Person-oriented Conception of Happiness: Between Freud, Jung and Maslow

Leonid Z. Levit
Centre for Psychological Health and Education, Minsk, 220057, Belarus.

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:
Self-actualization
Happiness
Egoism
Wellbeing

ABSTRACT

We develop a person-oriented conception of happiness (POCH), which is based on the ideas of systemic approach. We demonstrate that the conception can be considered as a powerful personality theory, which integrates the conceptions of Z. Freud, C. Jung, A. Maslow and some other scientists. We show how to solve several important problems of modern psychology within POCH, and outline perspectives of the further investigations.

1. Z. Freud and C. Jung: together and apart

Every psychologist knows the story of Z. Freud - C. Jung partnership which later grew into severe rivalry. As a result there appeared two different personality theories. In its classical form, psychoanalysis underlines the primary unconscious drives (Id) that have biological origin and possess much common features between the humans and other living creatures [1]. Jungian theory meanwhile lays special emphasis on the concept of Self as the unconscious centre of man’s psyche and his “inner treasure”. The process of individuation which is usually undertaken in the second part of person’s life helps his Ego to get in touch with Self and achieve self-realization [2,3].

The concept of Ego, the centre of person’s conscious life exists in both theories but has different origin. In Freud’s conception, “human” Ego is developing from “animal” Id, while in Jung’s model Ego separates from Self which is rather an “ideal”, the best part of an individual.

The ideas of individuation and self-realization were productively utilized in humanistic theories of A. Maslow [4-6] and C. Rodgers [7] with its stress on the importance of personal potential and self-actualization [8]. R. Assajioli’s psychosynthesis model [9] dealing with a person’s “inner centre” has certain common features with that of Jung. Meanwhile the psychoanalytic theory has also given birth to several Ego-conceptions as well as to Transactional Analysis [10] where the positions of Child, Adult and Parent partially correspond to Freudian Id, Ego and Superego.

Our contemplation on all the above mentioned theories has gradually brought us to the conclusion about the possibility of their integration into one big systemic paradigm, where the former “rivals” could become “brothers in arms” again (a good humanistic gesture, isn’t it?). Our model was firstly designed to synthesize eudaemonic and hedonistic traditions in happiness studies [11, 12] but later we have uncovered much broader possibilities of POCH within the psychology of personality. It sounds rather strange but our comprehension of POCH and its theoretical power is still continuing. So we would like to share some preliminary results of our work that deal with theoretical aspects of POCH model. Our original directivity towards the psychology of happiness will help a reader to understand the necessity of the next chapter, which explains one important basis of POCH construction.

2. Self-actualization, happiness and egoism

The introduction of our model needs some preliminary explanation pertaining to the mutual correspondence of the terms “egoism”, “happiness” and “self-actualization”.

First of all it should be mentioned that “The majority view …among biologists and psychologists, is that we are, at heart, purely egoistic…” (Ref. [13], p. 486). According to R. Dawkins, egoism is “inscribed” into our genes, since it provides strategies for survival and fitness of an individual [14]. So egoism is not just a “psychological trait” but has deeper roots being a strong biological power. The concept of universal egoism is represented in the following reviews (see Refs. [15, 16]).

Throughout the human history person’s pleasure and happiness were associated with egoism in its more or less rational forms [17]. Even Aristotle [18] considered that a virtuous man should firstly love and respect oneself. The ideas of Epicure, which gained strong popularity in the times of the Renaissance, emphasized the role of individual pleasures and enjoyment. Delightful sensations for one’s own sake were one of the main values of that period. Lorenzo Valla’s medieval treatise “About Delight” was a fine example of hedonism and egoism unification and consolidation [19].

© 2013 Int. j. econ. manag. soc. sci. All rights reserved for TI Journals.

* Corresponding author.
Email address: leolev44@tut.by
According to M. Stirner pleasure was always the subject of severe rivalry. That’s why egoism was also needed to get round other competitors and be the first [20]. The Russian philosopher I. Ilyin compared egoism with the snake’s skin, which was necessary for a person’s protection from external disturbances on his way to self-realization. “The absence of egoism, - Ilyin hypothesized, - does not allow a person to resist external pressure (primarily the egoism of other people), which hampers the development of his inner potential” [21, p. 305].

