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Reflective practices in the prevention of radicalization among inmates in penitentiary institutions

Abstract

This article examines the role of reflection in working with individuals who hold radical views, considering it as one of the key psychological mechanisms for preventing and correcting destructive attitudes. The purpose of the study is to reveal the significance of reflective practices in fostering awareness of one's future, re-evaluating past experiences, and reconsidering current patterns of behavior that contribute to successful social reintegration. The paper outlines the goals and structure of reflective activity, reviews major models and concepts of reflection in contemporary psychology, and describes practical tools—methods, techniques, and approaches—used in both individual and group psychological work with inmates in penitentiary settings. Attention is given to modern models and their step-by-step implementation, which allow for increasing the diversity and depth of reflective practices when working with inmates at risk of radicalization. The article also presents the methodology of structured letter-writing with inmates, along with practical options for applying this technique in the professional activities of psychologists within correctional institutions.

The findings of the study suggest that strengthening reflective capacities contributes to the development of critical thinking and encourages individuals to examine their own beliefs and behavioral patterns in a more conscious manner. Furthermore, engagement in reflective processes may increase

person's readiness to pursue constructive personal change, which, in turn, can support psychological well-being and create favorable conditions for improving overall quality of life.

The results obtained in penitentiary settings confirm the effectiveness of integrating reflective practices into comprehensive programs aimed at preventing radicalization and providing psychological support.

Keywords: reflection, radicalization, prevention of extremism, awareness, psychological correction

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Пенитенциарлық мекемелердегі сотталғандардың радикалдануын алдын алудағы рефлексиялық тәжірибелер

Аңдатпа

Мақалада радикалистік көзқарастардағы адамдармен жұмыс жасау барысында рефлексияның рөлі деструктивтік бағыт-бағдарды алдын алу және түзетудің негізгі психологиялық механизмдерінің бірі ретінде қарастырылады. Зерттеудің мақсаты – өзіндік болашақты жүзеге асыру, өткен тәжірибені қайта бағалау және қоғамда сәтті әлеуметтенуге көмектесетін қазіргі мінез-құлық формаларын қайта қарастыру үрдісінде рефлексиялық тәжірибелердің маңыздылығын анықтау. Бұл ғылыми мақалада рефлексиялық әс-әректің мақсаты, құрылымы, бүгінгі психологиядағы рефлексияның басты модельдері, тұжырымдамалары сипаттала отырып, жеке және топтық психологиялық жұмыста пенитенциарлық мекемедегу қамаудағыларға қолданылатын құралдары, нақтырақ айтсақ техникалар, әдістер мен тәсілдер берілген. Сотталғандарға хат жазу әдісін жүргізу технологиясы және психолог түрмедегі сотталғандармен осы әдістің қолданылу жолдарының нұсқалары баяндалған.

Рефлексиялық қабілеттерді дамытудың негізі ойлауды ынталандыратынын, тұлғаның жеке сенімдері мен жасаған әрекеттеріне саналы тұрғыда көзқарасты қалыптастыруға әсерін тигізетінін, сондай-ақ адамның конструктивтік өзгерістерге дайындығын арттырып, бұл ақырында психологиялық жағдайды жақсарту, өмір сүру сапасын дамытуға үлесін қосатынын зерттеудің нәтижелерінен көруге болады. Пенитенциарлық мекемелердегі зерттеу нәтижелері радикалданудың алдын алу және психологиялық сүйемелдеу бойынша кешенді бағдарламаларға рефлексиялық тәжірибелерді енгізудің тиімділігін растайды.

Түйін сөздер: рефлексия, радикалдану, экстремизмнің алдын алу, саналы мойындау, психологиялық түзету

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Рефлексивные практики в профилактике радикализации осуждённых в пенитенциарных учреждениях

Аннотация

В статье рассматривается роль рефлексии в работе с лицами, придерживающимися радикалистских взглядов, как одного из ключевых психологических механизмов профилактики и коррекции деструктивных установок. Целью исследования является раскрытие значения

рефлексивных практик в процессе осознания личного будущего, переоценки прошлого опыта и пересмотра актуальных форм поведения помогающие успешно социализироваться в обществе.

