

CH12: Stress and Health

Stress: Some basic concepts

- stress: the process by which we perceive and respond to certain events, called stressors, that we appraise as threatening or challenging
- when short-lived or perceived as challenges, stressors can have positive effects. A momentary stress can mobilize the immune system for fending off infections and healing wounds. Stress also arouses and motivates us to conquer problems
- extreme or prolonged stress can harm us
- Stress appraisal: stressful event= threat=stressed to distraction OR =challenge=aroused, focused

Stressors- Things that push our buttons

- stressors fall into three main types: catastrophes, significant life changes, and daily hassles
- Catastrophes: unpredictable large-scale events. For those who respond to catastrophes by relocating to another country, the stress is twofold. Experience culture shock and deteriorating well-being
- Significant life changes
- Daily hassles: prolonged stress takes a toll on our cardiovascular system

The Stress Response System

- Walter Cannon confirmed that the stress response is part of a unified mind-body system.
- Extreme cold, lack of oxygen, and emotion-arousing events all trigger an outpouring of the stress hormones epinephrine and norepinephrine from the core of the adrenal glands
- nervous system increases heart rate and respiration, diverts blood from digestion to the skeletal muscles, dulls feelings of pain, and releases sugar and fat from the body's stores
- the outer part of the adrenal glands secrete glucocorticoid stress hormones such as cortisol
- Selye proposed that the body's adaptive response to stress is so general that, it sounds no matter what intrudes.
- He named it the general adaptation syndrome: Alarm, resistance, exhaustion
- Alarm: heart rate increases. Blood is diverted to your skeletal muscles. Feel faintness of shock.
- Resistance: temperature, blood, pressure, and respiration remain high. Your adrenal glands pump hormones into your bloodstream
- Exhaustion: you become more vulnerable to illness or even, collapse and death.
- Shortening of telomeres, pieces of DNA at the end of chromosomes
- Severe stress seems to age people
- Other options for dealing with stress...loved one's death: Withdraw, pull back, conserve energy. They become paralyzed by fear. Men turn to alcohol, and become aggressive. Women respond by nurturing, and banding together. TEND AND BEFRIEND
- Oxytocin: stress-moderating hormone associated with pair-bonding in animals and released by cuddling, massage, and breast-feeding

Stress and Illness

- Psychophysiological illnesses: : "mind-body" illness; any stress-related physical illness, such as hypertension and some headaches
- Psychoneuroimmunology: The study of how psychological, neural, and endocrine processes together affect the immune system and resulting health
- lymphocytes: the two types of white blood cells that are part of the body's immune system: B lymphocytes form in the bone marrow and release antibodies that fight bacterial infections; T lymphocytes form in the thymus and other lymphatic tissue and attack cancer cells, viruses, and foreign substances
- Natural killer cells pursue diseased cells
- may attack the body's own tissue, causing some forms of arthritis or and allergic reaction. May allow dormant herpes virus to erupt or cancer cells to multiply
- Experiment on monkeys: 1. surgical wounds heal more slowly in stressed people. 2. Stressed people are more vulnerable to colds
- Stress creates competing energy need. Your stress responses divert energy from your disease-fighting immune system and send it to your muscles and brain

Stress and AIDS

- Stress and negative emotions speed the transition from HIV infection to AIDS in someone already affected. Stress predicts a faster decline in those with AIDS. Efforts to reduce stress help control the disease.

Stress and Cancer

- increased risk for cancer within a year after experiencing depression, helplessness or bereavement
- May affect growth

Stress and heart disease

- Stress is linked to coronary heart disease: the clogging of the vessels that nourish the heart muscle; the leading cause of death in many developed countries
- Freidman & Rosenman did study on tax accountants and found..
- Type A: competitive, hard-driving, impatient, verbally aggressive, and anger-prone people
- Type B: easygoing, relaxed people
- Nine years later they found that 257 men suffered heart attacks, and 69% of them were Type A
- Depression can be lethal
- Heart disease and depression may both result when chronic stress triggers persistent inflammation

