The Efficiency of Self-Nurture in Coping with Stress from Change, in Community College Student Populations

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# Abstract

Stress related to Change and major life events is best reduced by self-nurture, a process we deem ‘emotional.’

# Introduction: Setting the Stage

Prior research regarding stress for college students covers a gamut of stressors for traditional college enrollees. In considering the success stories of community college and non-traditional, residential college students, new research can be done, factoring their strategies for coping with the same variety of stressors. Using Misra’s core five stressors (llllllll), we queried a large population of Community College students in Riverside, California, asking them to categorize how they reduced stress related to various stressors, capturing their chosen technique for doing so, and measuring the impact of that technique.

In doing so, we aim to establish the power of self-nurture. This technique entails vacationing, taking time off, attending religious activities, reading, and other forms of self-help. These techniques are deemed to be ‘emotional,’ given the capacity to reduce stress after the fact, and aid in the process of adaptation.

In the scenario of change, life events such as moving, new work, new classes or new roommates is a stressor, however exhilarating. We posit factual statistics in favor of self-nurture in the recovery and adaptation process.

# Prior Work / Literature Survey

Ross establishes a basis for studying stress management among the college demographic, using basic types of stress such as academics, changes, in residence, sleep pattern change and otherwise adaptation to academic culture. Resists including CC students in their analysis. (Ross, 1999)

In summary, most sources historically omit the experience of community college (CC) students, focusing instead on residential college enrollees. To look at the experience of how CC students manage stress successfully, new and innovative research tools are necessary, and hence comprise the goal of our effort.

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# Design of Our Experiment

Beginning our research on the premise that CC students have powerful and relevant tools, at their personal disposal, by studying CC student techniques we can uncover interesting attitudes toward stress reduction. Also, working with the assumption that college student stress occupies 5 major domains:

1. Change
2. Pressure
3. Frustration
4. Self-imposed stress
5. Conflict

We can ask students when they experience these types of stress, how do they react, and thus reduce their stress. We asked students how they do this, considering three categories of solution:

1. Emotional: not taking on stressful situations head on, but using recovery and self-nurture later
2. Behavior: using techniques learned beforehand to handle stress, not using thought processes in the moment, but relying upon previously learned techniques
3. Intellectual: using energy intensive thought processes, in the moment, to resolve stressful challenges as they occur

Our solution categories were decided among students, themselves, and are thus original contributions to the literature on stress. They do represent some dichotomy in the relationship between time and the stressor, and thus we asked each respondent to supply an estimated time to solution, wherein they reduced stress, using the above 3 techniques, with a given time vector.

Thus, because we possess not only a category of problem, we also possess a solution type, and a measure of time. This combination of metrics amount to a measure of efficiency for the solution, in regards to the stressor and therefore evince a form of playbook in solving each type of stressor. Such an experiment is new, and will demand further testing.

The questions we asked in our questionnaire included:

1.

2.

3. …..

# Discussion of Findings

After proposing our questionnaire and analyzing data, in the realm of change as a stressor, the most efficient stress reducer was the emotional technique.

At the close of the experiment, 1,500 experiences had been catalogued.

To review, the emotional technique involves recovery after the experience of a stressor. The emotional technique involves self-nurture in all forms: religious meetings, entertainment, leisure time, and all time away from work. Thus the emotional technique, given our measure of time, helped reduce feelings of stress most quickly and aided in the adaptation of the individual to the greatest extent.

# Summary Conclusion

# Questions for Future Research

# Bibliography

Ross, S. E. (1999). Sources of stress among college students. *Social psychology 61(5)*, 841-846.