

First Aid in Mental Health

EXERCISE [PAGE 94]

Exercise | Q Q.1.(1) | Page 94

Fill in the blank.

One of the major obstacles to getting help from a mental health professional is the _____ attached to mental illness.

1. policy
2. **stigma**
3. society

Solution: One of the major obstacles to getting help from a mental health professional is the stigma attached to mental illness.

Exercise | Q Q.1.(2) | Page 94

Fill in the blank.

Friends and family are not a substitute for _____.

1. solving problems
2. giving solutions
3. **professional help**

Solution: Friends and family are not a substitute for professional help.

Exercise | Q Q.1.(3) | Page 94

Fill in the blank.

In our culture the _____ of an individual is considered to be the reflection of one's family.

1. intelligence
2. behaviour
3. **status**

Solution: In our culture, the behaviour of an individual is considered to be the reflection of one's family.

Exercise | Q Q.1.(4) | Page 94

Fill in the blank.

Individuals who experience _____ commonly have a negative thinking style.

1. depression
2. phobia
- 3. acute stress**

Solution: Individuals who experience **depression** commonly have a negative thinking style.

Exercise | Q Q.2.(1) | Page 94

Answer the following questions in 25 - 30 words.

Describe the term Mental Health First Aid?

Solution: Mental Health First Aid (MHF A) is an internationally recognized training programme designed to teach people how to identify the signs and symptoms of mental health problems and to provide assistance on a first aid basis. MHF A was originally developed by Betty Kitchener and Anthony Jorm. First Aid in Mental Health is a concept based on the idea of 'prevention is better than cure'. If the early signs of mental illness are recognized, it can help in the following ways.

(i) Diagnosis- timely diagnosis at the onset of mental illness helps to prevent it from developing into a more severe form.

(ii) Intervention - early intervention helps to get professional help.

(iii) Relapse prevention - it prevents the reoccurrence of the symptom of the mental illness.

Exercise | Q Q.2.(2) | Page 94

Answer the following questions in 25 - 30 words.

What are the stigmas attached to mental illness?

Solution: One of the major obstacles to getting help from a mental health professional is the stigma that is attached to mental illness. We fear things that we do not understand. In the same way, our lack of understanding of mental illness makes us fear it. This lack of knowledge and awareness makes us -

(i) Blame the individual, i.e., think that mental illness is a personal failing or weakness.

- (ii) Think that mental illness is caused as punishment for our sins.
- (iii) Think that the person is intentionally behaving in an inappropriate way.

Exercise | Q Q.2.(3) | Page 94

Answer the following questions in 25 - 30 words.

Anxiety disrupts day to day functioning of an individual :

State two predispositional factors contributing to anxiety.

Solution: The anxiety that is excessive or persists after the anxiety creating situation has subsided leads to anxiety disorders such as phobias, acute stress disorder, etc. predispositional factors in anxiety are -

- (i) Genetic factors - if anyone in the family has anxiety issues, then the person will be at a higher risk of exhibiting high levels of anxiety as compared to other persons.
- (ii) Childhood trauma such as physical or mental neglect or abuse, death of a loved one, parental divorce, etc.

Exercise | Q Q.2.(4) | Page 94

Answer the following questions in 25 - 30 words.

Your friend confided in you that he is suffering from anxiety.

Suggest two self-help strategies to help him deal with this issue

Solution: The self-help strategies that can be suggested to help him deal with excessive anxiety are -

- (i) Engage in some activity that he always wanted to pursue for e.g., pottery, writing, sketching, or voluntary social service.
- (ii) Indulge in physical activity like exercise, outdoor games, or trekking.
- (iii) Relaxation techniques like laughter therapy, meditation, and breathing techniques.

Exercise | Q Q.3.(1) | Page 94

Answer the following in 80 - 100 words.

List the common reasons why most people usually do not seek help during mental illness.

Solution: MHFA is an internationally recognized training programme whose objective is to teach people how to identify the signs and symptoms of mental health problems and to provide assistance on a first aid basis.

(a) Stigma associated with mental health:

Lack of understanding about mental illness makes us fear it. This lack of awareness leads us to blame the person for behaving inappropriately or showing personal failing.

(b) Shame Often, a person who has been diagnosed with a mental illness is ridiculed or blamed. He/she experiences shame, withdraws from social interaction and does not reach out to others or seek help. Hence, it is beneficial to show understanding and provide support.

(c) People do not always know how to respond:

Most people may not respond in an adequate way to a mentally ill person who reaches out to them. Sometimes, their advice/help may do more harm than good. However, MHFA programme can help friends/family to identify early signs of mental illness and help the person to get professional help.

(d) People may not always seek professional help:

The main reasons for this is -

(i) Culture - stigma attached to mental illness prevents people from seeking professional help as it may hurt the reputation of the family.

(ii) Advice from elders - A mentally ill person may incorrectly believe that advice of elders alone is sufficient to cure his illness.

(iii) Superstitions - If the person is convinced that his//her mental illness is caused due to sins/curses etc., they will not want to visit a mental health professional. Hence, they will be deprived of the benefits of early intervention.

