

## STRESS MANAGEMENT BY USING LIFE SKILLS

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### Abstract :

Each person is facing stress in their life. The life skills are important for to face the stress in life. The present paper explores the concept of stress, types of stress ,causes of stress at workplace, causes of stress at home, definitions of life skills,The ten basic life skills are : Self awareness, Empathy, Problem solving, Decision making, Effective Communication, Interpersonal relation, Creative Thinking, Coping with emotions, Coping with stress. These life skills are useful to minimize the stress in life.

**Key terms - Stress, Life skills, Empathy, Creative thinking, SWOT, Vulnerability.**

### Introduction :

Stress is a large part of everyday life. Stress has many definitions and there are many ways to manage stress. Most stress occurs at our busiest moments, school, college work place and home. Those are the most common places for stress to build. Nevertheless stress is unavoidable. Each and every person facing stress in their life. Even though Psychologist also face the stress in their life. The Psychologist Dr Rajendra Burve was also one stage in their life was under stress. He overcame that situation and became the famous psychologist.

What is Stress?

The word stress is derived from the Latin word “ string”, which means , “ to be drawn tight.” Stress can be defined as follows.

Stress as a physical mental or emotional response to events that has an effect on our body or mind.

In medical terms stress is defined as, ‘ a physical or psychological stimulus that can produce mental tension or physiological reactions that may lead to illness. “ When you are under stress, your adrenal gland releases corticosteroids, which are converted to cortisol in the blood stream. Cortisol has an immune suppressive effect in your body.

According to Richard S Lazarus, stress is a feeling experienced when a person thinks that the demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize.”

Stress disturbs the body’s normal way of functioning. Most of us experience stress at one time or another. Without stress, there would be no life. However, excessive or prolonged stress can be harmful. Stress is unique and personal. A situation may be stressful for someone but the same situation may be challenging for others. For example, arranging a world level symposium may be challenging for one person but stressful to another. Some persons have habit of worrying unnecessarily.

Stress is not always necessarily harmful. Han’s Selye said in 1956 , stress is not necessarily something bad, it all depends on how you take it. The stress of exhilarating, creative successful work is beneficial, while that of failure, humiliation or infection is detrimental.”

Stress can be therefore negative, positive or neutral.

**Stress types :** Three types of stress are distinguished.

#### **1] Acute stress**

Acute Stress is usually for short time and may be due to work pressure, meeting deadlines pressure or minor accident, over exertion, increased physical activity, searching something but you misplaced it, or similar things. Symptoms of this type of tension are headaches, back pain, stomach problems, rapid heart beat, muscle aches or body pain.

Acute stress is common in people who take too many responsibilities and are overloaded or overworked, disorganized, always in a hurry and never in time. Symptoms of this type of stress are prolonged tension headaches, hypertension, migraines, chest pain, long term stress can lead to digestive problem including ulcers, insomnia, fatigue, high blood pressure, nervousness and excessive sweating, heart disease, strokes and even hair loss.

#### **2] Episodic acute stress :**

There are those, however, who suffer acute stress frequently, whose lives are so disordered that they are studies in chaos and crisis. They're always in a rush, but always late. If something can go wrong, it does. They take on too much, have too many irons in the fire, and can't organize the slew of self-inflicted demands and pressures clamoring for their attention. They seem perpetually in the clutches of acute stress.

It is common for people with acute stress reactions to be over aroused, short-tempered, irritable, anxious and tense. Often, they describe themselves as having "a lot of nervous energy." Always in a hurry, they tend to be abrupt, and sometimes their irritability comes

across as hostility. Interpersonal relationships deteriorate rapidly when others respond with real hostility. The workplace becomes a very stressful place for them.

The symptoms of episodic acute stress are the symptoms of extended over arousal: persistent tension headaches, migraines, hypertension, chest pain and heart disease. Treating episodic acute stress requires intervention on a number of levels, generally requiring professional help, which may take many months.

### 3] Chronic stress :

This type of stress is the most serious of all the three stress types. Chronic stress that exist for weeks, months or even years. This stress is due to poverty, broken or stressed families and marriages, chronic illness and successive failures in life .

