

## HEALTH AND STRESS

According to the World Health Organization, health is a state of complete physical \_\_\_\_\_ and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

Health psychologists study \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Stress is a major risk factor. At work, prolonged stress can lead to \_\_\_\_\_. Emotional appraisals greatly affect our stress reactions and coping attempts.

Stress is the \_\_\_\_\_ process that occurs as individuals try to adjust to or deal with environmental circumstances that \_\_\_\_\_ their daily functioning. Stress involves a \_\_\_\_\_ between people and their environments. The environmental circumstances (such as exams or accidents) that cause people to \_\_\_\_\_ are called stressors. Stress reactions are the \_\_\_\_\_ responses (such as nervousness, nausea, and fatigue) displayed in the face of stressors.

\_\_\_\_\_ are common sources of stress. Three basic types of conflict are \_\_\_\_\_ (choice between two positive alternatives), \_\_\_\_\_ (both alternatives are negative), and \_\_\_\_\_ (a goal or activity has both positive and negative aspects).

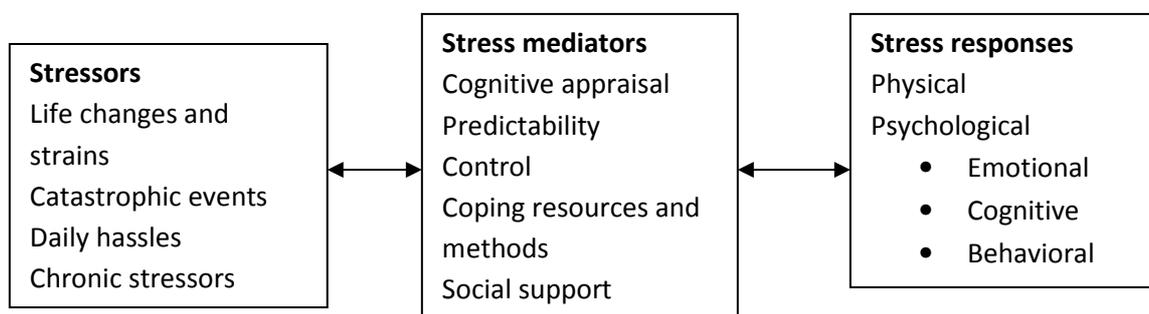
Major behavioral reactions to frustration include \_\_\_\_\_.

Anxiety, threat, or feelings of inadequacy frequently lead to the use of \_\_\_\_\_. Common defense mechanisms include \_\_\_\_\_. Learned helplessness explains some depression and some failures to cope with threat.

A large number of life changes can increase \_\_\_\_\_. However, immediate health is more closely related to the \_\_\_\_\_ or microstressors. Intense or prolonged stress may cause \_\_\_\_\_ problems. \_\_\_\_\_ may be used to combat stress and psychosomatic illnesses. People with Type A personalities run a heightened risk of \_\_\_\_\_. People with hardy personality traits are \_\_\_\_\_. The body reacts to stress in a pattern called the \_\_\_\_\_ (G.A.S.). In addition, stress may weaken the \_\_\_\_\_, which leads to greater susceptibility to disease.

A number of coping skills can be applied to manage stress. Most focus on \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_. Many people could learn to \_\_\_\_\_  
 more effectively than they typically do.

Why are some people more strongly affected by stressors than other people, or more affected on one occasion than another? The answer appears to lie in \_\_\_\_\_ that influence the relationship between people and their environments. Mediating factors include (1) the extent to which people can \_\_\_\_\_ their stressors, (2) how they \_\_\_\_\_ involved, (3) the \_\_\_\_\_ they get, and (4) their \_\_\_\_\_.



#### TEXTS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

Insert the words given below into the gaps in the text:

- |             |                         |                  |                                |          |
|-------------|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|----------|
| contributes | sense of failure        | to be confused   | decline                        | apathy   |
| ultimately  | clusters                | emotional burden | hostile                        | downsize |
| to complain | to prevent and relieve  | detaching        | withdrawing                    | bare     |
| drained     | personal accomplishment | self-esteem      | avoiding                       |          |
| absenteeism | indifferent             | exhaustion       | work quality and work quantity |          |

#### What is Job Burnout?

What is job burnout? If you are employed, you are lucky to have a job. Perhaps, you've heard this, thought it, or both. And it's true. With so many people out of work, it seems almost like biting the hand that feeds you ... about your work conditions and expect your employer to care.