Promoting Health

Coping With Stress

- problem-focused coping: attempting to alleviate stress directly- by changing the stressor or the way we interact with that stressor
- Emotion-focused coping: attempting to alleviate stress by avoiding or ignoring a stressor and attending to emotional needs related to one's stress reaction

Stress control

- perceiving a loss of control we become more vulnerable to ill health
- link between economic status and longevity

Optimism and health

- Pessimists expect things to go badly. Optimists expect best. Optimists tend to have more control, to cope better with stressful events, and to enjoy better health

Social Support

- feeling liked and encouraged by intimate friends and family.
- Social support calms us and reduces blood pressure and stress hormones
- Social support fosters stronger immune functioning
- close relationships give us an opportunity for "open heart therapy" a change to confide painful feelings

Reducing Stress

Aerobic Exercise

- sustained exercise that increases heart and lung fitness; may also alleviate depression and anxiety
- some studies indicate that not only is exercise as effective as drugs, it better prevents symptom recurrence. Exercise increases arousal

Relaxation and Meditation

- biofeedback ... relaxation response

Faith Communities and health

- faith factor: religiously active people tend to live longer than those who are not religiously active
- religious involvement is a predictor of health and longevity
- religion promotes self-control

CH13: Personality

Psychodynamic theories

- view personality with a focus on unconscious and the importance of childhood experiences

Freud`s Psychoanalytic perspective: Exploring the unconscious

-led to the discovery of the unconscious:

-free association: in psychoanalysis, a method of exploring the unconscious in which the person relaxes and says whatever comes to mind, no matter how trivial or embarrassing

-psychoanalysis: Freud`s theory of personality that attributes thoughts and actions to unconscious motives and conflicts; the techniques used in treating psychological disorders by seeking to expose and interpret unconscious tensions

-unconscious: according to Freud, a reservoir of mostly unacceptable thoughts, wishes, feelings, and memories. According to contemporary psychologists, information processing of which we are unaware.

-the mass of unacceptable passions and thoughts that he believed we repress, because they would be too unsettling to acknowledge.

The remembered content of dreams he believed to be a censored expression of the dreamer`s unconscious wishes

Personality Structure

-Freud: human personality arises from a conflict between impulse and restraint. Our efforts to resolve this basic conflict- to express these impulses in ways that bring satisfaction without also bringing guilt or punishment

-Id: a reservoir of unconscious psychic energy that strives to satisfy basic sexual and aggressive drives. The id operates on the pleasure principle, demanding immediate gratification

-Ego: the largely conscious executive part of personality that, mediates among the demands of the id, superego, and reality. The ego operates on the reality principle, satisfying the id`s desires in ways that will realistically bring pleasure rather than pain

-Superego: the part of the personality that, represents internalized ideals and provides standards for judgment (the conscious) and for future aspirations. Focuses on how we ought to behave.

Age 4,5

Personality Development

-Psychosexual stages: the childhood stages of development (oral, anal phallic, latency, genital) during which, the id`s pleasure seeking energies focus on distinct erogenous zones.

-Oral (0-18 months): Pleasure centers on the mouth- sucking, biting, chewing.

-Anal (18-36 months): Pleasure focuses on bowel and bladder elimination; coping with demands for control

-Phallic (3-6 years): Pleasure zone is the genitals; coping with incestuous sexual feelings

-Latency (6-puberty): A phase of dormant sexual feelings

-Genital (puberty on): Maturation of sexual interests

-Identification: the process by which, children incorporate their parents` values into their developing superegos

- gender identity and childhood relationships influence our identity
- fixation: a lingering focus of pleasure-seeking energies at an earlier psychosexual stage, in which conflicts were unresolved

Defense mechanisms

- defense mechanism: in psychoanalytic theory, the ego's protective methods of reducing anxiety by unconsciously distorting reality
- all defense mechanisms function indirectly and unconsciously
- repression: the basic defense mechanism that banishes anxiety-arousing thoughts, feelings, and memories from consciousness