### Causes of Stress :

Whenever our body feels something not favorable, then it tries to defend itself. If this situation continues for a long time, then our body is working overtime.

There are several causes of stress. For example, when you are worried about something, worried about the illness of your father, worried about your job security, or worried about your loans or similar things.

### Causes of stress at home.

- Death of spouse, family, near relative or friend.
- Injury or illness of any family member.
- Separation or divorce from partner.
- Children educational performance.
- Marriage of self or son or daughter or brother or sister.
- Pregnancy or birth of new baby.
- Children behaviour or disobedience.
- Hyperactive children.
- Sexual molestation.
- Arguments or heated conversations with spouse, family members or friends or neighbours.
- Not sufficient money to meet out daily expenses.
- Loss of money in burglary, pick-pocketed or share market.
- Moving house.
- Change of place or change of city or change of country.

### **Causes of stress at work place.**

- To meet out the demands of the jobs.
- Your relationship with colleagues.
- To control staff under you.
- To train your staff and take work from them.
- Support you receive from your boss, colleagues and juniors.
- Excessive work pressure.
- To meet out deadlines.
- To give new results.
- Working overtime and holidays.
- New work hours.
- Promotion or you have not been promoted.
- Change of job.
- Arguments or heated conversations with co-workers or boss.
- Work against will.
- Harassment
- Sexual molestation.

### **Strategies dealing with stress :**

Life skills are problem solving behaviours used appropriately and responsibly in the management of personal affairs. They are a set of human skills acquired via teaching or direct experience that are used to handle problems and questions commonly encountered in daily human life. Effective acquisition of life skills can influence the way adolescents cope with stress and face the challenges present in their lives.

The World Health Organisation has defined life skills as, "the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life." In other words Life skills are abilities that facilitate the physical, mental and emotional well-being of an individual.

UNICEF defines life skills as a behaviour change or behaviour development approach designed to address a balance of three areas: knowledge, attitude and skills. Life skill education are important to face the stress. Life skills are those skills using which an individual solves the problems in his daily life and accomplish his daily needs effectively.



World Health Organization (WHO) has given the ten basic skills which are very useful to face the stress.

The ten basic life skills are: Self awareness, Empathy, Problem solving, Decision making, Effective communication, Interpersonal relation, Creative thinking, Coping with emotions, Coping with stress.

**1] Self awareness :** One of the most important skills or talents to cultivate in order to manage your stress is ‘Self –Awareness.’ Self awareness is aware of what is going on inside your body, especially your emotions and your self-talk and how they are affecting your behaviour, how you “are” in the world, or how you appear to others, and how you interact with other people in your life. If self awareness increases the spontaneity in work also increases.

**2] Empathy :** has been defined and measured in the literature in numerous ways. Many describe it as the ability to understand the mental and emotional states of others, as well as a concern for their feelings, desires and needs. (Davis, 1980; Eisenberg and Fabes, 1998; Schieman and Gundy, 2000) Psychologist proves that the stress management and empathy increases with age. This is confirmed by research showing that the greater our stress, the less empathy we have. So as stress goes up, Emotional Intelligence goes down.

**3] Problem solving :** SWOT (Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.) is very effective way identifying your strength and weaknesses and of examining the opportunities and threats you face. This helps you to focus on your plus points, understand and overcome your limitations.

**4] Decision making :** Is the most important life skill. Taking the right decision at right place is eliminates stress in life.

**5] Effective Communication :** A proper communication can bring happiness to all concerned; and a lack of it creates stress, conflict and unhappiness! Effective communication skills that can help in making your life less stressful and more productive. Use of sweet and polite talking with others can minimize stress in life.

**6] Interpersonal relation :** skill is necessary for both personal and professional success. Many people speak without having really thought about what they are trying to communicate. Each person has unique identity so respect the relationship.

