

# HEALTH AND CONSULTING PSYCHOLOGY IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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## STRESS AND COPING STRATEGIES WITH IT DURING THE FIRST WAVE OF COVID-19 IN BULGARIA

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**Abstract.** *The article presents a study of the levels of perceived stress and strategies for coping with it during the first lockdown on the spread of COVID-19 infection in Bulgaria. The survey was conducted through a survey using online questionnaires through social media software - KwikSurveys. The periods of conducting the two waves of research during the first lockdown are March 22-28, 2020 (N=695) and April 25 - May 2, 2020 (N=456). These results fit into the paradigm outlined by Lazarus. The methods used include the Constructive Thinking Inventory (Epstein, 1998, Bulgarian adaptation Karastoyanov, 2018) and the Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen, Kamarck, Mermelstein, 1983, Bulgarian adaptation Karastoyanov, Hristova, 2000). The data from the study on the negative correlation between constructive thinking and perceived stress show that the constructive thinking questionnaire can be a good predictor of the level of stress experienced during a crisis. More frequent use of emotional and behavioral coping as the two most important components of constructive thinking, expressing the ability to deal with the inner world of feelings and the outside world of events, and less frequent use of components of destructive thinking (e.g. personal superstitious thinking) are associated with experiencing lower levels of stress.*

**Keywords:** COVID-19; perceived stress; coping strategies.

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**Antoaneta Hristova** – Theoretical background, Methodology, Data processing and Discussion.

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