Stress is a non-specific response of the body to a demand. Researchers define stress as physical, mental or emotional response to events that cause bodily or mental tension. Stress arises when individuals perceive that they can adequately cope with the stressors being made on them or with threats made to their well being. For instance, for a teacher, stress is “the experience by teacher of unpleasant, negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, tension, frustration or depression, resulting from some aspect of their work as a teacher”. It is important to understand that while stress is necessary and positive, it can be negative and harmful. Whether positive or negative, physical or mental, the body’s reaction to stress can be described by three stages: Alarm Reaction Stage - The body identifies and first reacts to the stressors. In this stage, the body releases hormones that help in the defence against the stressor. Resistance Stage - The body continues to fight the stressors as they persist. If the stressors continue and there is a consistent state of resistance, there is potential to move into the third and final stage. Exhaustion Stage - The body and mind are no longer able to make the necessary adjustments to resist the stressors and there is physical and/or mental exhaustion.

The focus of the article is on negative physical and mental stress and specifically reviews the perennial stressors that push a person into the third stage and ultimately to exhaustion.

Why Stress in Youth?

Sources of Stress

We can experience stress from four basic sources like, environment, family-related stressors, Workplace Stressors, physiological reasons. Our thoughts also play a role in causing stress. The environment can bombard us with intense and competing demands to adjust.

Examples of Environmental Stressors include weather, noise, crowding, pollution, traffic, unsafe and substandard housing, and crime.

Family-related stressors include, family separations (due to work relocations or other reasons), relationship conflict, disagreements, demands for your time and attention, loss of a loved one, illness or death of a family member, parenting or child care challenges.

Workplace Stressors are conflict among co-workers, unexpected/unwanted transfer of work location, lack of mobility/transport for high risk patients at the healthcare facility, arguments with the supervisor, lack of support from supervisor, no forum to express work concerns and issues and lack of resources to support the provision of care.

Physiological stressors are situations and circumstances that affect our body. Examples of physiological stressors include rapid growth of adolescence, menopause, illness, aging, giving birth, accidents, lack of exercise, poor nutrition, and sleep disturbances.

Thoughts: Our brain interprets and perceives situations as either advantageous, difficult, painful or pleasant. Some situations in life are stress provoking, but it is our thoughts that determine whether they are a problem for us or not.

Causes of Stress

Stress is a psychological and physiological response to events that upset our personal balance. The potential causes of stress are numerous. These may be linked to outside factors such as the state of the world, environment in which one lives or works or the family. It may come from our current mental or emotional attitude or feeling or unrealistic expectation. The causes of stress are highly individualistic. A range of physical to emotional factors cause stress. These include threat, fear, uncertainty, life causes, frustrations, conflicts, pressures, environment, fatigue and overwork.

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Prolonged unhealthy stress has many physiological effects. These include increased heart rate, blood pressure, muscle tension, and decreased sex drive and heart palpitations. Emotional symptoms include memory problems, poor judgment and lack of concentration, increased irritability, difficulty in taking decisions, confusion, and anxiety. Stress can stem from expectations of others or demands placed on one. Pressure to perform well in exams, increased responsibilities, financial crisis, environment and crowd, pressure of work/family that cause stress.

Stress is a natural response to danger in the environment, poor judgment and lack of concentration. Stress can be beneficial to an individual. But there are some common symptoms of stress, difficulty in taking decision, confusion, poor judgment and lack of concentration, problems, poor judgment and lack of concentration, sleep disturbance, fatigue, high blood pressure, heartburn, shortness of breath, vomiting. Stress can even trigger an asthma attack.

Involuntary Symptoms are memory problems, difficulty in taking decisions, confusion, and lack of concentration. Emotional Symptoms are becoming more or less, irritation, guilt, being upset, problems, anger or shortness of breath, decreased sex drive and heart palpitations. Emotional symptoms include memory problems, poor judgment and lack of concentration, increased irritability, difficulty in taking decisions, confusion, and anxiety. Stress can stem from expectations of others or demands placed on one. Pressure to perform well in exams, increased responsibilities, financial crisis, environment and crowd, pressure of work/family that cause stress.

Symptoms of Stress

Every one reacts to stress differently. But we all have the same stress response. One may go through uncontrollably, breathing heavily, pressure in the chest, a change in diet, and an increase in blood pressure. One's volume. Stress can even trigger an asthma attack.

The stress response is the body's fight-or-flight response. It is a natural response to danger in the environment. This response can be beneficial to an individual. But there are some common symptoms of stress, difficulty in taking decision, confusion, poor judgment and lack of concentration, problems, poor judgment and lack of concentration, sleep disturbance, fatigue, high blood pressure, heartburn, shortness of breath, vomiting. Stress can even trigger an asthma attack.

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