В представленной научной статье описываются цель и структура рефлексивной деятельности, разъясняются основные модели и концепции рефлексии в современной психологии. Кроме этого, в материалах представлены конкретные фразы, техники, методы и приемы, применяемые как в индивидуальной, так и групповой психологической работы с осужденными, отбывающими наказание в пенитенциарных учреждениях. Отдельное внимание уделено актуальным моделям и последовательным этапам социализации, использование которых позволяет расширить возможности применения рефлексивных практик и повысить их содержательную глубину при организации и проведении психологической работы с заключенными, относящимся к группе риска радикализации. В статье представлена технология проведения письма с заключенными и варианты проведения метода письма на практике в пенитенциарном учреждении в деятельности психолога. Показано, что развитие рефлексивных способностей способствует формированию критического мышления, осознанному отношению к собственным убеждениям и поступкам, а также повышает готовность личности к конструктивным изменениям, влияющие на психологическое благополучие и качество жизни человека. Результаты исследования пенитенциарных практики подтверждают целесообразность включения рефлексивных практик в комплексные программы профилактики радикализации и психологического сопровождения.

Ключевые слова: рефлексия, радикализация, профилактика экстремизма, осознанность, психологическая коррекция

Introduction The resocialization of convicted individuals is one of the key priorities of psychological work in penitentiary institutions. It represents a complex and multidimensional process aimed at restoring socially acceptable patterns of behavior, value orientations, and self-regulation skills. For individuals in prison, this process goes beyond external control. It also involves the conscious acceptance of social norms within the surrounding environment and the development of internal psychological mechanisms that help individuals to take personal responsibility for their own actions.

In this context, reflection gains particular importance as an individual's capacity to comprehend personal experience, analyze the causes and consequences of behavior, and reassess life attitudes. The development of reflective abilities enables inmates to move from externally imposed normative control toward internal self-regulation, which is a crucial condition for sustainable personal change and successful social adaptation.

Reflective processes contribute to the development of inmates' ability to critically evaluate their own actions, understand the emotional and motivational foundations of their behavior, and assume responsibility for their decisions. In this regard, reflection serves as an important psychological resource for rethinking the values and meanings underlying unlawful behavior [1].

Reflection is of particular practical relevance when working with destructive cognitive patterns and maladaptive coping strategies commonly observed among incarcerated individuals. The use of reflective practices creates conditions for revising entrenched thinking patterns and fostering more constructive behavioral models across various social contexts.

Within the resocialization process, reflection also performs an integrative function by linking past life experiences with future prospects. Making sense of lived experiences, including the experience of committing a crime and serving a sentence, contributes to the formation of realistic life plans, strengthens motivation for change, and increases readiness for successful reintegration into society after release.

The object of this study is the process of preventing radicalization among inmates in penitentiary institutions.

The subject of the study is reflective practices as a psychological tool for preventing and reducing the risk of radicalization among convicted individuals.

The relevance of the study is обусловлена the growing concern over the spread of radical and extremist attitudes within penitentiary environments, as well as the need to develop effective psychological approaches and tools for the prevention of radicalization and the resocialization of inmates.

The practical significance of the research lies in the possibility of applying reflective practices by psychologists and penitentiary system specialists in their work with inmates to foster critical thinking, awareness of personal values, and prevention of radical attitudes.

The study employs methods of theoretical analysis of scientific literature, comparative analysis, systematization and generalization of academic sources, as well as elements of bibliometric and network analysis of publications related to the research topic.

The criteria for selecting sources included their scientific relevance, alignment with the research topic, indexing in international and national academic databases, and a focus on recent publications reflecting current approaches to the prevention of radicalization and the application of reflective practices.

In constructing the publication network map, the following indicators were taken into account: the number of publications on the topic; key terms and thematic research clusters; relationships between authors and scientific fields; and the dynamics of publication activity over time.

The search strategy was based on the use of keywords and phrases reflecting the core content of the study in both Russian and English, including: “reflective practices,” “radicalization,” “prevention of radicalization,” “inmates,” “penitentiary institutions,” “psychological prevention,” and “extremism in places of detention.”

The concept of “reflection” was first introduced into scientific discourse by the French philosopher René Descartes, who understood it as the ability of a subject to focus on the content of their own thinking and to be aware of acts of consciousness. He characterized reflective practice as an “evaluation of the grounds of one’s beliefs,” that is, a process through which an individual rationally examines their own assumptions [2].

Subsequently, this concept was further developed in the works of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz and John Locke, where reflection was interpreted as a specific mechanism of self-knowledge that enables the comprehension of internal mental processes [3].