The concept of rational egoism as the principal means for individual achievements was proclaimed by the French philosophers of the Enlightenment as well as the English Utilitarians. It was affirmed for example that if an egoistic person strived for his own goals and didn’t violate other people’s rights, he would be useful for them as well [22]. In A. Rand’s writings an individual should attain happiness with her own abilities [23]. There are two principal components in this process – the person’s mind and designation. Rand underlines the virtue of selfishness as the main means of self-realization. The person actualizes potentials through the productive activity, and the latter is attributed to the sphere of her “own” interests by rational egoism.

According to modern theories of ethical egoism, every man has predominant obligation towards himself. His reason helps to make the right choice on a journey to his own achievements. 5 out of 10 statements in the Scale of dispositional egoism, the only one found in Russian psychological literature deal with the theme of happiness, hedonistic pleasure and personal well-being [24]. In the author’s opinion, egoism is a strong motivation of person’s activity. People, who score high in egoism, are usually more successful and optimistic [24], while the feelings of optimism and being successful are in their turn associated with happiness [25]. The correlation between egoism and optimism clearly shows the protective power of the former on a person’s productive activity. And vice versa: an unhappy personality is usually described as lacking any egoism and optimism [25].

As J. Robinson in his essay “Egoism” puts it: “According to your sympathy, you will take pleasure in your own happiness or in the happiness of other people; but it is always your happiness you seek” [26, p. 1].

Growing materialism and consumerism among the developed capitalist countries’ population based on the egoistic pursuit of the hedonic enjoyment enameled the Earth’s resources [27]. As B. Grinde puts it, “Most humans primarily think of themselves” and “Any serious political system should take a level of egoism into account” [28, p.258].

It can be concluded that hedonism, directed towards one’s self-delight is a substantial (though not always clearly seen) component of egoism. The term “hedonistic egoism” exists in modern science and implies the person’s desire to achieve more luxury and keep suffering off. Ed Diener’s SWB theory [29] is a fine reflection of hedonistic egoism, based on a person’s striving for more pleasant experiences and avoidance of negative ones.

Personal egoism can’t and shouldn’t be avoided but people can select between different forms of egoism – “materialistic” and more “rational” one, which helps to correlate individual interests with those of other people as well as to get “higher” human pleasures [30]. Moreover, the driving motivational force of rational egoism, its intellectual functions as well as the protective power may and should have beneficial application in a person’s self-actualization. According to A. Maslow [5], such process is more “natural” for a person who possesses a certain amount of narcissism, individualism and egocentrism [8]. The very term “self-actualization” implicates the activity directed at oneself. Therefore it seemed reasonable for us to apply the concept of (rational) egoism in consequent discourse and modeling.

3. POCH: introduction and explanation

We have developed a synthesizing conception, which is based on bio-psycho-social unity of a man, on the ideas of systemic approach. No similar theories were found in modern psychology. The results of our five-year work on the problem are summarized in five monographs [11, 12, 31-33].

The major goal of the present article is the introduction of POCH paradigm and the demonstration of its integral character in respect to different personality theories of the beginning-mid twentieth century as well as to some contemporary models of human well-being. This paper deals only with the theoretical aspects of our work that is being made on the borderline between the psychology of personality (primarily self-actualization theory) and the psychology of subjective well-being. Keeping in mind the latter we shall also mention some works on the important issues in happiness studies – eudaimonia and hedonism. We do it especially because the first one of them is relative to the concepts of self-realization and self-actualization.

Through the content-analysis of scientific literature, discourse and modeling, we have developed a three-level paradigm (see Fig.1).

Moving bottom-up, let us briefly describe the main components of POCH. The biological (“body”) level of our model (L1) is represented by the concept of Health, which we understand primarily as the absence of essential body “problems” in the course of psychological self-realization. From our point of view, Health is the most important characteristic of the body level, which gives a person physical energy and therefore the opportunity to strive for optimal life.

By the way, we do not hold to the term “positive health” [34]. What can be “positive” in natural health? It can't be transformed into fairy “super health” in any way. Health is either normal or not. In the former it doesn't distract an individual, thus creating better conditions for self-realization and can also benefit from such way of living to some extent. And just the opposite is possible: health may get worse (at least, for a certain period of time as in the case of sportman's trauma), but this is not the point.
Creeping shift of the focus can lead to the substitution of self-actualization by the healthy way of life. Must we open “Humanistic clinic” as a new panacea against diseases? One shouldn’t rank self-fulfillment as the top priority in life if her main purpose is health improvement. And the primary means for the health amendment is a healthy way of living. The early death of Abraham Maslow from the second heart attack was a sad but convincing example. Health should simply be “present”, but not be “positive” or “superb”.