The Neo-Freudian and Psychodynamic Theorists

- placed more emphasis on the conscious mind's role in interpreting experience and in coping with the environment
- they doubted that sex and aggression were all consuming motivations
- tend to emphasize loftier motives and social interactions
- Alfred Adler and Karen Horney: believed that childhood social tensions are crucial for personality formation
- believed that our behavior is driven by efforts to conquer childhood inferiority feelings that trigger our strivings for superiority and power. Childhood anxiety triggers our desire for love and security
- Carl Jung: Collective unconscious: concept of a shared, inherited reservoir of memory traces from our species' history

Assessing unconscious processes

- Projective test: a personality test, such as the Rorschach, that provides ambiguous stimuli designed to trigger projection of one's inner dynamics
- Rorschach inkblot test: the most widely used projective test, a set of 10 inkblots, designed by Hermann Rorschach; seeks to identify people's inner feelings by analyzing their interpretations of the blots

Evaluating Freud's Psychoanalytic perspective and modern views of the unconscious

Modern Research contradicts many of Freud's ideas

- see our development as lifelong not fixed in childhood
- infants neural networks are mature enough to sustain as much emotional trauma as Freud assumed
- doubt that conscience and gender identity form as the child resolves the Oedipus complex age at 5
- believe might have created false memories of abuse

- find little support for Freud's idea that defense mechanisms disguise sexual and aggressive impulses
- failed to support that suppressed sexuality causes psychological disorders
- most serious problem: it offers after-the-fact explanations of any characteristic yet fails to predict such behaviors and traits

Modern research challenges the idea of repression

- assumption that the human mind often represses offending wishes, banishing them into the unconscious until they resurface
- agree that we sometimes spare our egos by neglecting threatening information
- do believe that extreme prolonged stress, might disrupt memory by damaging the hippocampus
- high stress and associated stress hormones enhance memory

The modern unconscious mind

- our lives are guided by off-screen, out-of-sight, unconscious information processing
- today's researchers call the false consensus effect, the tendency to overestimate the extent to which others share our beliefs and behaviours
- Baumeister concluded that defense mechanisms are motivated less by the seething impulses that Freud presumed than by our need to protect our self-image
- history has supported that Freud's idea that we unconsciously defend ourselves against anxiety
- Terror-management theory: a theory of death-related anxiety; explores people's emotional and behavioral responses to reminders of their impending death

Humanistic Theories

- view personality with a focus on the potential for healthy personal growth

Abraham Maslow's Self-actualizing Person

- Self-actualization: according to Maslow, one of the ultimate psychological needs that arises after basic physical and psychological needs are met and self-esteem is achieved; the motivation to fulfill one's potential
- studied Abraham Lincoln, who were self-aware, and self-accepting, open and spontaneous, loving and caring, and not paralyzed by others opinions. Their problems were problem-centered

Carl Rogers' Person-centered perspective

- believed that people are good unless thwarted by an environment that inhibits growth
- believed that a growth promoting climate required three conditions:
 - Genuineness: open with their feelings, self-disclosing
 - Acceptance: unconditional positive regard: attitude of total acceptance toward another person
 - Empathy: share and mirror other's feelings and reflect their meanings
- self-concept: all our thoughts and feelings about ourselves, in answer to the question, who am I

Assessing the self

- fill out questionnaires
- Rogers: describe themselves both as they would ideally like to be and as they actually are, when they were nearly alike, self-concept is positive

Evaluating Humanistic Theories

- concepts are vague and subjective
- merely a description of the theorist's own values and ideals ...
- those who focus beyond themselves who are most likely to experience social support, to enjoy life, and to cope effectively with stress
- naïve, fails to appreciate the reality of our human capacity for evil

Trait Theories

- Gordon Allport: describe personality in terms of traits
- trait: a characteristic pattern of behavior or a disposition to feel and act, as assessed by self-report inventories and peer reports
- concerned less with explaining individual traits than with describing them
- Isabel Briggs Myers: sort people in terms of Carl Jung's personality types: Myers briggs type indicator MBTI
- feeling types, sympathetic appreciative and tactful, thinking types...prefer an objective standard truth

Exploring Traits

Factor Analysis

- identify clusters of test items that tap basic components of intelligence
- extraversion- introversion and emotional stability- instability