In psychological science, reflection is viewed as a complex process through which an individual becomes aware of and analyzes their own mental activity. A significant contribution to the development of this concept was made by V. A. Lefebvre, who defined reflection as a *person’s ability to adopt the position of an observer, researcher, and regulator in relation to their own thoughts, bodily states, and actions* (Lefebvre, 2003). Within this framework, reflection is understood not only as a form of self-observation but also as a mechanism of self-regulation and behavioral control (Molokanova K., 2024) [3].

In general terms, reflection in psychology can be defined as a process in which an individual consciously turns to their own experience, thoughts, emotions, and actions with the aim of analyzing, reinterpreting, and using the insights gained for further personal and behavioral development.

Structurally, the process of reflection includes posing questions about one’s own experience, conducting an objective analysis of events, becoming aware of one’s thoughts and the nature of one’s actions, exploring alternative ways of acting, drawing conclusions relevant for the future, and forming new behavioral patterns based on acquired insights. In this context, reflection should not be seen as fixation on mistakes, but rather as a resource for growth, awareness, and responsibility.

In examining the reflective process, it is also important to take into account its various types: (1) personal reflection (self-analysis); (2) communicative reflection (interaction with others); (3) intellectual reflection (analysis of cognitive processes); (4) existential reflection (consideration of fundamental questions such as the meaning of life, personal purpose, and one’s place in the world); (5) temporal forms of reflection, including retrospective (analysis of past experience—what happened?), situational (understanding events as they unfold in the present), and prospective (orientation toward the future,

including goal-setting and planning behavioral strategies); and (6) constructive reflection (focused on growth and change) versus destructive reflection (ruminative self-criticism) [4,5,6].

The Technology of Reflection. As noted by E. Antyufeeva, effective reflection represents a structured process of conscious analysis of personal experience and involves a последовательное выполнение ряда этапов. In particular, she identifies eight key steps of reflective analysis that ensure its constructive and practice-oriented nature:

1. Allocating dedicated time and space for reflection in order to minimize external distractions and enhance focus.
2. Identifying a specific situation to be analyzed.
3. Recording the factual circumstances, including objective events and participants' actions, without evaluative judgments.
4. Analyzing emotional responses experienced during the situation.
5. Examining one's own actions and behavioral strategies.
6. Considering the situation from multiple perspectives, including those of other participants.
7. Identifying the causes and factors that influenced the outcome.
8. Formulating a plan for further actions aimed at correcting behavior and improving effectiveness in similar situations [6]. The application of this structure allows reflection to move beyond spontaneous self-observation and become a purposeful tool for personal development.

Models and Concepts of Reflection. The use of structured models enables a more comprehensive understanding of situations within reflective practice. Reflection serves as a key instrument of personal and social development, allowing individuals to consciously analyze their thoughts, emotions, behavior, and value orientations. Regular engagement in reflective practices helps to identify deep-seated beliefs that shape responses to the surrounding world and to understand which internal assumptions influence decision-making and behavior.

In the context of penitentiary institutions, where inmates—particularly those with radicalized views—are exposed to significant psychological stress, reflection plays a particularly important role. This, of course, makes it possible to identify extremist and negative beliefs and reconsider them. It helps reduce aggression and impulsive reactions in a person and also develops the ability to recognize in advance one's negative influence and actions toward others. During the deradicalization process, this can strengthen self control and improve the ability to understand and respond to the feeling of others.

The application of reflective models and concepts allows for structuring experience and developing skills of conscious analysis. Each model offers a methodological framework for examining situations, understanding personal motives, and forming constructive behavioral strategies.

The following section presents the main models and concepts of reflection used in educational and psychological practice, adapted for training programs with inmates aimed at reducing radical beliefs and supporting personal transformation (see Table 1).

Table 1 – Models of Reflection [7]

Concept, Author	Components of Reflection
Brookfield's Four Lenses Model (1998)	Reflection framework: – Lens 1: viewing the situation retrospectively as accumulated experience; – Lens 2: viewing the situation from the participant's own perspective; – Lens 3: colleagues' perspectives—how others interpret what has occurred; – Lens 4: theoretical perspective—what is already known about the issue.
Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (David A. Kolb, Ron Fry, 1975)	Structure of reflection: 1. concrete experience/feeling; 2. observation and reflection; conceptualization/thinking; 3. active experimentation/action.
Donald Schön's Reflective Practice Model	Schön distinguished two types of reflection: 1. Reflection-on-action: analysis of past experience or completed actions,

