

## Stress Management & Personal Development

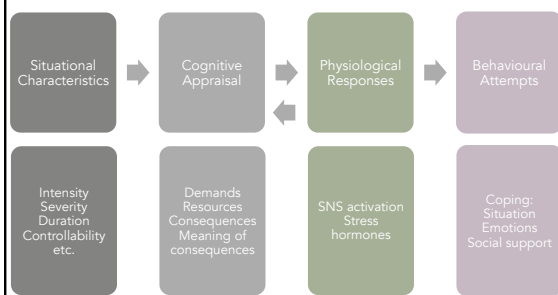
### 5. PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE – THE POWER OF THE MIND



### Today's outline

- Main purpose: understand what role our minds play in stress response & management
- 4 aspects of cognitive appraisal
- Protective factors
- Stress management:
  - The power of acceptance
  - The power of the present
  - The power of the breath

### Different components in stress response

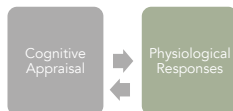


### Psychological perspective on stress

- We respond to a situation depending on how we perceive it...
- ...and what it means to us
- 4 aspects of cognitive appraisal:
  1. Demands
  2. Resources
  3. Consequences
  4. Meaning of consequences
- Explains difference in reaction to same event

### Psychological perspective on stress

- Physiological response might trigger you even more
- Our brain is a pleaser
- Negative thoughts  
→ stress hormones
- Through our thinking we can reduce stress response



### Protective factors

- Social support
  - Knowing we have someone that can help or support us
- Commitment
  - To what we do, feel it's important
- Control
  - Over the outcomes (not powerless to influence)
- Challenge
  - Demands = challenges/opportunities (not threats)
- Coping self-efficacy
  - Believing you can cope successfully

## The power of acceptance

- What is acceptance?
  - A conscious approach or attitude
  - Susceptible
  - Openness
  - Willingness
  - Non-judging
  - Flexible

## The power of acceptance

- What is it not?
  - Bathing in your emotions
  - Grow up and accept it!
  - Giving up or resign
  - Wanting it or liking it
  - Fair or just
  - Correct or appropriate
  - Tolerance
  - Tolerating status quo
  - Not changing

## The power of acceptance The Serenity Prayer

*"Grant me the serenity to accept things I  
can not change,  
the courage to change the things I can,  
and the wisdom to know  
the difference"*

## The power of acceptance

- How do we deal with uncomfortable things?
  - Avoid or run
  - Ignore
  - Force

## The power of acceptance A final say...

*"Acceptance means that we choose to see  
both our inner and outer reality  
without running, avoiding, twisting or  
judging it.*

*An accepting approach doesn't mean that  
we wont try to change a difficult situation,  
rather it means that we stop the war  
on our lives and ourselves."*

• Anna Kåver •

## The power of the present What mindfulness is all about

- The past
- The future
- The present
- Relation to stress?
  - Unnecessary thinking
  - Missing life
- Mindfulness makes you more present
  - 3-3-3

### The power of the breath

- Every emotional state has a corresponding breathing pattern
  - Stress → breathe fast and shallow
  - Stress → hold our breath
- We can change our emotional state through breathing
- Diaphragmatic breathing → the vagus nerve → parasympathetic activation

### The power of the breath

- Lets breathe!
- Deepen your breath!

### Summary

- Our stress response depends on how we perceive demands, resources, consequences and the meaning of the consequences
- Our brain is a pleaser
- Thoughts can increase or decrease stress
- Social support, commitment, control, demands as challenges, and coping self-efficacy protects us
- Acceptance → less struggle
- Mindfulness → less thinking
- Breathing → parasympathetic activation

### Until next time...

- Area 5-8 in the Map of Values
- Group evaluation on Thursday
- Do one thing differently per day:
  - Balance activity with rest
  - Focus on main activity
  - Do it slow and present
- Write down your experiences
- See you Thursday!
- Until then, breathe deep! ;-)