As for the concept of Egoism (EG), the inborn property which is common to humans and other living creatures we place it at the bottom of psychological Level 2. EG is responsible for self-protection and survival of species, for satisfying two basic instincts - food and sexual, that brings to a man hedonistic (“lower”) pleasures.

Moving further up along L2, EG gradually transforms into Rational Egoism (REG), that includes intellectual, regulatory, and (if necessary) reflexive components. Until being reoriented towards PU actualization REG is responsible for “higher”, “human” pleasures and some activity at the social level.

The analysis of the problem helped us to establish the following major functions of the Rational Egoism concept in person’s self-actualization activity.

1. Self-development, that is choosing the appropriate material from the external world for PU at the first stage of its maturing;
2. Self-realization, that is providing “protective” and other functions at the second stage of PU realization in the environment;
3. Self-regulation and reflection that is managing PU activity from higher, “meaningful” level of the hierarchy.

The internal logic of our theory rests upon the following isomorphism: REG originates from EG in the same way as consciousness and rational mind allowed the mankind to evolve from the animal world. In connection with this, let’s recall the Freud’s idea that personality is developing from Id [1]. EG in POCH with its instinct of self-preservation and Freud’s “pleasure principle” serves as a link between the first body level (L1) and the second psychological level (L2), while REG connects L2 with the social L3, being the mediator between PU and external world.

“Deeply inside” Level 2 we place Personal Uniqueness (PU) − the property of at least certain number of people. PU is somewhat analogous to daimon in its classical meaning or personal potential in humanistic comprehension. Personal Uniqueness represents synthesis of individual gifts and potentials (“U”) with the personal components (“P”) that facilitate its application in “appropriate” activity (assurance, persistence, etc.). These “P-components” of individual activity belong to the higher sublevel within L2 than “U-components”.

Thus some stages of the PU development can be formulated. First of all, a gifted child possesses “U”, but the “P” components are added (or not!) later, when his personality is developing. The same process takes place in REG formation, when the letter “R” (Ratio) is being gradually added to inborn EG, giving it a new “human” quality – the ability to coordinate personal needs with interests of other people; the component of altruism, and so on.

At the first stage of PU formation, REG brings it the necessary “nutriments” from the outer world (the process of self-development). At the second stage, the developed PU with the help of REG “enters” the external world, and the process of self-actualization takes place. There is an opportunity for the third “transcendental” stage [4] which, in our opinion, can take place in the situations of social synergy.
Thus, we argue that cohesive interaction of REG and PU brings self-realization and complete human life. Rational Egoism is the best “partner” for Personal Uniqueness since it accomplishes protective, intellectual and motivating functions in the process of her actualization, being on the outside of the PU activity. To put it metaphorically, REG in its optimal form can be described as the experienced “promoter”, which protects his very talented but rather “naive” pupil (PU) from external threats and superfluous problems in the time of her actualization.

The following continuity from hedonism to self-realization can be marked within POCH framework: “lower” pleasures, primarily connected with the satisfaction of food and sexual instincts (EG); “higher” pleasures (REG); the process of self-actualization (REG+PU); the Flow (see later; PU). Our conclusions concerning REG and EG original responsibilities (“higher” and “lower” pleasures correspondingly) as well as their common descent are confirmed by the results of the recent neuroscientific investigation: “…the brain mechanisms involved in fundamental pleasures (food and sexual pleasures) overlap with those for higher order pleasures (for example, monetary, artistic, musical, altruistic, and transcendent pleasures)” [35].

The third level (social contacts of an individual) is represented by the concept of Moderation [30] that reflects Aristotle’s ideas expressed in Nichomachean Ethics as well as our comprehension of the ambivalence of social world, which influences person’s striving to actualize his potentials and achieve happy life in very different ways. The idea of moderation at Level 3 is represented by some sort of narrowing social contacts at the boundary between a person and society (see Fig. 1).

Under the circumstances, we achieve optimal interaction of all the POCH levels. Indeed, L3 positively affects L1 which, in turn, feeds with energy L2. Psychological harmony at L2 has a positive feedback for L1 and L3. We have called the achievement of happiness by this way as “Happiness No 1”. It is characteristic for people who have found their PU and realize it via REG.