	including consideration of alternative approaches and identification of positive aspects of the interaction; 2. Reflection-in-action: reflection occurring in the course of action, involving ongoing consideration of practice and decision-making during the process.
Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (Graham Gibbs, 1988)	Stages: 1. description (what happened); 2. feelings (what was felt and thought); 3. evaluation (what worked and what did not); 4. analysis (what sense can be made of the situation); 5. conclusions (what could have been done differently); 6. action plan (what to do next time).
ORID Model (Objective–Reflective–Interpretive–Decisional), R. Brian Stanfield, 1997	Stages: 1. objective (facts and data—what?); 2. reflective (emotions and reactions—what is happening to me?); 3. interpretive (analysis of meaning—so what?); 4. decisional (actions and decisions—now what?).
Johns' Model of Reflection (Christopher Johns, 1995)	Core idea: combining inward and outward perspectives. Reflection occurs through: – “looking inward” (thoughts and emotions); – “looking outward” (the situation and others' responses). Stages: 1. internal reflection (emotions, personal reactions); 2. external reflection (context and others' responses).
DEAL Model (Suvorova N.M.)	Stages: 1. description of the situation; 2. examination/analysis; 3. articulation of learning outcomes.
STAR/AR Model (Situation, Task, Action, Result / Analysis), Suvorova N.M., 2001	Stages: 1. situation; 2. task; 3. action; 4. result; 5. analysis.
“Iceberg of Reflection” Model (Peter Senge, 1990; Nguyen Nhat Quang, Kushnir et al., 2021) Concept: reflection as a multi-level process represented metaphorically as an iceberg.	Stages: 1. events (surface level—what happened?); 2. patterns/trends (what repeats?); 3. structures (systems, rules, habits, conditions influencing outcomes); 4. mental models (beliefs shaping perception and behavior). Principle: maintaining a balance between desired results (R) and supporting capacities/resources (RC).
Nguyen Nhat Quang's Reflection Iceberg Model (2022)	Concept: a layered reflective process analyzed through the lens of critical reflection, using the iceberg metaphor.
Kashlev's Reflection Model (S.S. Kashlev)	Procedure: 1. identification of the current state; 2. determination of underlying causes; 3. evaluation of the effectiveness of the interaction.
Lefebvre's Reflection Model (V.A. Lefebvre)	Levels, stages of reflection: pause → fixation → objectification → generalization → interpretation.
Borton's Model (Terry Borton, 1970)	Reflection is structured around three key questions: “What?” → “So what?” → “Now what?” (see Reach, Touch, and Teach, 1977).

Argyris' Double-Loop Learning Model (Chris Argyris, 1993)	Structure: 1. defensive reactions (what needs to be overcome); 2. assumptions, values, beliefs (why we act as we do); 3. goals, strategies, techniques (how we act); 4. results and conclusions. Includes the “Ladder of Inference” exercise.
Theory U Model: Cultivating the Social Field (Otto Scharmer)	<i>Core idea: exploring the “blind spot” and the internal state from which actions emerge; reflection initiates internal transformation.</i> Stages: 1. co-initiating (pause and openness); 2. co-sensing (deep observation, understanding reality); 3. presencing (connection with intention); 4. co-creating (bringing new practices into reality); 5. co-evolving (embedding and sustaining change).

Thus, reflection can be regarded as a core component of self-analysis and personal development, enabling a conscious understanding of one's experiences, actions, and emotional responses. In contemporary pedagogy, psychology, and coaching practice, reflection is viewed as an effective tool for fostering critical thinking, enhancing personal effectiveness, and developing professional competencies.

Reflective tools encompass a wide range of means, methods, techniques, and approaches that make it possible to systematically record experience and performance outcomes; analyze the causes of both successes and failures; identify underlying motives, beliefs, and behavioral patterns; obtain feedback from others and integrate it into one's own practice; and plan further actions while adjusting developmental strategies.

The use of these tools ensures a multidimensional approach to self-development, combining individual methods (such as reflective journaling, writing letters to oneself, and cultivating an inner observer) with group-based formats (including feedback sessions, discussions, and strategic workshops). In practice, this approach allows not only for the evaluation of current experience but also for the development of strategies aimed at personal and professional transformation (see Table).

Common methods of reflection include morning and evening reflection, reflective pauses, and social reflection (for example, dialogue with a mentor or trusted advisor) [4] (see Table 2).

