which, the volunteer generates a plan for action and sets the direction of consciousness toward its object, as well as creates an internal commitment to its realization. A motive is a set of externally caused internal conditions that actualize the need and thereby prompt a conscious act, setting the motivational vector and the intensity of psychospiritual activity. The purpose is a consciously accepted self-instruction to achieve certain results, derived from beliefs about the expediency and desirability of the action. The purpose is the inevitable consequence and product of the transition from intention and motive to the creation of a step-by-step detailed action plan, which serves as the culmination of the individual's decision-making process. Goal setting is a complete psychological process that forms the individual's holistic view of the result of the action. Effective goal setting requires a logical, systematic, and structured approach with clear criteria and defined stages to transform intentions, motives, and purposes into achievable results. Intentionality is the reflexive, meaning-making orientation directed at achieving goals and simultaneously the feature of consciousness that allows its direction as a flow of intentionality, manifested and developed through the motivating forces of the motive, the planned actions of the purpose, and goal setting.

Thus, goal setting is an act of intentionality that involves a thoughtful-action process, aimed at forming a stable orientation toward the satisfaction of clearly defined goals and considering the reflective awareness of the volunteer's personal life aspirations and ambitions. Through the cyclical-action approach, intentionality is completed through reflection and generates a new intention, which exists on a qualitatively new, higher level of the volunteer deed as a way of transforming reality. Intentionality, primarily due to reflection, is capable of making the individual reconsider the existing meanings in their consciousness by enriching the existential experience, expanding motivation, since the struggle of motives and ultimately the choice of one leading motive requires perfection through its

complement by goal setting. In other words, intentionality serves as the all-encompassing foundational ability of human consciousness, enabling the existential being of directed, motivated, planned, and purposeful deed.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. Goal setting as an act of intentionality constitutes an attributive characteristic of human consciousness, allowing the individual to orient themselves to the future, project themselves as a subject, and engage in meaning-making activity. At the same time, goal setting is not only a cognitive or behavioral act but also a deep ontological self-definition that correlates with the values, beliefs, and existential choices of the individual.

2. Goal setting is the main motivational center of the volunteer deed, orienting the volunteer toward achieving socially significant goals. The intentionality of the volunteer, as an integral part of this process, contributes to true self-definition through the choice of existential tasks that align with their internal values and moral beliefs. Goal setting in volunteering is not only a instrument of achieving results but also an act of meaning-making, helping the individual find meaning in life and the significance of the work they are doing.

3. Volunteering often requires the individual to have the ability for long-term planning and choosing appropriate strategies to achieve set goals. This implies a conscious choice of specific steps and the integration of motivational resources oriented toward specific social needs and tasks. In this context, goal setting as an act of intentionality is realized in a special way, as it enables the volunteer to define priorities and effectively interact with the environment, achieving significant results in helping those in need.

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## АНОТАЦІЯ

**ФУРМАН Анатолій Васильович, ДИКИЙ Ярослав Олегович.**

**Цілепокладання як акт інтенційності мотиваційного поля вчинку волонтерства.**

Дослідження присвячене обґрунтуванню психологічної значущості цілепокладання як акту інтенційності у процесі актуалізації мотиваційного осереддя (компонента) вчинку волонтерства. Результатом удетального аналізу стало виявлення ключових закономірностей розвиткового перебігу цього процесу. По-перше, показано, що цілепокладання, розуміючись як свідомісний акт інтенційності, є фундаментальною умовою становлення мотиваційної структури волонтерського вчинку, тісно пов'язаною з ціннісно-смісловою сферою особистості, її екзистенційним самовизначенням та вибором значущих соціальних цілей. По-друге, деталізовано взаємозв'язок інтенції, мотиву, наміру та цілі як динамічних компонентів, що структурують мотивацію від початкового внутрішнього імпульсу до усвідомленого образу бажаного результату та плану вчинкових дій. Наголошено, що цінності, зокрема просоціальні та моральні, є засадничими детермінантами інтенційності та мотиваційності справи волонтера. По-третє, обґрунтовано тезу про те, що ефективне цілепокладання вимагає інтеграції когнітивних, емоційних і вольових компонентів, підкріплених самоефективністю, що забезпечує подолання ним повсякденних труднощів. Висновується, що цілепокладання як акт інтенційності свідомого ось-буття волонтера є не лише регулятором учинення, а й потужним механізмом смислотворення, що надає глибинного значення суспільно корисній і безоплатній діяльності та сприяє особистісному зростанню й реалізації ковітально значущих змін.

**Ключові слова:** особистість, свідомість, самість, цілепокладання, інтенційність, мотивація, вчинок, волон-

терство, вчинок волонтерства, мотиваційне поле, просоціальна діяльність, цінності, психологічне деталювання.

## ANNOTATION

**Anatoliï V. FURMAN, Yaroslav DYKYI.**

**Goal setting as an act of intentionality of the motivational field of the act of volunteering .**

This study is dedicated to substantiating the psychological significance of goal setting as an act of intentionality in the process of actualization of the motivational field (component) of the volunteer deed. The detailed analysis revealed key regularities of this developmental course. Firstly, it is shown that goal setting, understood as a conscious act of intentionality, is a fundamental condition for the formation of the motivational structure of the volunteer deed, closely linked to the individual's value-sense sphere, existential self-determination, and the selection of meaningful social goals. Secondly, the interrelation of initial intention, motive, specific intent, and goal is detailed as dynamic components that structure motivation from the initial internal impulse to the conscious image of the desired outcome and action plan for the deed. It is emphasized that values, particularly prosocial and moral ones, serve as fundamental determinants of intentionality and motivation for the volunteer's activity. Thirdly, the thesis is substantiated that effective goal setting requires the integration of cognitive, emotional, and volitional components, supported by self-efficacy, which enables the volunteer to overcome everyday difficulties. It is concluded that goal setting as an act of intentionality of the volunteer's conscious «Dasein» is not merely a regulator of the deed but also a powerful mechanism of meaning-making, imparting profound significance to socially useful and gratuitous activity and contributing to personal growth and the realization of covitally significant changes.

**Keywords:** *personality, consciousness, selfhood, goal setting, intentionality, motivation, deed, volunteering, volunteer deed, motivational field, prosocial activity, values, psychological detailing.*

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