Talking about the correlation between the psychological (L2) and the social (L3) levels of POCH we want to touch upon one seeming contradiction in Aristotle’s writings, that was described but not analyzed thoroughly in one of the papers [34]. For Aristotle eudaimonia was “…the highest of all goods achieved by human action”, “…the best thing in us”, “…our true and best nature”, while “…happiness ought to be in accordance with highest virtue” [34]. One can easily see the abundance of superlative degrees. At the same time Aristotle repeatedly defines virtues in the categories like “mean” and “intermediate”. Thus the question arises: how can the best and unique qualities of a person be at the same time mean and moderate? Will, for example, one’s musical talent become “stronger” if “tempered” in the process of self-realization? Didn’t Aristotle know that creative activity was usually accompanied by the decline in defense mechanisms?

To answer these questions correctly, let’s consider an abstract from the “Nichomachean Ethics” (taken from [34]): “Both fear and confidence and appetite and anger and pity and in general pleasure and pain may be felt both too much and too little, and in both cases not well, but to feel them at the right times, with reference to the right objects, towards the right people, with the right motive, and in the right way, is what is both intermediate and best, and this is characteristic of virtue.”

So the question arises: what psychological “agent” within a person decides when, with whom, how, etc. the virtue should be actualized? The non-contradictory explanation comes from our conception: if PU is person’s virtue (or “daimon”), then REG is his “practical wisdom” (“phronesis” in Aristotle’s terms) that takes appropriate decisions, concerning the conditions of PU fulfillment in the external world and tempers it if necessary. Thus the need for the cohesive interaction between Rational Egoism and Personal Uniqueness that leads to self-actualization (eudaimonic way of living) is proved again.

Introducing our new conception we take into account, that positive psychology will hardly feel itself very convenient (at least at first) with such negatively loaded term as “egoism”. So let’s remind that REG radically distinguishes from EG and even overcomes it in the process of self-actualization. Can inborn egoism's negotiation and submission be called truly egoistic? Not likely.

As soon as Personal Uniqueness in our comprehension is close to “daimon” in its classical meaning, let’s look back at the Ancient Greeks' views on the subject. They considered daimon to be quite a separate, “ideal” part (golden figurine) inside a person [36]. It was the moral imperative for an individual to get in touch with his spirit (“know thyself”) and live in accord with it. Therefore daimon was a kind of another, higher, possible self thus creating a certain heteronomy within a personality.

From such point of view REG activity towards PU strengthening and actualization aimed not on "me", but on "the other in me" completely looses its traditional "egoistic" (negative) meaning. As A. N. Slavskaya points out, a person “does not simply express but rather fulfills himself. Such activity resolves the contradiction between egoism and altruism” ([37], p. 22).

We also consider unreasonable to oppose egoism and altruism, since society may benefit from the results of creative activity of an individual. At the same time there is still some place for a very refined version of the former egoistic experiences. A person who has come in touch with his PU and actualizes it in his activity gets the feeling of absolute uniqueness and wonderful solitude of his life where he competes primarily with himself, gets his “personal” victories as well as higher pleasures and is always “the first” in his self-actualization journey.

Here we would like to emphasize that the structure of our model takes into account both the elicited overlap between hedonic and eudaimonic, self-actualizing living (since REG originates from EG) as well as their divergence (REG should become reoriented and take the side of “eudaimonic” PU, not of “hedonic” EG). The above mentioned regularities were found in the recent studies [38, 39].

One of the most exciting things about POCH is that REG, being EG “offspring” becomes rather antagonistic towards his “father” for the sake of PU actualization (a moderate version of Oedipus myth). So a person faces an existential choice: to stay on the “hedonic” (EG) level,
or to "climb higher" (REG + PU), discover his true potentials and lead the meaningful life. To decide between life for oneself and life in the name of oneself [12].

At present we can not give an exhaustive explanation of how REG reorients from “higher” pleasures to PU actualization. Still, some analogies can be mentioned. Esoteric literature gives examples, when a person transcends the borders of everyday life after spiritual crisis. According to Maslow [5] a man moves to self-actualization when both his “basic” and “higher” needs are satisfied – usually in the second half of his life. The same regularity is mentioned in Jung’s writings [2].

The similar dilemma – between the “ethical” choosing of one’s Self and “aesthetic” choosing of external life and its pleasures – is put by S. Kierkegaard [40]. For Kierkegaard despair was the main means of transition to Self-choice; for us – the PU reinforcing signals, “heard” by REG.

4. A bit of arithmetic

To clarify our tentative conclusions we can use numbers and give one point to the highest possible expression of each level of POCH. We get the following score for self-actualizing personality: Level 1=1; Level 2=1; Level 3 (moderation in social contacts) ≈0.5. 1+1+0.5 gives 2.5 out of 3. We call such result (optimal from our point of view) as “Happiness No 1”.