Biology and personality

- Personality inventory: a questionnaire, on which people respond to items designed to gauge a wide range of feelings and behaviors; used to assess selected personality traits
- Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI): personality test. Originally developed to identify emotional disorders. this test is now used for many other screening purposes
- MMPI items were empirically derived: test developed by testing a pool of items and then selecting those that discriminate between groups

The big five factors

- Conscientiousness, agreeableness, neuroticism, openness, extraversion
- How stable are these traits? stable

- How heritable are they? 50%
- Do the big five traits predict other behavioral attributes? Yes

Evaluating trait theories

The person-situation controversy

- with age, personality traits become more stable, as reflected in the stronger correlation of trait scores
- further from being able to predict how you will feel and act tomorrow
- Genetically influenced personality traits according to Samuel Gosling:
 - music preferences, dorm rooms and offices, personal websites, e-mail

Social-cognitive Theories

- social-cognitive perspective: views behavior as influenced by the interaction between people's traits and their social context
- believe we learn our behaviors either through conditioning or by observing and imitating others
- us vs. environment

Reciprocal influences

- reciprocal determinism: the interacting influences of behavior, internal cognition, and environment
- three ways which individuals and environments react:
 - 1. Different people choose different environments
 - 2. Our personalities shape how we interpret and react to events
 - 3. Our personalities help create situations to which we react

Personal Control

- the extent to which we perceive control over our environment
- two basic ways to study: 1) correlate people's feels of control with their behaviors and achievements 2) experiment by raising or lowering people's sense of control and noting effects

Internal vs. External Locus of Control

- Julian Rotter: External locus of control: the perception that chance or outside forces beyond our personal control determine our fate
- Internal locus of control: the perception that you control your own fate

Depleting and strengthening self-control

- Self-control: the ability to control impulses and delay short-term gratification for greater long-term rewards
- exercising will power temporarily depletes the mental energy needed for self-control

Learned helplessness vs. Personal control

-Learned helplessness: the hopelessness and passive resignation an animal or human learns when unable to avoid repeated aversive events

Optimism vs. Pessimism

-Mere fantasies do not fuel motivation and success. Realistic positive expectations do

-Excessive optimism: realistic anxiety over possible future failures can fuel energetic efforts to avoid the dreaded fate. Success requires enough optimism to provide hope and enough pessimism to prevent complacency. If overconfident, more likely to expose ourselves to temptations and fail.

-Blindness to one's own incompetence: people often are overconfident when most incompetent. Unaware of what we don't hear. Thinking we're good at something drives how we perceive ourselves doing

Assessing behavior in situations

-Persons past behavior patterns in similar situations

-create an assessment situation that simulates the task so you can see how the person handles it

Evaluating social-cognitive theories

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Exploring the self

-self: in contemporary psychology, assumed to be the center of personality, the organizer of our thoughts, feelings, and actions

-Hazel Markus: possible selves include your visions of the self you dream of becoming & fear

-Thomas Gilovich: Spotlight effect: overestimating others' noticing and evaluating our appearance, performance, and blunders

The benefits of self-esteem

-Self-esteem: one's feeling of high or low self-worth

-those who are negative about themselves also tend to be oversensitive and judgmental

Self-Serving Bias

-Carl Rogers: humanity's problems arise from excessive self-love or pride

-Self-serving bias: a readiness to perceive oneself favorably

-People accept more responsibility for good deeds than for bad, and for successes than for failures

-most people see themselves as better than average

-people even see themselves as more immune than others to self-serving bias

-Jean Twenge: Generation Me: Narcissism: excessive self-love and self-absorption

Psychological disorders

Perspectives on psychological disorders

Defining psychological disorders

- psychological disorders: deviant, distressful, and dysfunctional patterns of thoughts, feelings, or behaviors
- may vary by context and by culture
- attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder: a psychological disorder marked by the appearance by age 7 of one or more of three key symptoms: extreme inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity

Understanding psychological disorders

The medical model

- Philippe Pinel: madness is not demon possession but a sickness of the mind caused by severe stresses and inhumane conditions
- medical model: the concept that diseases, have physical causes that can be diagnosed, treated, and cured, often through treatment in a hospital

