

STRESS MANAGEMENT SKILLS WORKSHOP

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Outline

1. Introduction & Your expectations
2. Stress: definition, causes, psychosomatic symptoms
3. Stress & Me
4. Myths and reality
5. Self-reflection
 - Perceived stress
 - Interrelation among thoughts, body, emotions & behavior
 - Stress management strategies and techniques
 - Difficulties and challenges in managing stress
6. Exposure and relaxation techniques. Problem Solving
7. Conclusions and suggestions
8. Questions

What is stress?



What is stress?

- Physical and/or psychological

- Injuries or loss, criticism

- Absolute stress vs. relative stress

- earthquake vs. exam

- Acute stress vs. chronic stress

- Accident vs. cancer

- Distress vs. eustress

- Late for final exam vs. honor award



MYTHS AND REALITY

Stress is always negative emotion.

“Stress is killing me”.

Stress is studied in psychology only.

We should remove stress from our life.

If I avoid stress, it would be less complicated!

What stresses me out?

- Write down 3 different situations starting from more stressful ones
- Mention causes
- Identify your thoughts, emotions, body reactions, and behavior

| Situation Who? What? How? Where? | Emotions | Automatic thoughts | Body reaction | Behavior |
|---|-----------------|--|---|-------------------------------|
| car accident | worry, anger | “he is the worst driver” “I will have problems” | dizziness, shortness of breath Heart biting | aggressive or avoidance |
| | | | | |

Let's look at them 😊

Identify your cognitive distortions

| | Cognition | Example |
|----|-----------------------------|---|
| 1 | “All or nothing” | Categorizing in the extremes: white or black, good or bad |
| 2 | Overgeneralization | Believing that if something happens once it will happen always |
| 3 | The filter | Pick at a small negative detail of the situation which influences person’s perception of the whole situation. |
| 4 | Rejection of the positive | Transforming neutral or positive experience into negative one. |
| 5 | Thought reading | Deciding that someone has a negative attitude towards us without validating. |
| 6 | Prediction error | Tendency to foresee the worst and convince oneself that predictions are confirmed by facts (even if there is a small chance) |
| 7 | Exaggeration & minimization | Tendency to amplify the importance of own errors or worries, but to diminish the importance of our strong points. |
| 8 | Emotional reasoning | Presuming that sad, gloomy feelings reflect reality. |
| 9 | “I must” & “I should” | Motivation oneself by “I must”, as if you have to fight or punish yourself, to convince yourself to do something (guilty feeling) |
| 10 | Labelling + errors | Labeling yourself (or others) negatively after committing an error. |
| 11 | Personalization | Taking responsibility for an upsetting event without being the cause. |

Identify the relations between emotion, physiology, thoughts, behavior

Emotions

- Sensitivity, worry
- Anxiety
- Irritation
- Sadness
- Anger
- Shame
- Guilt
- Disappointment
- Regret

PHYSIOLOGY

- Pain
- Muscular tension
- Digestive problems
- Sleep or appetite problems
- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue

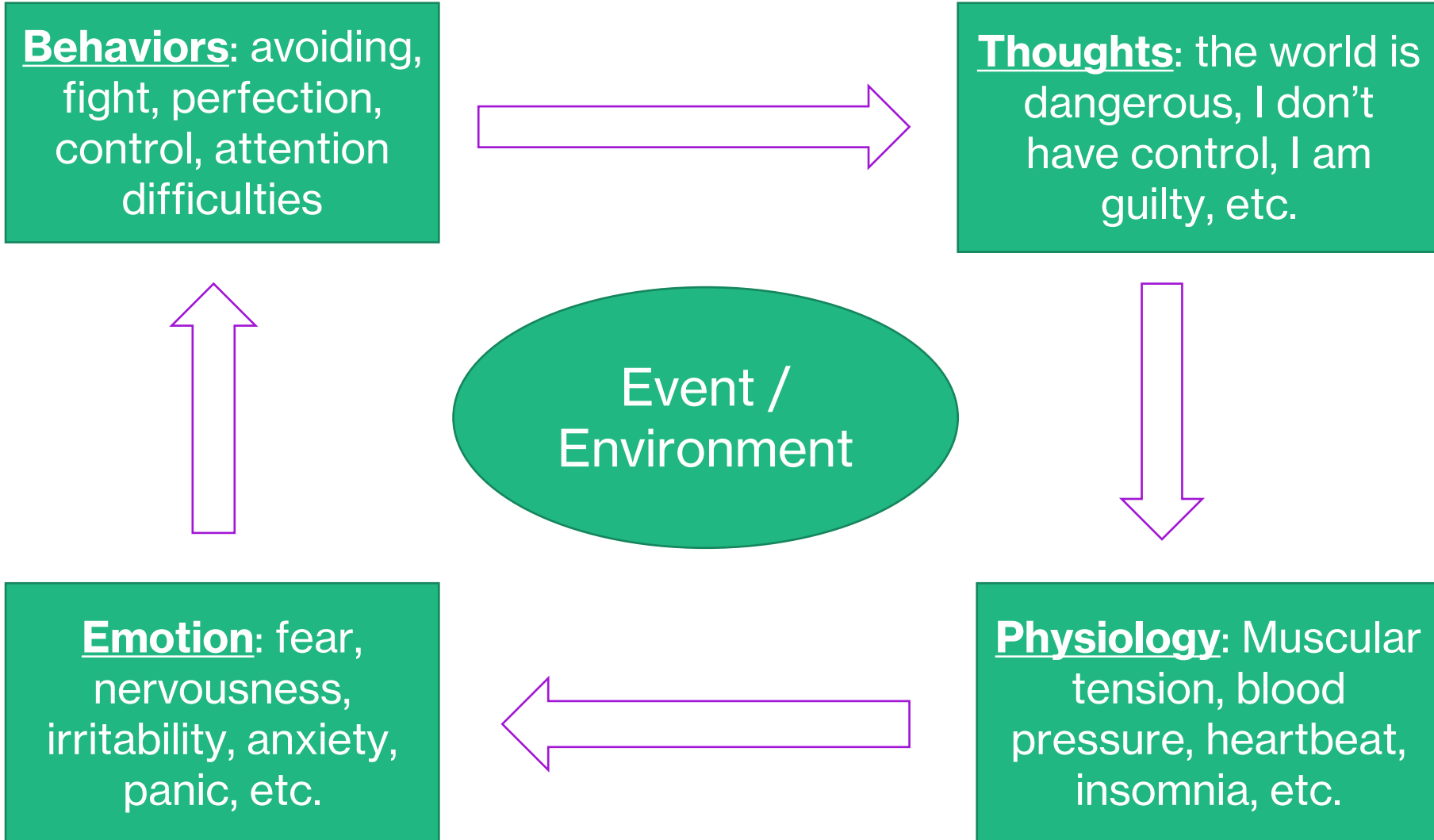
Cognition

- Concentration problems
- Forgetfulness
- Indecisiveness
- Negative perception
- Disorganization

BEHAVIOR

- Aggressive behavior
- Difficulties in relationships
- Absenteeism
- Isolation
- Abuse of mass media
- Increase consumption of caffeine, sugar, Tobacco, chocolate
- Avoiding certain situations

Vicious circle or to sum up



Managing stress strategies

PROACTIVE

- Understanding your stress
- Thought consciousness
- Knowledge of your needs
- Manage your body reactions
- Healthy life style



DYSFUNCTIONAL

- Negation
- Diversion, escape or distance
- Avoidance, fleeing, isolation
- Emotional release (-)

- Reappraisal
- Problem-solving
- Emotion-solving



Clarify your strategy of coping with stress

AVOIDANCE STRATEGIES

- Diversion
- Denial
- Food or smoking abuse
- Venting

PROACTIVE STRATEGIES

- Action prevent stressful situations.
- Emotional & Social support
- Positiveness in various situations.
- Foreseeing the importance of the threat.
- Acceptance of situations that are not under our control.
- Overcoming problem, challenging yourself.

Stress management: difficulties/ challenges

- Group activity

| Difficulties and challenges | Possible solutions |
|---|---|
| "No time" | scheduling 10 min. for relaxation/ music etc. |
| Pretending I am fine/ ignoring a problem | Problem-solving |

STRESS MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES & TECHNIQUES

What can we do to manage our stress effectively?





Stress management

- Relaxation techniques:
 - Music
 - Meditation
 - “Safe place”
 - Negative emotions

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MR57rug8NsM>

— IMPORTANCE OF SELF-REGULATION

- Self-regulation and emotions while experiencing stress
- Self-regulation and physiology while under stress

Things to remember



1. Importance of social support
2. Keeping balance between positivity and negativity
3. Seek professional support if necessary
4. Work on cognition (e.g. accept that there is no solution for some situations)
5. Avoid uncertainty. Take action. Delegate if needed

TO SUMMARIZE

