STRESS & 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 Model

Lazarus & Folkman (1984)

Stage 1: Primary Appraisal
Is potential stressor a threat or challenge?

No
Feel no stress

Yes
Go to Stage 2

Potential Stressor:
Something new
Something different
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 No Control

Geer et al., (1970)

Phase 2
Lower Skin Conductance

Ways of Coping
Psychological
Reframe event

Social support
Get help

Biological Coping Study
(Brown, 1991)

Low Stress
High Stress

Eat right
Sleep right
Exercise
Meditate

Low Fit
Low Not Fit

Few Illnesses
Many Illnesses

Low Fit
Low Not Fit

Few Illnesses
Many Illnesses

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 set 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).