If an individual’s L2 is not filled in sufficiently (PU is absent or not “heard”) he is prone to compensate it with L3 widening (extensive but personally meaningless social activity). In this case we obtain another “formula of happiness”: L1=1; L2≈0.5; L3=1. Again it gives 2.5 out of 3. The “quantity” is the same, but the “quality” of life is different (“Happiness No 2”, see Fig. 2). We can observe some narrowing at Level 2 and widening at Level 3.

There are many other “ways of living” that can be expressed numerically within POCH model, but the frame of our article does not allow us to analyze them in details, since most of them get lesser scores and are associated with “unhappiness” or even personality disorders.

5. POCH: comparative analysis and some criticism

Since ancient times the concept of “psyche” was associated with two big and partially overlapping constructs: “soul” and “ratio” [41]. Anyway both of them are represented in POCH: Personal Uniqueness and Rational Egoism correspondingly. The given fact explains the theoretical power of our conception, which will be illustrated with the examples below.

In his Nichomachean Ethics, Aristotle speaks of the activity of soul according with rational mind [18]. From our point of view, this is isomorphic to the interaction of PU and REG. We fully agree with the philosopher that such an activity corresponds to “destination of a righteous man” and contains reward in itself. As has already been mentioned, the process of self-actualization can also bring enjoyment which, in turn, facilitates its continuation.

![Figure 2. POCH (“Happiness No 2”).](image-url)
According to Plato, Aristotle’s teacher, the soul consists of three parts: the part which is responsible for wishes and “appetites”, the rational part, and spiritual (“passionate”) part [42]. In our conception, the three correspond to EG, REG, and PU, accordingly. REG is “at the reins” of the ancient Greek chariot (Plato’s metaphor), while PU and EG are his “noble” horse and “stumbling” horse correspondingly.

Turning briefly to religious metaphors, we can characterize PU as the “spark of God”, while REG corresponds to “protecting angel” (“angelsavior”). We can also notice similarities of Moderation at L3 with the ideas of Buddhism: activity of REG in the outer world has common features with one of the basic principles of Judaism (importance of “righteous deeds”); while the emphasis on internal spiritual state (PU) correlates with the ideas of Christianity [43].

And now let’s turn to the psychology of personality. The comparison of our model with the most famous theories of the first half of the XXth century (the conceptions of Z. Freud, E. Berne, C. Jung, A. Maslow, C. Rogers, R. Assagioli, partially G. Allport and E. Erikson) uncovered integrative character of POCH. Our model combines the energy of the Freudian unconscious drives (by the way, REG is somewhat similar to psychoanalytic “strong” Ego), intellectual capabilities of an Adult in the transactional analysis of Eric Berne [10], self-actualization and self-fulfillment tendencies in the humanistic approaches of A. Maslow [4, 5] and C. Rogers [7], inner “centre” (somewhat analogous to PU) and the movement towards it in the R. Assagioli's psychosynthesis theory (2008), principles of individuation and movement towards Self in the Jungian conception [3]. One can also see REG proximity to G. Allport’s proprium in the function of “positive, creative, developing source of human nature” [44], while PU successful actualization - to Eriksonian feeling of identity [45]. Inter alia, REG in our conception is responsible for self-regulation and strategic construction of the individual lifecycle.

Suffice is to say that POCH (in the case of optimal interaction between its levels) is free of contradictions that are characteristic of some previously mentioned theories: the ones between Id and Superego in psychoanalysis, between the willing Child and forbidding Parent in transactional analysis, between humanistic self-actualization tendency and unfriendly external conditions that suppress it (C. Rogers and A. Maslow).

“Universal” properties of POCH are somewhat surprising even for the author. If a person for example, discovers his PU (“daemon”) and with REG help wishes to actualize it in the external world, we talk about humanistic character of our model. In this case, the movement is directed outwards. But if an individual chooses to move in the opposite course – inwards, guided by the slogan “Know thyself” (know your Personal Uniqueness) we can talk about esoterically, mystically-oriented conceptions. Such an inward movement is vividly represented in C. Jung’s theory [2, 3] (knowing Self in the process of individuation) and in R. Assagioli’s psychosynthesis [44] (person’s tending towards his deeply located centre). In this case the third level of social contacts in POCH model fulfils the role of “false façade”, the cover under which a real life, though not seen by strangers, proceeds.