If you're suffering from job burnout – which is not ... with a general aversion to hard work – your work performance, health, and personal life suffer. ..., so does the company that employs you. Both employers and employees need to understand the conditions that lead to burnout, the signs of burnout and what can be done ... this problem that is becoming even more widespread as companies ... and remaining employees take on added responsibility.

Job burnout is not the same as depression, but the two are closely related. Job burnout is the condition that involves different ... of symptoms: emotional ..., depersonalization, reduced ..., physical, medical and psychological problems, increased use of alcohol and drugs, poor ..., a ..., dislike of people, conflicts in relationships, irritability, suspiciousness, paranoia, frustration and ....

Emotional exhaustion is the experience of feeling ... of energy or all used up. When people begin to experience emotional exhaustion they may try to reduce the emotional stress of working with other people by ... from others. They commonly begin to maintain an emotional distance from others.

This detachment can be expressed by an ... attitude toward others. People experiencing job burnout may have ..., critical interactions with others. It is also common for a burned out person to view others as objects or numbers. ... from others is a frequent response.

Another common response to job burnout is for the burned out person to try to reduce his or her workload. This may be done by ... work, ..., doing the ... minimum when at work, not doing certain tasks that are experienced as more stressful and spending more time doing other tasks that are considered less stressful.

These responses often result in a ... in job performance – both ... can suffer. The person experiencing job burnout then feels guilty for the poor work performance. The self-critical attitude that develops further ... to the ... and increases the job burnout.

### **The Antidote for Burnout**

The antidote for burnout is personal power? or a feeling of “I can do”, a belief that you can act to control your work. Here are some paths to personal power and exercises to help you accomplish them.

**Managing stress.** Stress is a normal part of life, and a certain amount of stress is healthy and necessary for motivation. The key to managing your stress is to recognize how stress manifests itself in you and which situations and people trigger your stress responses. This understanding can be used to raise and lower your tension level as needed for optimum personal power.

**Building social support.** “You got to have friends”. A strong support system made up of family, friends, and co-workers provides a buffer against the negative effects of stress. Studies show that people with strong support systems enjoy healthier, longer life.

**Skill building.** Personal power comes from knowing how to arrange learning situations for yourself, which gives you the confidence to handle new challenges. When we start our career, we are not highly skilled, effective workers. In the beginning, we model our work. As time goes on, we begin to rely on our own creativity, instincts, and skills to make the job suit our talents. As you do so, your job satisfaction increases.

**Changing jobs.** Perhaps you or someone you know has left a job because of burnout. The only way changing job works is if you know why the other job led to burnout, what you really need and want in a new job, and if you find the *right* job. Having a clear image of your own best job can help you define the characteristics necessary for you to experience personal power.

**Thinking powerfully.** Powerful thinking equals positive thinking. It also means being able to quiet you mind and concentrate on the task. Being able to focus is like living on a neat, orderly environment as opposed to one that is chaotic. You operate much more effectively in a calm atmosphere.

Focusing on the situation at hand, taking what steps you can to make it better, and letting go of the things you can't control make for a healthier life.

### **QUIZ**

1. Joe can't decide between the four-wheel drive pickup and the minivan. He loves them both but can only buy one of them. He is experiencing an ... conflict.

- a) approach-approach
- b) avoidance-approach
- c) approach-avoidance
- d) avoidance-avoidance

2. From the given below, choose the names for defense mechanisms:

- a) denial, projection, sleep
- b) regression, rationalization
- c) denial, anger, shyness
- d) regression, inferiority complex

3. People with Type A personalities are:

- a) tender and shy, never able to protect themselves
- b) Ambitious, Aggressive, Analytical
- c) competitive, striving, and frequently angry and hostile; they have a chronic sense of time urgency
- d) nothing of the above

4. Stress reactions are the ..., ..., and ... responses displayed in the face of stressors.

5. Some people are less affected by stressors than other people thanks to mediating factors which in particular include:

- a) catastrophic events
- b) the way people interpret what happens to them and their coping skills
- c) avoidance-approach and avoidance-avoidance reactions
- d) all of the above