

Stress management

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ABSTRACT

Modern life is full of stress. In this present paper nature, processes and consequences of stress are discussed. This present study has also highlighted on stress management.

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Modern life is beset with problems and challenges. To cope with these changes human beings often undergo stresses. 'Stress is nonspecific response of the body to any demand' (Hans Selye, 1946). In simpler language it can be said that the term stress is used to describe the physical, emotional, cognitive and behavioural responses to events that are evaluated as threatening. The responses to stressful life events consist of an emotional response with somatic concomitants, coping strategy along with defense mechanisms.

Holmes and Rahe (1967) believed that any life-event that required people to change adopt or adjust their life styles would result in stress. They invented a way to measure the amount of stress in a person's life by adding up the total 'life change units' in their Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS) like Scale. They have also assumed both negative events such as divorce and positive events such as marital reconciliation demand that an individual adopt in some way, and so both kinds of events are associated with stress known as distress and eustress.

Certain factors magnify the effect of stressors. It depends on personality pattern and perception of the individual. Following pattern reflect vulnerability to stress.

Crises of feeling:

I have difficulty in identifying what I am feeling. I feel puzzled and can't determine what to do .

Low self esteem:

Most of the time I feel inferior in every respect in comparison with others

Often I feel embarrassed and insecure.

Defiance:

Often I have to conform to other's decision to avoid

rejection.

I prefer to put aside my own interests and opinions in order to do what others want.

Being powerful:

I would like to convince others of what they should think and how they should act.

I become annoyed when others will not let me help them.

Emotional response to stressful life events are of two kinds:

anxiety and depressive responses. Anxiety responses are generally associated with events that pose a threat while depressive response involves separation or loss.

Coping strategies serve to reduce the impact of stressful life – events thus attenuating emotional and behavioral response.

One type of coping strategy is to work on eliminating or changing the stressor it self.

According to Folk man and Lazarus, (1980) Lazarus (1993) when people try to eliminate the source of a stress or reduce its impact through their own actions, it is called problem – focused coping . On the other emotion – focused coping is a strategy that involves changing the way a person feels or emotionally reacts to a stressor. An individual who use emotion – focused coping may view the stressor as a challenge rather than a threat. Again ignoring the problem is also found to be a good strategy when it is not possible to change or eliminate the stressor (Ginsburg *et al.*, 2003).

Emotion focused coping is highly related to several forms of defenses first proposed by Sigmund Freud .

Emotion focused strategies highlights following features .