STRESS & COPING

Stress and Coping

Unpleasant state of arousal

coping ability ≤ problems of life
Top 5 Stressors for College Students

• Concern over meeting high standards
• Being lonely
• Fear of wasting time
• Troubling thoughts about the future
• Not getting enough sleep

Types of Stressors

Major life events

Everyday hassles
Stress and Coping

Potential Stressor:

- Something new
- Something different

Stress and Coping Model
Lazarus & Folkman (1984)

Stage 1: Primary Appraisal

Is potential stressor a threat or challenge?

- No
  - Feel no stress
- Yes
  - Go to Stage 2
Stress and Coping Model
Lazarus & Folkman (1984)

Stage 2: Secondary Appraisal

Can I cope with the stressor?

Yes
Feel No Stress

No
Feel Stress

What Makes an Event Stressful?

Positive vs. Negative

Negative events more stressful

• Lower self-esteem
• Create more problems than they solve
What Makes an Event Stressful?

Negative vs. positive
Predictable vs. unpredictable

Unpredictable events more stressful

What Makes an Event Stressful?

Negative vs. positive
Predictable vs. unpredictable

Timing

Content
What Makes an Event Stressful?

Negative vs. positive
Predictable vs. unpredictable
Controllable vs. uncontrollable

Uncontrollable events more stressful

Yoked Shock Study
Staub et al., (1971)

Participant 1
Participant 2

In control
Yoked

Better able to tolerate shock
Perceived Control Shock Study
Geer, Davison, & Gatchel (1970)

Phase 1
Feel shock → Press Switch

Perceived Control Shock Study
Geer et al., (1970)

Phase 2
Perceived Control → No Control

Lower Skin Conductance
Ways of Coping

Psychological

Reframe event

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Ways of Coping

Psychological

Social support

Get help

Instrumental Support: Providing labor, materials, or a direct service to another (e.g., lending $, giving somebody a ride).

Informational Support: Providing information that helps another act and make decisions (e.g., giving another person directions, medical information, etc.).

Appraisal Support: Providing useful, accurate feedback about another's performance/behavior (e.g., feedback from a coach).

Emotional Support: Reassuring another, providing comfort, expressing concern, love (e.g., a shoulder to lean on).
Ways of Coping

Psychological

Social support

Biological

Eat right
Sleep right
Exercise
Meditate

Biological Coping Study (Brown, 1991)

Low Stress
Fit → Few Illnesses
Not Fit → Few Illnesses

High Stress
Fit → Few Illnesses
Not Fit → Many Illnesses