The Biopsychosocial Approach

- all behavior arises from the interaction of nature and nurture
- links between specific disorders and culture
- Western culture: anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa
- Malaysia: amok=sudden outburst of violent behavior
- Latin America: Susto= severe anxiety, restlessness, and a fear of black magic
- Japan: Taijinkyofusho= social anxiety
- Depression and schizophrenia occur world wide
- negative emotions contribute to physical illness and physical abnormalities contribute to negative emotions

Classifying Psychological disorders

- classification creates order
- classification orders and describes symptoms
- Schizophrenia classification: person talks incoherently, hallucinates or has delusions, shows little or inappropriate emotion, socially withdrawn
- DSM-IV-TR: The American psychiatric association`s diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders. Fourth edition, with an updated "text revision"; a widely used system for classifying psychological disorders
- financially necessary...need it before therapy
- defines a diagnostic process and 16 clinical syndromes, describes disorders, including psychotic disorders

Labeling psychological disorders

- too often people with disorders are portrayed as objects of humor or ridicule, freaks, homicidal maniacs
- in real life, people with disorders are more likely to be the victims of violence than the perpetrators
- not only can labels bias perceptions, they can change reality

Anxiety disorders

- psychological disorders characterized by distressing, persistent anxiety or maladaptive behaviors that reduce anxiety

Generalized Anxiety disorder

- Generalized anxiety disorder: which a person is continually tense, apprehensive, and in a state of autonomic nervous system arousal

Panic Disorder

- marked by unpredictable, minutes-long episodes of intense dread in which a person experiences terror and accompanying chest pain, choking, or other frightening sensations

Phobias

- marked by a persistent, irrational fear and avoidance of a specific object, activity, or situation
- specific phobias may focus on animals, insects, heights, blood or close spaces
- social phobia is shyness taken to an extreme
- agoraphobia is the fear or avoidance of situations in which escape might be difficult or help unavailable when panic strikes

Obsessive-compulsive disorder

- characterized by unwanted repetitive thoughts (obsessions) and/or actions (compulsions)
- common amongst teens and adults

Post-Traumatic Stress disorder

- characterized by haunting memories, nightmares, social withdrawal, jumpy anxiety, insomnia that lingers for four weeks or more after a traumatic experience
- the greater one's emotional distress during a trauma, the higher the risk for PTSD
- impressive survivor resiliency of those who do not develop PTSD
- sensitive limbic system increases vulnerability
- PTSD patients suffering memory flashbacks have right temporal lobe activation

-Richard Tedeschi and Lawrence Calhoun: Post-traumatic stress growth: positive psychological changes as a result of struggling with extremely challenging circumstances and life crises

Understanding Anxiety Disorders

The learning Perspective

- Fear conditioning: first stimulus generalization, then reinforcement
- Observational learning: learn fears by observing others
- Cognition: our interpretations and irrational beliefs also make for anxiety. Hypervigilant.

The biological perspective

- Natural selection: spiders, snakes, and other animals
- Genes: some studies point to an anxiety gene that affects brain levels of serotonin, a neurotransmitter that influences sleep and mood. Too much glutamate can over activate the brain's alarm centers
- The Brain: over arousal of brain areas involved in impulse, control and habitual behavior. Anterior cingulate cortex, brain region that monitors our actions and checks for errors, seems especially likely to be hyperactive in those with OCD. Can create fear circuits within the amygdala.

Mood disorders

-characterized by emotional extremes. Two forms: Major depressive disorder & bipolar disorder

Major Depressive disorder

- "common cold"
- often response to past and current loss
- biologically speaking, life's purpose is not happiness but survival and reproduction
- MDD: a mood disorder in which a person experiences, in the absence of drugs or another medical condition, two or more weeks of significantly depressed moods or diminished interest or pleasure in most activities, along with at least four other symptoms

Bipolar disorder

- mania: a mood disorder marked by a hyperactive, wildly optimistic state
- bipolar: in which a person alternated between the hopelessness and lethargy of depression and the overexcited state of mania
- during the manic phase, people are typically over talkative, overactive and elated