Table 2 –Reflection methods (Antyufeeva E., 2025) [6]

Methods	Description
<i>Journaling Method (Diary Method)</i>	Systematically recording thoughts, actions, and emotions helps you monitor and track your development, identify patterns, and draw good conclusions.
<i>Feedback Method</i>	Input from others provides an alternative perspective on a situation, offers valuable recommendations, and supports the adjustment of one's actions.
<i>20 Minutes of Daily Self-Reflection (End-of-Day Practice)</i>	It takes the mind off of the extra information received during the day, allows to focus on the useful.
<i>Biannual Strategic Reflection Sessions</i>	Allows to think more broadly and assess actions more deeply, focuses attention on specific goals based on the results achieved, analyzes and takes into account the environment and the dynamics of changing conditions.
<i>External Perspective (“View from the Outside”)</i>	Connection with the environment, especially with experts, exchange of experience leads to quality decision-making, which expands the perspective of critical thinking.

In practice, when you work with inmates, psychologists usually use “Letter” technique for deeper understanding of oneself and others.

Various formats of letter-based reflective practice are applied in correctional settings [25–41]:

– “*Psychological letter inspired by Fyodor Dostoevsky*” (addresses the human need for confession expressed in diverse and often unexpected forms; enables perspective-taking through immersion in characters’ inner worlds, analysis of portrait and landscape as reflections of psychological states, facial expressions, gaze, gait, speech, and nonverbal behavior) [26];

- *instructional letter*;
- *expressive writing* (James W. Pennebaker; see Writing to Heal);
- *gratitude letter*;
- *healing letters* (see Louise DeSalvo, Writing as a Way of Healing);
- *therapeutic letters* (unsent letters; see Irvin Yalom);
- *farewell letter to oneself*;
- *restorative letters* (see Ilse Sand, Healing Conversations);
- *free writing* (stream-of-consciousness);
- *letter to oneself for working through negative thoughts* (being “heard”);
- *associative writing* (schematization technique);
- *self-compassion letter*;
- *letter of resentment*;
- “*letter to the victim*”;
- “*room-to-room letter*” (Sh. Amonashvili; sincere self-addressed writing);
- “*my letter about...*”;
- *emotional letters* (Barbara De Angelis, John Gray; based on emotion mapping);
- *release writing* (uncensored expression of concerns to reduce stress and achieve emotional relief);
- *accompanying letter*;
- *letter to oneself*;
- *unsent/addressless letter* (expression of accumulated emotions);
- “*letter to anger*” (safe expression of emotions, awareness of sources of anger, development of self-regulation);
- *dialogical letter* (from the voice of anger and the “wise self”), which helps safely process strong emotions, reduce aggression, and foster conscious behavioral choices;
- “*forgiveness and letting go*” letters (constructive processing of negative emotions in a safe environment);
- “*letter from the future*” (develops self-reflection, clarifies long-term goals and values, enhances motivation for change);
- “*circular letter*” (group-based reflective exchange and feedback);
- *motivational letter* (focus on strengths and existing achievements);
- “*letter from the future*” as a visualization-based reflective technique;
- *forgiveness letter* (based on Colin Tipping’s radical forgiveness and Robert Enright’s four-phase model);
- *feedback letter*;
- *role-based letter*;
- *letter to parents*;
- *dialogical correspondence* (letter and reply);
- *letter to one’s past self*.

The “Letter” method in reflective practice is widely used in psychological and correctional work with inmates to develop self-awareness, emotional regulation, and personal transformation. It is particularly effective in penitentiary environments, where individuals often find it difficult to openly express their experiences. Writing provides a safe medium for emotional expression and meaningful processing of life experiences. For individuals with radicalized views, this method offers specific benefits: it helps them envision a desired future beyond current constraints and destructive beliefs;

fosters personal responsibility and intrinsic motivation; develops goal-setting and strategic thinking skills; and supports the integration of personal values while identifying pathways toward change [1].

We propose the following implementation framework for the letter-writing method:

Stage 1. Preparatory and orientation stage. Creating a safe environment and explaining the rules of the process.

Stage 2. Writing stage. Participants are instructed to write sincerely and continuously, without focusing on style or grammatical correctness.

Stage 3. Reflective processing. After writing, participants are guided through reflective questions: What did you feel while writing? What was most difficult? Did any new thoughts emerge? Was anything unexpected? Has your perception of the situation changed?

Stage 4. Psychological integration. Follow-up tasks may include writing a response letter, formulating conclusions and decisions, and developing a personal action plan.

