

Stress Management & Personal Development

3. INTRODUCTION TO STRESS



Today's outline

- Main purpose:
 - Introduce the concept of stress
 - Continue working with stress management
- What is stress?
- Signs of stress
- Doing everyday things differently to prevent getting sick from stress
- A tiny home assignment
- A break in the middle, as always ;-)

What is stress?

- It depends on who you ask
- A biological system
- Different stressors → different reactions
 - Life crisis → *Adjustment disorder* (F43.2)
 - Trauma → *Acute stress reaction* (F43.0)
 - Trauma → *PTSD* (F43.1)
 - Chronic stress → *Exhaustion syndrome* (F43.8)
- Our focus:
 - Dealing with “everyday stress” or “job stress”
 - Preventing chronic stress and getting sick from stress

What is stress?

- A few minutes to write down:
 - What makes you stressed?

What is stress?

- A few minutes to write down:
 - How do you know that you are stressed?
 - How do you react when you are stressed?

Symptoms of stress

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Tiredness – Lack of energy – Sleep disturbances – Dizziness – Body ache – Heavy chest – Heart palpitation – Upset stomach • Mentally/cognitive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Memory impairment – Concentration difficulties | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotionally/
psychologically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Feeling down/low/blue – Irritability – Worry – Hopelessness – Anxiety – Panic attacks |
|---|--|

What is stress?

- A general definition:
 - Stress is about the individual's relationship with its surroundings
 - Stress is a *reaction* to an *imbalance* between someone's perceived *demands* and the perceived *resources* that someone has to deal with the demands

Doing things differently

- The way we do things can make us more tired, drained, or stressed than necessary
- Doing things differently is an easy way to prevent getting sick from stress
- The same activity can be either health promoting or health impairing, depending on HOW we do it

Balance between activity & rest

- 45 – 15 – 45 – 15 – 45 ...
- Passive and active breaks
- Changing activity → new brain areas, new muscles, new thoughts
- What and how long is less important
- Thoughts of effectiveness makes us vulnerable
- What does your pattern look like?
- The time optimist (planning too many activities):
 - Changeover
 - Buffer time

Main activities & sub-activities

- Focus!
- Main activity
- Hidden activities
- Unexpected activities
- Being on standby or on-call time
- High complexity takes a lot of energy
- Doing one thing at a time makes you last longer

The power of slow (and present)

- Slow → signal to the body that everything is okay
- Fast → signal to the body that something is wrong, needs to be done, under pressure etc...

Until next time...

- Do one thing differently:
 - Balance activity with rest
 - Focus on your main activity
 - Do something slowly
- Don't forget area 1-4 in the map of values
- See you (outside) Thursday!