A closer look at the second (L2) and third (L3) levels of our conception makes evident its partial isomorphism to the Freudian theory of personality. Indeed, EG can be treated as a certain counterpart of Id with its primary drives and the reigning pleasure principle [1, 46]. REG development from EG is analogous to that of Ego from Id. The Moderation principle at the social L3 of our model can be in a certain sense interpreted as a “softened” version of Superego. However, in the Freud’s personality theory there is no notion concerning “personal potentials” of a man. Psychoanalysis interprets any creative activity as a result of sublimation defensive mechanism [1], while the attempts at explaining person’s inborn talent are not even undertaken. That is why the use of PU concept and its meaningful fulfillment by individual brings our model closer to humanistic and existentially-oriented theories. It is interesting to point out that the very eudaimonic orientation on a person’s self-realization does make it possible to keep his EG (Id in the psychoanalytic understanding) under control. REG in this case acts as a mediator between “inner” and “outer” world, thus reducing their mutual antagonism [47].

There is one important distinction between POCH and the Jungian theory of personality. It should be discussed just because A. Maslow has adopted some theoretical mechanisms elaborated by Jung into his self-actualization model [8]. According to Jung, the deeply hidden Self (PU in our framework) “gives birth” to conscious Ego (the concept is a bit similar to REG in POCH) which separates from his “mother”. In the process of person’s living his Ego gets far from Self at the same time preserving the initial bond with it ([48], p. 261). Thus Jungian Ego is homogeneous to Self. In this case the process of individuation implies the reverse movement of Ego to Self as well as strengthening of the latter. We think, as far as Ego is Self’s “scion” it must not be very difficult for him to go this back way. But if the process of individuation is so homogeneous and “natural”, then why does it occur so rarely among people?

The structure of POCH, possessing heteronomy between PU and REG at Level 2 (first of all due to their different parentage) can better explain the empirical facts. REG originates from “animal” EG (like Freudian Ego develops from Id), but not from “ideal” PU. Still Personal Uniqueness does exist as “higher possibility”, as a “golden figurine” inside a man [36], but its disclosure demands reorientation and subsequent hard work from REG; first of all - turning away from pleasure seeking towards PU actualization. But we do not consider PU to be the ruling centre of our psyche in no way, while REG has no initial “bonds” with it.

That’s why POCH, admitting the existence of “ideal” PU, is not as “pessimistic” about human nature as the psychoanalytic theory. At the same time our model does not predict an easy and “natural” way towards PU actualization that may seem possible from Jungian writings – mainly because of the radical distinction in origin between Rational Egoism and Personal Uniqueness. Therefore an actualization of our “inner treasure” is not predetermined; it becomes rather hypothetical, a question of conscious choice and hard work for a person who “hears” the reinforcing call of his PU and feels his own vocation. Such mode of the theoretical discourse gives much better explanation of the relatively small number of individuals involved in the process of self-actualization and individuation.

Consequently POCH occupies the intermediate position between the two psychological “monsters” – the theories of Z. Freud and C. Jung. In our opinion this is one of the examples of the “golden mean” that was intuitively observed in POCH in the process of its construction. Most likely we have found the lacking link that can symbolically connect the former two “rivals” again.
To illustrate REG functions towards PU with an example, let’s analyze an abstract from C. Jung’s autobiography ([36], p. 3).

“I have had much trouble, getting along with my ideas. There was a daimon in me, and in the end its presence proved decisive. It overpowered me and if I was at times ruthless it was because I was in the grip of the daimon.”

In our framework this quotation is a fine sample of strong PU (daimon), but rather weak REG, that subsequently causes trouble in individual’s social contacts at Level 3 of POCH. The decrease of protective measures/psychological defences on the “peak” of self-actualization may take the process out of the person’s control. Perhaps, Jung’s “ruthlessness”, being the result of powerful PU actualization and certain lack of Rational Egoism, might have been perceived by his contemporaries as a sign of “irrational” egoism (EG).

A person with a strong and developed REG can overcome dangers of the environment in the process of PU realization. Within such an approach, we also get the opportunity to deal successfully with an important problem in humanistic psychology which is relative but not identical to the one discussed above. A. Maslow and C. Rogers explained small percentage (less than one) of self-actualizing people due to “unfriendly conditions of the environment” [4, 7]. At the same time both of them believed that every person has his inborn potential.

This contradiction between the theoretical constructions and reality becomes even stronger while reading one of the last Maslow’s interviews [49]. The scientist discovered, that some of his students “refused” to enter the highest stage of their development – self-actualization, notwithstanding the fact that all the lower levels of the pyramid of needs were satisfied. A. Maslow, by the way, could not give a satisfactory explanation of this fact in the framework of his theory.