Understand mood disorders

- Peter Lewinsohn:
- Many behavioral and cognitive changes accompany depression

- depression is widespread
- Women`s risk of major depression is nearly double men`s
- stressful events related to work, marriage, and close relationships often precede depression
- with each new generation, depression is striking earlier, and affecting more people, with the highest rates in developed countries among young adults

The biological perspective

- heritability of major depression at 37 percent
- The depressed brain: diminished brain activity slowed-down depressive states, and more activity during periods of mania. The left frontal lobe and an adjacent brain reward center are active during positive emotions. Studies show that hippocampus, the memory-processing center linked with the brain`s emotional circuitry, is vulnerable to stress-related damage. Found decreased axonal white matter or enlarged fluid-filled ventricles in the brain. Norepinephrine is scarce during depression and overabundant during mania. Repetitive physical exercise reduces depression as it increases serotonin. Excessive alcohol use also correlates with depression.

The social-cognitive perspective

- self-defeating beliefs and negative explanatory style feed depression`s vicious cycle.
- Negative thoughts and negative moods interact
- depression`s vicious cycle: stressful experience -> negative explanatory style-> depressed mood -> cognitive and behavioral changes

Schizophrenia

Symptoms

- schizophrenia: group of severe disorders characterized by disorganized and delusional thinking, disturbed perceptions, and inappropriate emotions and behaviors
- psychosis: which a person loses contact with reality, experiencing irrational ideas and distorted perceptions

Disorganized thinking

- delusions: false beliefs, often of persecution or grandeur, that may accompany psychotic disorders
- paranoid tendencies, word salad, selective attention

Disturbed Perceptions

- Hallucinations: sensory experiences without sensory stimulation

Inappropriate emotions and actions

- flat affect: emotionless
- difficulty perceiving facial emotions and reading others` states of mind
- motor behavior may also be inappropriate
- catatonia: remain motionless for hours and then become agitated

Onset and Development of Schizophrenia

- negative symptoms: have toneless voices, expressionless faces, or mute and rigid bodies.
- positive symptoms: presence of inappropriate behaviors, and negative symptoms are the absence of appropriate behaviors

Understanding Schizophrenia

Brain Abnormalities

- Dopamine over activity: hallucinations and paranoia
- Abnormal brain activity and anatomy: abnormally low brain activity in the frontal lobes. Decline in the brain waves that reflect synchronized neural firing in the frontal lobes. Vigorously active in several core regions, such as thalamus. Increased activity in the amygdala. Shrinkage and thinning of cerebral tissue. Smaller than normal area is the cortex and corpus thalamus.
- Maternal virus during midpregnancy: people are at increased risk of schizo if during the middle of their fetal development, their country experienced a flue epidemic. People born in densely populated areas, where viral diseases spread more readily, at greater risk for schizo. Those born during the winter and spring months are at increased risk. Mothers who report being sick with influenza during pregnancy more likely to bear children who develop schizo.

Genetic factors

- fetal-virus infections do appear to increase the odds
- 6 in 10 if share placenta, if not then 1 in 10
- production of myelin: coats the axons of nerve cells and lets impulses travel at high speed through neural networks

Psychological factors

- no environmental causes

Other disorders

- dissociative disorders: which conscious awareness becomes separated from previous memories, thoughts, and feelings

Dissociative identity disorder DID

- rare disorder in which a person exhibits two or more distinct and alternating personalities

Eating disorders

- anorexia nervosa: which a person maintains a starvation diet despite being significantly underweight
- Bulimia nervosa: person alternated binge eating with purging or fasting
- Binge-eating disorder: significant binge-eating episodes, followed by distress, disgust, or guilt, but without the compensatory purging or fasting that marks bulimia nervosa

Personality disorders

- psychological disorders characterized by inflexible and enduring behavior patterns that impair social functioning
- avoidant personality disorder
- schizoid personality disorder
- histrionic personality disorder
- narcissistic personality disorder

Antisocial Personality disorder

- which a person exhibits a lack of conscience for wrongdoing, even toward friends and family member.
May be aggressive and ruthless or a clever con artist
- feel and fear little