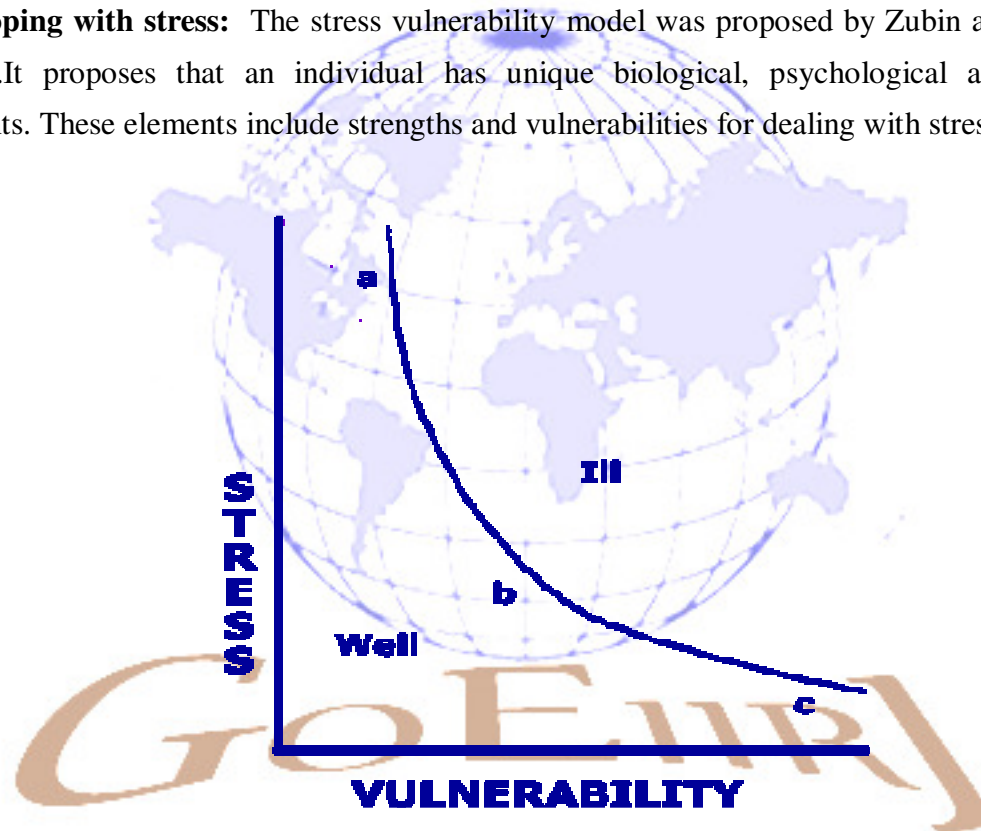
**7] Creative thinking :** A recent seminar about brain power indicated that stress releases two key chemicals in the brain: cortisone and adrenaline. Both chemicals heighten an individual's

survival instinct. Blood pressure rises, Heart beats increase and person under stress can no longer think clearly. So the creative thinking increases the stress is decreases.

**8] Critical thinking :** The skill of thinking differently or in a novel way a problem or situation.

**9] Coping with emotions :** By learning better coping with emotions skills you can reduce your stress levels and helps you in depression. So try to control your emotions. Keep cool and patience in the stress. Most of the time ego creating the stress in life .Get ride of egos. Egos are the greatest enemy of person. Think positively.

**10] Coping with stress:** The stress vulnerability model was proposed by Zubin and spring (1977).It proposes that an individual has unique biological, psychological and social elements. These elements include strengths and vulnerabilities for dealing with stress.



In the diagram above person “a” has a very low vulnerability and consequently can withstand a huge amount of stress.

Life skills education promotes mental well-being in children and equips them to face the realities of life. By supporting mental well-being and behavioural preparedness, life skills education equips individuals to behave in pro-social ways and it is additionally health giving (BirellWeisen and Orley, 1996). To achieve health giving pro-social behaviour a life skill programme must have effect on the inner layer of mental well-being and middle layers

behavioural preparedness. Consequently, life skills education can be seen as empowering children and thus enabling them to take more responsibility for their actions.

### Conclusion :

As briefly demonstrated on this paper, there is relationship between stress and life skill. Giving proper education of life skills in schooling age, it minimizes the stress in future. The present paper explores the important of life skills in education.

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