POCH application based on PU-REG dualism enables us to outline some ways of solving this problem. For example a person with a strongly developed sense of Personal Uniqueness (and even giftedness) not always possesses a proper mechanism (REG) of its realization in the outer world, thus becoming “non-actualized” talent. Or an individual may hold neither REG nor PU, but can have strong EG and move further towards unlimited satisfying of his materialistic needs and getting new hedonic pleasures.

Those Maslow’s students who had transcended to self-actualization stage, possessed the feeling of “inner call”, their vocation and mission, and were ready for serious work [49]. In other words, having PU and REG, they were prone to realization of the second level of POCH. And those who were incapable of self-actualization strengthened and widened their third level getting involved into frequent but superficial social contacts (hypersociality in our framework).

The given fact demonstrates the mechanism of interaction between L2 and L3 once more. The person’s concentration on self-development and self-realization, demanding the hard work on his potentials, consequently urges him to moderate non-useful social contacts. At the same time the “door” is always half-open, because it is the external world that gives the person an opportunity to actualize his developed PU [30]. And vice versa: a person experiencing inner emptiness at L2 widens his third, social level as compensation.

Furthermore if we investigate Carl Rogers’ process of psychotherapy within the framework of POCH, we can give alternative explanation to its beneficial effects. Therapist’s efforts at the initial stages of work with a client, connected with the unconditional understanding and acceptance of the latter, can be interpreted as REG activity, the function of which the therapist fulfills by himself. Such efforts help to gradually strengthen the client’s PU at the first stage of its development. If the therapy is effective, there comes the time for the second stage – PU entering the external word – firstly, into the space of interaction between the therapist and the client. Such space is broadening by degrees while the client’s PU is getting more and more solid.

In modern theories, the PU-REG connection easily incorporates most of the components concerning eudaimonic living and self-fulfillment: autonomy [34, 50, 51]; competence (Ryan and Deci) and mastery (Ryff and Singer); life purpose (Ryff and Singer) and self-concordant goals (Sheldon and Elliot); personal growth and self-acceptance (Ryff and Singer). Every personal trait, mentioned above, can be included either into REG concept (for example autonomy, life purpose, self-acceptance etc.) or into PU. If a trait is demonstrated “inside” the person’s specific activity, it should be related with PU; if “outside” – with REG.

“Relatedness” (Ryan and Deci) and “positive relatedness” (Ryff and Singer), the rest eudaimonic components, belong to Level 3 within POCH framework, putting a special emphasis on quality, not quantity of interactions [50]. These concepts do not contradict an overall moderation in “broad” social contacts and at the same time evoke the idea of social synergy, introduced by Ruth Benedict, one of Maslow’s teachers [4].

In our comprehension the term “social synergy” nowadays can be applied in a more narrow sense – describing the community of people, which promote eudaimonic way of living within the “complementarity of excellences” principle [36]. Thus, social interactions of a person can be formulated in such a way: moderate the quantity, “synergize” the quality. In Maslow’s writings one can find references concerning the community of people (mostly psychologists) who pursue self-actualization.

It goes without saying that POCH does not contradict to Waterman’s conception of eudaimonic activity [39] with only one addition: in our opinion, the concept of “personal expressiveness” (PE) can hardly give the full coverage of eudaimonic way of living. That’s why it is supplemented with the terms “self-realization”, “engagement” and “self-development” of a person in our ESM experiments [12]. Of course, we do not intend to encroach upon the abovementioned theories, which have proved their validity; we simply show some concomitant opportunities the new systemic paradigm offers.

Further we would also like to dwell on a very important theme, which we want to discuss with the help of POCH ideas – the flow [52]. We understand the flow as unimpeded PU actualization (almost without REG) in appropriate activity. That’s why one can fully concentrate on the process and use his psychic energy in a harmonious pattern ([52], p.176).
In explanatory purposes let's add “some POCH” into the flow and describe the dynamics. When a person is inside the flow without anything hampering his PU, he acts in the most effective way. Imagine that after some time there appears a minor “irritator” that can to some extent distract the actor's attention. For example some strangers appear near the rock during the climber's training. They watch his performance and loudly talk about it. In order to keep his activity at the proper level and under control, the climber's REG comes into play. Most probably, the sense of flow will diminish to some extent. The noisier are the visitors, the bigger REG is, and the smaller the flow is. If the "audience" begins to behave aggressively (like throwing stones at the climber) his flow and PU disappear, while "intelligent" REG is replaced by more "brutal" EG.

