

Stress

Stress- person's perception of their ability to cope with an event or situation

Stressor- stress producing event of situation

Types of Stress

Distress- Negative stress
Eustress- Positive stress

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Sources of stress

- ▶ Major life events
- ▶ Catastrophes
- ▶ Daily hassles
 - Frustration
- ▶ Conflict



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Sources of Stress

1. **Frustration-** blocked from obtaining goals
 Ex. Delays, lack of resources, other people

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Sources of Stress Cont.

2. **Daily hassles-**
 Ex. Health hassles, environmental hassles, works hassles, future security
3. **Life Changes-**
 Ex. Moving, illness, divorce, death, work
4. **Job**
 - a. Working conditions
 - b. Overload
 - c. Under load

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- A. **Role Ambiguity-** unclear what is expected
- B. **Role Conflict-** demand worker to do things they dislike or disapprove of beyond job description
- C. Responsible for others

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Role Cont.

- Interpersonal relationships
 - Career development
 - Lack of participation
 - Family/other activities

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Conflict

Approach-approach conflict- 2 attractive alternatives

Avoidance-avoidance conflict- 2 unattractive alternatives


Approach-avoidance conflict- choice of whether or not to do something when part of the situation is attractive but the other is not

Double approach-avoidance conflict- pros/cons
2 choices both with pros/cons (most common)

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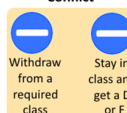
Conflicts

Approach-Approach Conflict



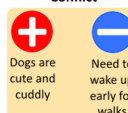
See the latest superhero movie See the latest comedy

Avoidance-Avoidance Conflict




Withdraw from a required class Stay in class and get a D or F

Approach-Avoidance Conflict



Dogs are cute and cuddly Need to wake up early for walks

Multiple conflicts



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Personality Types

Type A people

- Impatient
- Angry
- 2+ things at once
- Competitive

Type B people

- More relaxed

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1. Self-efficacy expectations- beliefs people have that they can accomplish goals that they set
2. Sense of humor
3. Predictability- if you predict stress, easier to cope
4. Social support
5. Perceived control over stress

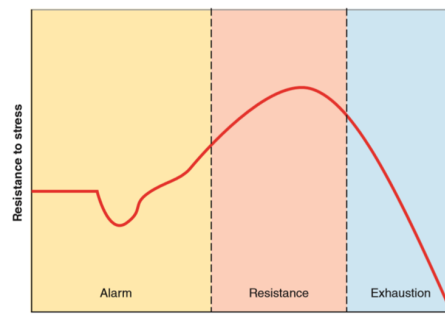
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Physical Effects of Stress

1. **General Adaptation Syndrome**
Alarm- fight or flight response
Ex. Rapid heart beat and breathing
- Resistance**- Find way to cope and remove stress
- Exhaustion**- Adrenaline glands maxed out; may develop delusions
Ex. Soldier falling asleep during battle

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General Adaptation Syndrome



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Physical Effects of Stress Cont.

2. Immune system

Stress causes body to produce steroids which interferes with antibodies

Holmes-Rahn scale

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Holmes and Rahe Social Readjustment Rating Scale

RANK	LIFE EVENT	LIFE CHANGE UNITS
1	Death of a spouse	100
2	Divorce	73
3	Marital separation	65
4	Jail term	63
7	Marriage	50
12	Pregnancy	40
16	Change in financial state	38
20	Take out mortgage or loan for major purchase	31
25	Outstanding personal achievement	28
32	Change in residence	20
38	Change in sleeping habits	16
41	Vacation	13

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Undergraduate Stress Questionnaire

- ▶ Sample items:
 - Death (family member or friend)
 - It's finals week
 - Found out boy/girlfriend cheated on you
 - Problems with your computer
 - Working while in school
 - Can't finish everything you need to do
 - Parents controlling with money
 - Had a visit from a relative and entertained him/her

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3. Headaches

Muscle-tension headache- dull, steady pain on both sides of the head also tension and pressure

Migraines- Sudden onset, severe throbbing pain one side; can last for hours or days

Symptoms: Nausea, loss of appetite, sensitivity to light

Auras- Visual distortions or unusual odors before onset

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Coping with Stress – Approaches

- ▶ Problem-focused coping
- ▶ Emotion-focused coping



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- **Problem-focused coping** is aimed at controlling or altering the environment that is causing the stress.
 - > Elimination of the perceived stressor.
 - > Take control over your environment, which may also enhance your self-esteem.
 - > Most when we feel that we can actually do something about a situation.
 - > leads to a more positive health outcome.
 - > However, when we do not feel that a situation is controllable, we often rely more on emotion-focused coping strategies.

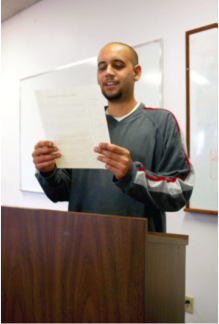
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- **Emotion-focused coping** is aimed at controlling your internal, subjective, emotional reactions to stress.
 - > either express your emotions or alter the way you feel/ think
 - > Stressors activate a variety of emotions, including anxiety, worry, guilt, shame, jealousy, envy, and anger.
 - > Because these emotions are usually experienced as unpleasant, we are motivated to release, reduce, or avoid them.

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Cognitive Appraisal

- ▶ **Primary**
 - Is this a threat, harm, or challenge?
- ▶ **Secondary**
 - How can I cope or manage this stressor?



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Ways of coping

1. Psychological Coping
 - A. Cognitive appraisal- interpretation of an event which helps us determine the stress impact
 - Ex. Student does well on tests so not worried
 - C. Intellectualization- Watches situation from an emotionally detached standpoint
 - Ex. See a car accident and don't know the person... oh well.
 - D. Cognitive preparation- "work of worrying"

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2. Defensive coping
 - Substance Abuse
 - Aggression
 - Withdrawal
 - Suicide
 - Defense mechanisms

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Coping with Stress – Defense Mechanisms

MECHANISM	DEFINITION
Denial	Refusing to accept or acknowledge the reality of a situation or idea
Rationalization	Devising a plausible reason or motive to explain one's behavior
Reaction formation	Engaging in a behavior or attitude that is at the opposite extreme of one's true motive or impulse
Regression	Returning to an earlier stage of development in one's behavior, thinking, or attitudes
Sublimation	Directing emotions into an activity that is more constructive and socially acceptable
Repression	Excluding wishes, impulses, ideas, or memories from consciousness
Projection	Attributing one's own ideas, feelings, or attitudes to other people
Displacement	Directing emotions toward a less threatening source

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Effective Strategies for stress

- Eliminate stressor if possible
- Exercise
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- Guided Imagery

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