

**PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL IN EMERGENCY  
SITUATIONS: METHODS, TOOLS, AND PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE**

***A.Sh. To`ymurodov***

*Asia international university*

*Pedagogy and psychology department teacher*

+998912447213

[Abdurahmontuymuradov@gmail.com](mailto:Abdurahmontuymuradov@gmail.com)

**Annotation**

This article analyzes psychological services provided to military personnel during emergency situations, focusing on practical methods, tools, and real-life applications. It emphasizes the role of psychological support in maintaining mental stability, operational effectiveness, and resilience under extreme conditions. Realistic examples from military practice illustrate how timely psychological intervention helps prevent trauma, reduce stress, and support long-term mental health.

**Keywords**

military psychology, emergency response, psychological services, crisis intervention, stress resilience, trauma prevention, combat stress, counseling techniques, psychological tools, mental health support

**Introduction**

Military personnel often operate in environments characterized by uncertainty, danger, and high emotional tension. Emergency situations such as armed conflicts, terrorist attacks, natural disasters, or large-scale accidents expose soldiers to intense stress, fear, loss, and responsibility for human lives. Under such conditions, psychological services become as important as medical or logistical support. Without proper psychological assistance, even well-trained soldiers may experience decreased concentration, impaired decision-making, emotional breakdowns, or long-term mental disorders such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Psychological services in emergencies aim to protect mental health, ensure emotional stability, and maintain combat readiness. These services are designed to work directly in the field, close to real events, where rapid and effective intervention is essential. «Specific Features of Psychological Services for Military Personnel» Psychological services for military personnel have a number of distinctive features that differentiate them from psychological support provided in civilian settings. These features are shaped by the unique nature of military service, which involves strict discipline, hierarchical structures, exposure to life-threatening situations, and prolonged separation from family and normal social environments. One of the key characteristics of military psychological services is their «operational orientation». Psychological support is often delivered in real-time, directly in the field, during training exercises, combat operations, or emergency response missions. Psychologists must work under time pressure and in unsafe environments, providing rapid assessments and immediate interventions that help soldiers remain functional and mission-ready. Another important feature is «preventive focus». Military psychology places strong emphasis on prevention rather than only treatment. Psychological training, stress resilience programs, and mental preparedness exercises are conducted before deployment to help

servicemembers cope with future stressors. This proactive approach reduces the risk of psychological breakdowns and long-term disorders such as post-traumatic stress disorder. «Confidentiality and trust» also have a special role in military psychological services. Soldiers may fear that revealing psychological difficulties could affect their career or reputation. Therefore, military psychologists must carefully balance confidentiality with command responsibilities, building trust while ensuring safety and operational effectiveness. A further distinctive aspect is the «integration of psychology with command and leadership». Military psychologists often advise commanders on morale, group dynamics, leadership behavior, and decision-making under stress. For example, a psychologist may recommend rest cycles, unit rotation, or communication strategies to reduce emotional exhaustion and prevent conflicts within units. The «collective nature of military life» makes group-based psychological methods especially important. Group counseling, unit debriefings, and peer support systems help strengthen cohesion and mutual support among servicemembers. In many cases, support from fellow soldiers is more readily accepted than individual counseling. Finally, military psychological services must be «culturally and professionally adapted» to military values such as discipline, duty, and loyalty. Psychologists working with military personnel need a deep understanding of military culture to communicate effectively and provide relevant support. In conclusion, the uniqueness of psychological services for military personnel lies in their operational, preventive, and integrated nature. These services are essential for maintaining mental health, resilience, and effectiveness in the demanding conditions of military service.

### **Methods of Psychological Support in Emergency Situations**

One of the most important methods is **psychological first aid**, provided immediately after or during a crisis. For example, after an explosion or sudden attack, a military psychologist may help soldiers regain orientation, control breathing, and reduce panic. Simple techniques such as grounding exercises, calm verbal guidance, and emotional reassurance can significantly stabilize a distressed servicemember. **Crisis counseling** is another key method. In real combat situations, soldiers who have witnessed the injury or death of comrades may experience shock, guilt, or helplessness. Short-term counseling sessions allow them to express emotions, understand normal stress reactions, and prevent emotional suppression. These sessions are often brief but focused, adapted to field conditions. **Stress management training** is widely used before, during, and after emergencies. For instance, soldiers deployed to disaster relief operations are trained in relaxation techniques, self-regulation skills, and cognitive control strategies. Controlled breathing, muscle relaxation, and positive self-talk help them remain calm while rescuing civilians or working in dangerous environments. **Group debriefings** also play an important role. After completing a high-risk mission, military units often participate in structured group discussions led by a psychologist. These meetings allow soldiers to share experiences, support each other, and reduce feelings of isolation. In many real cases, peer support within the unit becomes a powerful protective factor against long-term psychological problems.

### **Tools Used in Military Psychological Services**

Psychological services rely on both traditional and modern tools. **Rapid assessment tools**, such as stress and anxiety scales, help psychologists quickly identify soldiers who need immediate support. Observation of behavior, speech, and emotional reactions is especially important in emergency settings where time is limited. Modern technology has expanded the range of psychological tools. **Mobile applications** are now used to teach self-help techniques,

monitor stress levels, and provide remote psychological guidance. For example, soldiers stationed in remote or hazardous areas can access brief relaxation exercises or communicate with psychologists through secure digital platforms. **Simulation and virtual reality tools** are increasingly used in training. Before deployment, soldiers may undergo simulated emergency scenarios that prepare them psychologically for real-life stress. Such training has proven effective in increasing resilience and reducing shock during actual emergencies.

## Practical Examples from Military Experience

During humanitarian missions following natural disasters, military personnel often face scenes of destruction, injured civilians, and mass casualties. In such cases, psychologists working alongside rescue teams provide immediate emotional support, helping soldiers cope with distress while continuing their duties. In combat zones, soldiers returning from intense operations may show signs of emotional exhaustion or aggression. Timely psychological intervention, including short rest periods and counseling, has helped many servicemembers regain emotional balance and avoid severe mental health consequences.

## Conclusion

Psychological services for military personnel in emergency situations are essential for both individual well-being and mission success. The use of practical methods, effective tools, and real-time interventions helps soldiers cope with extreme stress, maintain mental resilience, and recover from traumatic experiences. Strengthening psychological support systems is a vital component of modern military readiness and human-centered defense strategies.

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