

STRESS MANAGEMENT -AN ULTIMATE NEED OF THE HOUR TO SUCCEED

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ABSTRACT

Stress is any physical, chemical, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental unrest. It produces a number of symptoms which vary from person to person. Moreover it is a notable fact that an absolute elimination of stress is unrealistic, so it is very important to manage the stress for those undergoing through it. This paper attempts to get an insight into the stress management concept and how far it is important to achieve success in this competent world. It would also explore how stress management skill helps you to excel in your field.

Stress acts as a killer and a life force as well. A minimum amount of stress known as eustress is necessary, whose consequences are helpful or otherwise positive. It is a driving force to do any task efficiently. The paper will further talk about the various other related factors and the strategies employed for stress management.

Key Words: *Eustress, Hyperstress, Hypostress, Neustress, Stress, Stress Management, Stressors.*

INTRODUCTION

Stress is one of the most common things in everyone's life. It can be associated with any moment of life. It is any physical, chemical, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental unrest. It produces a number of symptoms which vary from person to person. Despite stress often being thought of as a subjective experience, levels of stress are readily measurable using various physiological tests and measures can be taken to reduce it. Moreover it is a notable fact that an absolute elimination of stress is unrealistic, so it is very important to manage the stress for those undergoing through it. All this had led to the emergence of concept of "Stress Management", which is now days proved to be a most needed soft skill in such a competent and fast running world.

WHAT IS STRESS?

Stress is experienced when a situation is appraised as exceeding the person's adaptive resources. The word stress has been derived from the Latin word 'stricture' which means strict. The literal meaning of the stress is "distress", oppression, hardship and adversity. The term stress is used to describe the individuals' response towards a force or pressure. It arises from internal or external events of life which may be physiological, psychological, physical, mental, spiritual or behavioral. It can be noted through various characteristics, like heart beat and breath is increased, person feels nervous and depressed, headaches, fatigue, dryness of mouth, person remains confused, develops a negative temperament,

feels lethargic, lack of concentration, forgetfulness, feels apathetic, doubts about the self-ability and being successful etc.

Every situation which requires adjustment whether positive or negative seems to be stressful. **Hans Selye(1980)** has described four variations of stress, each with its own label:-

- **Eustress**- Stress which has a beneficial effect is suggested by Selye as eustress or positive stress. eg- getting a new job.
- **Hyperstress** -When events, including positive ones pile up and stretch than the limits of human adaptability, a situation of excessive or hyper stress arises.
- **Distress** -This kind of stress occurs when there is any event with harmful effects.
- **Hypostress** - Hypostress occurs when an individual is bored or unchallenged. It occurs due to lack of stimulation. Hypostress is the opposite of hyperstress.

Lazarus (1984) has appraised three types of stress appraisals - harmless, threat and challenge.

Pestonjee (1992) has stated similar variations of stress as Selye's variations, namely Neustress, Distress and Eustress.

- **Neustress**- It is a type of stress that is neutral and has no consequential effect.

There are various reasons or causes of stress known as stressors. Stressors are normally thought to be as negative events like work load, injuries, death, divorce, or a rocky relationship etc. However, anything that puts high demands on you or forces you to adjust can be stressful. Stressors can also be some positive events such as going to college, getting married, buying a house or receiving a promotion. Stress is not only caused by external factors but many times it arises from inside.

Eternal sources of stress-Major life changes, relationship difficulties, children and family, financial problems, work or school and being too busy etc.

Internal sources of stress - Chronic worry, Negative self-talk, Pessimism lack of flexibility, All-or-nothing attitude, Unrealistic expectations/Perfectionism, and Rigid thinking etc.

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF STRESS MANAGEMENT

Stress management means, "Building a life of healthy balance". It produces a number of symptoms which vary from person to person. Moreover it is a notable fact that an absolute elimination of stress is unrealistic, so it is very important to manage the stress for those undergoing through it. This ideology of complete non elimination of stress from the lives of the people has given space to the concept of "Stress Management". Individuals, who generally put other's needs before their own, often ignore the stress that affects their performance. In addition, stress means different things to different people. Stress management is the integral part of the various strategies employed by the individual to meet the demands of the complexity of modern life. It holds an important place in the lives of each and every individual, whether it is a working or non-working men, a student, a house hold person or the persons

from different genders. All had to face with the issue of stress management at some or the other, in one or the other way.

STRESS IS A KILLER OR A LIFE FORCE

Stress acts as a killer and a life force as well. Not all stress is bad for you, in fact we all tend to perform better when we are under a short stress burst, where we feel we have control and there is an end in sight. However, prolonged stress especially when the sufferers feels or believes they have no control tends to become a vicious cycle that feeds itself, progressively increasing perceived stress. If directed positively then it proves to be worthy to do a task effectively and sometimes it works otherwise. During the examinations if a student is worried about his studies and takes little stress to make his schedule of study, to collect study material etc., then it is positive and is said to be a driving force for succeeding in his exams. On the other hand if any student takes overload regarding his studies, it will affect his health and mental state as well causing some kind of illness or nervousness then as a result he won't be able to do well in his exams and finally hampering his results.

Similarly if we consider the example of a working individual then we can see that a working person comes across several stressful activities in the office every day. If he takes over stress then he is not able to concentrate on his work and ruins it, on the other hand if he takes little pains to do his work then he can finish the task more efficiently without causing any havoc. Keeping all such factors in mind the stress management skill is of great importance.

STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

As it is observed that there is an immense need to manage the stress by students, working people or any one. We can prevent or manage stress through three basic approaches-

- **Eliminate the stressor** - By confronting the problems that are causing you stress, you sometime can change or eliminate the source.
- **Change your thinking**- At times you cannot eliminate the cause of your stress, but you do have the power to change the interpretation of the situation and the way you think about it.
- **Manage the stress**- Sometimes the best thing you can do is to manage the stress through skills that will help you cope most successfully. When you can't prevent stress relaxation techniques will help you manage the resulting effects of stress.

There are several stress managing techniques discussed ahead.

- **Exercise** - Exercise can be a key, central method to compensate for stressors. Physical exercise not only promotes overall fitness, but it helps you to manage emotional stress and tension as well. Exercise can also aid in relaxation and improve sleep. For one thing, exercise can emotionally remove one temporarily from a stressful environment or situation. Being fit and healthy also increases your ability to deal with stress as it arises.

- **Meditation** - A few minutes of meditation can help a lot in relieving stress. It's very simple. Just sit up straight with both feet on the floor and eyes closed. Focus your attention on reciting out loud or silently - a positive mantra such as "I feel at peace" or "I love myself". Place one hand on your stomach to start and end the mantra with your breaths. Let any distracting thoughts float by like clouds.
- **Yoga**-Yoga is an ancient Indian form of exercise based upon the premise that the body and breathing are connected with the mind. Yoga is beneficial in increasing flexibility and capability for relaxation. The practice of yoga is thought to be over 5,000 years old. One goal of yoga is to restore balance and harmony to the body and emotions through numerous postural and breathing exercises.
- **Socialization** – It is one of the easiest techniques to release stress. The person should share the problem or the issue with friends, family member or someone significant. It will help you to get a fresh perspective while keeping your connection strong. There is ample evidence that satisfying social relationships are crucial for both mental and physical health. Loneliness is more closely related with how many close relationships one has than with mere contact with one's social network members. This suggests that maintaining good relationships with a few close friends may be a key to managing stress and staying healthy.
- **Humor**–Intuitively, a good laugh seems to be a useful aid for fighting of stress, and indeed research suggests that it can help. In 2002, Marry Bennet and her colleagues reported that viewing a humorous video decreased self-reported stress in a group of healthy adult woman. In 2004, a neuro imaging study showed that self-generated happiness or sadness activated the same parts of the brain as real emotions. In addition, imagined laughter was successful at reducing self-reported sadness and imagined crying at reducing self-reported happiness.
- **Positive thinking** – Thinking positively about stressors can help moderate stress. Thinking about positive events in general may also help enhance mood or happiness and lower the levels of stress. When a person keeps a positive attitude regarding something then he is able to move whole heartedly towards it which also adds to his work efficiency.
- **Modifying environment** – This is a kind of projective method to shoo away stress from life. The person should go for a change for some time to avoid the associated harsh memories with the stressor. The person can go for shopping, outing, visit friends or go for a long vacation to get a change. After spending some time away from the stressful situation person gets adjusted to it and starts thinking normally. This is one of the most prevalent stress management techniques.

There are several other techniques as well presented here pictorially



STRESS MANAGEMENT LEADING TO SUCCESS

Stress can be both a boon and a curse. If there is excessive of stress and the person is not able to cope with it which is affecting his efficiency then it is proved to be a curse. Secondly if the same stress exposed to the other person is managed in a proper way then it mostly turns out to be a boon for him and paves a way for his success in the task. It is generally observed that a minimum amount of stress is necessary as a driving force to do any task effectively. Unless a person takes a little stress and thinks before taking up any activity, he is not able to pursue that work properly. But on the other hand access of stress may ruin the whole task badly. Assertiveness is the preferred way to manage stress whenever there is a reasonable possibility of success. Such an approach consists of direct attempts at modifying the stressful situation itself.

As it is well known that in the present era there is a lot of hush and gush in the everyday life of the people. Most of the activities act as the stressor for the people in their offices, homes, and schools etc. from which they need to cope up so as to achieve their task and come out with flying colors in any work they get in. It is generally observed that managing stress for the office men, students, teachers, business men, housewives and everyone in this world has become a matter of immense importance. Without managing with stress, the success of that person can be endangered. When there is any stressful situation hindering the success then there can be modification of environment to reduce the stress.

When it is felt that the situation can't be changed then we should accept that fact and act accordingly. The negative arousal should be converted to the positive energy and used in a constructive manner. Everything that has happened in life is completely unchangeable and the part of the history. Thinking over the past and getting stressed is the biggest waste of time. Looking back at missed opportunities won't recreate them. Feeling guilty over past mistakes doesn't serve you. Rather the whole energy should be directed to achieve the goal without getting despaired.

CONCLUSION

Keeping all such factors in mind the stress management skill is of utmost importance and a real prerequisite to success. Stress focused on a right target produces the right results. If we don't fully understand the importance of stress management then try to think reverse. Imagine yourself not suffering from the negative impact of the stress. Without the negative results of stress in your life, then a person is able to enjoy a more satisfying and stress - free life. Stress management possess various beneficial effects like

- improving the overall health status
- developing a positive attitude and outlook for life in person
- it increases the productivity as the person is able to clearly focus on the task
- the person can better control the emotions and learns how to respond to it

In nutshell it can be said that if you are stressed, do one or all of these things, in whatever order that takes your fancy. The key to de-stressing is getting away from or removing yourself from the stressor. Developing new habits which regularly remove you and distract you from stressors and stressful situations and pressures, is essentially how to manage stress on a more permanent basis.

In this modern world it is difficult if not impossible to change stressful situations. What we can do however is change and reduce our exposure to those stressful situations. These stress reduction ideas and techniques are based on that simple principle. These tips won't change the situation causing the stress, but they will, more importantly, enable you to change your reaction and relationship to the stressful situations. If the stress is managed then success in that task is surely yours.

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