Exercise | Q Q.3.(2) | Page 94

Answer the following in 80 - 100 words.

Explain the ALGEE Model in your own words.

Solution: ALGEE is an action plan to carry out First Aid in Mental Health.

(a) Approach, Assess and Assist in any crisis - An attempt is made to understand the situation and observe if there are behavioural changes in the person whom we are concerned about.

(b) Listen non-judgmentally - We should listen to the other person without letting our opinions influence us. We should not judge/ criticise but listen with acceptance and empathy. It does not imply that we agree with what the other person is saying but it

ensures that the person feels supported.

(c) Give support and information - This helps the person to feel more in control of the situation since they have emotional and informational support.

(d) Encourage the person to get professional help - Persons suffering from mental illness may hesitate to seek help due to lack of knowledge or due to stigma attached. Others may not know how to respond to someone showing 'red flags' of mental illness and may do more harm than good. Mental health professionals are trained to help the person to identify the problem and cope with the situation.

(e) Encourage self-help and other support strategies - Self-help strategies are tasks that help to increase our resources to deal with stress and to maintain mental health such as exercise, adequate sleep, having hobbies, etc.

Exercise | Q Q.3.(3) | Page 94

Answer the following in 80 - 100 words.

Enumerate the various symptoms an individual with anxiety disorders exhibits.

Solution: Anxiety is an emotion characterised by feelings of tension, hopelessness, etc. Excessive level of anxiety which persists even after the anxiety-producing situation has gone away can lead to anxiety disorders.

(a) Physical Symptoms

- Heart palpitations and rapid heart rate
- Shortness of breath
- Dizziness or headaches
- Restlessness, tremors, and shaking

(b) Psychological Symptoms

- Mind racing or going blank
- Difficulty in concentration
- Forgetfulness
- Problems in decision making
- Irritability, impatience and anger

(c) Behavioural Symptoms

- Avoiding people and situations

- Repetitive checking
- Strong urge to escape the situation

Exercise | Q Q.3.(4) | Page 94

Answer the following in 80 - 100 words.

Justify with the help of examples what over dependence on the internet means.

Solution: (a) Meaning:

The amount of time, as well as the reason for using the internet, may become a matter of concern for e.g., online gambling, gaming, etc. The person may socialise more online with friends than real-life socialising. Spending excess time online may cause the person to neglect family, relationships, work, etc. The virtual world enables games/gambling almost continuously. This leads to the person neglecting personal hygiene, real-life relationships, and become withdrawn and irresponsible. The person may feel guilty or defensive about internet use. He/ she may panic in the absence of internet service. Growing dependence on the internet refers to an inability to stop and down down.

(b) Four C's to identify excessive internet usage

Excessive internet usage is characterised by extensive, problematic addiction to the use of computers and the internet. It signifies poorly controlled preoccupations or behaviour regarding such usage. Excessive internet usage leads to personal distress and social impairment. The four C's to identify excessive internet usage are as follows - (i) Craving - Do you have an intense desire to use the internet? (ii) Control - Do you have an inability to control your self using the internet? (iii) Compulsion - Do you find it difficult to stop using the internet? Even though you know you should not spend so much time on it? (iv) Consequence - Have you ever experienced any physical or psychological ill effects as a result of excessive use of the internet? If you answer a 'yes' for at least three of the C's, it can be a matter of concern.

(c) Red flags that indicate internet addiction:

The Red Flags that indicate over-dependence on the internet are -

- Feelings of euphoria while using the internet.
- Physical symptoms like headache, dry eyes, etc.
- Inability to keep to schedules and boredom with routine tasks.
- Poor personal hygiene and nutrition to remain online.

Exercise | Q Q.4. | Page 94

Analysis the following Case Study,

Sujata is now a sad and lonely girl. She has cut off herself from all her relatives and family friends. She doesn't participate in any college programmes nor family functions. She is mostly found in the library all by herself. She has lost her self-confidence. At home, she prefers eating in the bedroom and mostly indulges in television or mobile

activities.

Apply the ALGEE model and help Sujata to evolve in her mental health.

Solution: Sujata is showing symptoms of depression and anxiety such as sadness, withdrawing from family/ friends, and social activities. The ALGEE model can be used.

(i) Approach, assess and assist in any crisis - Behavioural changes are very noticeable in Sujata. I can voice my concern to the teachers/ counsellor of the school or to her family members.

(ii) Listen in a non-judgemental manner - I will try to meet Sujata in the library or any place where she feels comfortable. I will explain my concerns to her about not interacting with others and the overuse of mobile phones. I will listen patiently and compassionately.

(iii) Give support and information- Let Sujata know that she has emotional support of her friends. There is nothing to feel guilty or ashamed of. She should hence be forthcoming about her problems.

(vi) Encourage her to get professional help - I will encourage her to meet the college counsellor who will be able to help her professionally. (v) Encourage self-help strategies - This will help Sujata to regain control over her life. Some positive measures include breathing exercises, yoga, laughter therapy, etc.