In addition to letter-based methods, *reflective journaling* is also widely used in work with inmates. It supports the development of self-observation, conscious analysis of thoughts and emotions, and the formation of a habit of regular reflection. Modern technologies can enhance this process [40]. Digital tools allow individuals to structure reflective practices, monitor emotional states, and observe changes over time.

Tools supporting reflective journaling include:

1. journaling applications (Day One, Journey, Diaro) for recording events, thoughts, and emotions;
2. mood trackers (Daylio, Mood Meter) for daily emotional monitoring;
3. meditation applications (Headspace, Calm, Insight Timer) to develop mindfulness and reduce stress;

4. AI-based reflection tools that guide users through structured self-inquiry [1]. In settings with limited access to smartphones, offline applications on tablets or secure digital notebooks can be used as alternatives.

Reflective journaling contributes to the development of self-awareness, emotional regulation, and critical analysis of personal experience. It helps identify internal triggers, behavioral patterns, and underlying beliefs, including those that may reinforce radical attitudes.

Within reflective journaling, the SMER method is applied, enabling individuals to better understand the nature of their emotions and learn to regulate thoughts, behaviors, and actions [1,7].

What kind of techniques are employed in reflective practice? Plus–Minus–Interesting (PMI); 3–2–1; open microphone; enhanced reflection; inner observer; phenomenological reduction (E. Husserl); dialogical work with subpersonalities; existential analysis; mindfulness-based meditation practices; alternative scenario analysis (“it could have been different”); downward arrow technique (Judith Beck); empty chair technique, etc [1].

To activate cognitive processes in reflective practice, various facilitative techniques are used alongside methods and approaches (see Table 3).

Table 3 – Reflective Techniques

Techniques	Description
<i>Plus–Minus–Interesting (PMI)</i>	Analysis of experience from three perspectives: positive aspects, negative aspects, and new or interesting insights; promotes a comprehensive evaluation of situations and the development of critical thinking.
<i>“What if...?”</i>	Encourages consideration of alternative courses of action; stimulates creative thinking and the ability to view situations from new perspectives.
<i>Use of Aphorisms and Proverbs</i>	Applied to interpret experience through cultural and philosophical expressions; supports the development of metacognition and generalization skills.
<i>“Rake or Cluster” (Spider Diagram)</i>	Visualization of experience in a schematic form: “rake” represents mistakes and difficulties, while “cluster” reflects achievements and successes; develops analytical and structural thinking.

<i>Reasoned Responses to Questions</i>	Builds the ability to justify conclusions and articulate one's position; contributes to the development of critical reflection.
<i>Three "M" Technique</i>	Identification of three key moments that were particularly successful; helps focus on positive experience and supports motivation.
<i>Graphing</i>	Visual representation of changes in interest, level of understanding, and individual engagement; allows tracking the dynamics of personal development.
<i>"Final Reflection" ("In Conclusion, I Would Say")</i>	Summative reflection involving evaluation of expectations, identification of unmet outcomes, and analysis of their causes; enhances analytical processing of experience.
<i>"My and Our Perspectives"</i>	Formulation of conclusions and future plans at both individual and group levels; supports goal-setting and collective reflection.
<i>"Gratitude"</i>	Expression of appreciation toward participants, situations, or oneself; fosters emotional awareness and maintains a positive psychological climate.

Conclusion. The study demonstrates that mindfulness and reflective practices possess significant preventive potential in addressing the risk of personal radicalization, as they foster skills that can substantially improve an individual's quality of life. Reflective practices enable individuals to move beyond automatic patterns of behavior toward conscious living, making balanced and well-considered decisions that influence not only thoughts and emotions but also deliberate actions. The integration of these practices into the work of psychologists in penitentiary institutions contributes to the development of self-observation, critical reflection on personal experiences, attitudes, and behavioral responses. In turn, engaging in negative behavior reduces the likelihood of blindly accepting belief systems that can lead to behavior destruction and extremist ideas. The results of our study showed that developing emotional regulation, mindfulness, and reflective skills can strengthen a person's psychological resilience and help them deal with internal, as well as external conflicts in a constructive way. For sure, these qualities can also be considered important factors that help prevent radicalization. Based on these findings, the practical value of the study is not limited to helping people consciously reflect on and evaluate their actions. These skills are also important when working with at-risk groups, especially in psychological prevention programs, counseling, and different forms of training. Their regular use can help prevent extremism and other harmful behaviors.

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