Since rock climbing and playing chess give good examples of the flow experience, some climbers and chess players were thoroughly interviewed by M. Csikszentmihalyi. Being the chess master in the past and amateur rock climber at present, the author of the paper wants to mention a small contradiction in Csikszentmihalyi's description of the flow, which in no way relates to the essence of the topic: “concentration on the task” (pp. 176, 178), “focus of attention” (p.180) and “high level of applied skills” (p.181) can hardly coexist simultaneously with “loss of self-consciousness” (p.178) when “everything goes automatically, without thinking” (p.183). The latter two are closer to a trance state. Most probably, there exist different stages of the flow or even different kinds of the flow – in more or less strenuous activities.

Csikszentmihalyi's characteristic of transcendent personality is a fine confirmation of REG-PU coexistence and interaction: “It is the T-person who combines harmoniously these opposite tendencies: he or she is original yet systematic, independent yet responsible, bold yet disciplined, intuitive yet rational ... It is easy to be at one or the other pole of these pairs, and much more difficult to be at both ends at once. Yet only when the apparent antinomy of these two processes is resolved can a self fully participate in the flow of evolution.” (p. 238).

What's more, the protective function that REG implements towards PU during its actualization in the outer world helps to withstand The Hostile-World Scenario [53]. The term “HWS” does not seem too precise: external world can't be "hostile" or "friendly" - in fact it is "indifferent" to us. Thinking about the world as "hostile" implies some paranoid attitude towards the environment. Therefore we propose to change the order of words and talk about The World's Hostile Scenario (WHS) keeping in mind that an abundance of "world's scenarios" is possible.

Within the present theoretical article we can cover only a small part of the problems we are interested in. So let’s show the possible solution of only one "enigma" that exists in modern psychology – “the egoist’s dilemma”, which deals with a balance between personal egoism and social good [27]. The problem in general is reduced to the following: there is a village and a common meadow nearby. The peasants have cows that feed on the meadow. For his own benefit, each peasant wishes to have as many cows as possible, but in this case all the grass on the meadow will be eaten soon and the cows will starve to death.

With the help of POCH, this problem can be easily solved. If every peasant knows his PU (that is unique for each person) then only few of them (if any) may wish to deal with cows, because the majority will prefer to actualize themselves in other, more suitable activities. And the peasants, whose PU lies in the sphere of agriculture, will easily figure out the optimal herd [54]. That is it – the modern solution of “the egoist’s dilemma” by means of Rational Egoism! Not only for peasants, but for their cows as well.

The use of our model can be highly productive in the upbringing of gifted children. We help to uncover their Personal Uniqueness, while we can form the Rational Egoism components for their future life and activity [55]. In this case, the contradiction between conditional (for REG formation) and unconditional (for PU uncovering) positive approaches is resolved.

On the other hand we also admit the possibility of the spontaneous PU “outburst” – usually in middle-aged persons between 40 and 50 years [56]. But why should one wait till that? Isn’t it better to form one’s REG, so that PU could be consequently actualized without any “outbursts”?

Our model can also be represented in the extremely abstract form if necessary: something “Brute” (EG) inside a person gives birth to something “Rational” (REG) which in its turn begins to search for something “Ideal” (PU) and having discovered the sought actualizes it in the external world, at the same time putting “Brute” under certain control.

All the abovementioned examples make it clear that POCH offers wide opportunities in the sphere of theoretical psychology. Such useful properties stem from its systemic nature and many centuries of debates and explorations of its main components. First of all we have in view the concepts of “daimon”, “self” and “personal potential” (Personal Uniqueness), “the golden mean” (Moderation) and Rational Egoism. According to N. Smith [41] POCH can be referred to “metatheory”, which consists of “super constructs”.

6. Conclusions

Our person-oriented conception of happiness (POCH) combines the ideas of Z. Freud, C. Jung and A. Maslow within a new systemic paradigm. Importantly the concept of self-actualization (REG+PU) is placed higher in the hierarchy of psychological Level 2, thus “including” hedonic components of well-being in it.

In the sphere of fundamental psychology POCH has integrative character towards some personality theories of the beginning-mid twentieth century and at the same time can serve as the possible systemic “prototype” for the future theoretical and experimental investigations. POCH in our opinion is a fine example of the integrative approach, the intermarriage of different perspectives around the concepts of self-actualization and complete human life.