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Knowing Your Stressors

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Stressors are objects, persons or situations that lead to the emergence of stress to an individual, as well as the triggering of his stress response system. Recognition of one's stressors is the first step towards effective stress management.

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Knowing Your Stressors

Stressors are typically perceived as threats to the wellbeing of a person, because of the possibility of these stressors to overwhelm the available resources to be used for stress response [1]. The definition tells us that in order for a person to manage stress in the best way possible, proper recognition of one's stressors is highly necessary.

Types of Stressors

Psychologists often categorize stressors into two major types: internal stressors and external stressors.

Internal Stressors

Most often than not, the stressors or stress inducers that we are able to recognize are those outside of ourselves. However, it is always important to identify our personal internal stressors [2] first because they affect us more than the external stressors. These internal stressors, also

called emotional stressors, include anxiety, fear and personality traits.

Too much worrying about the outcome of a job interview is actually an internal stressor which leads you to respond to this anxiety by excessive perspiration, difficulty in sleeping or perhaps, nail biting. Your personality trait can also be an important internal stressor, especially traits that are associated to perfectionism, suspiciousness, pessimism or feelings of helplessness.

External Stressors

Anything outside one's self that induces stress is called an external stressor. This may include family stressors, such as family role expectations, parent-to-child relationships, sibling relationships, financial struggles and ill family members.

Other external stressors are called social stressors, which emerge from the relationships, problems and challenges we face at work, school or other places. In particular, work stressors arise from workplace pressures such as an erratic boss or hectic schedules and tight deadlines.

Yet another subtype of external stressors is the change stressor, or stress inducers related to significant life changes. Common examples of change stressors include finding a job, moving, marriage and pregnancy. Change stressors are often paired with decision stressors, wherein the stress results from the need to make crucial decisions such as where to study for college or what career to follow.

Chemical stressors are any drugs a person uses or abuses, such as alcohol, nicotine, caffeine, or tranquilizers. On the other hand, disease stressors are those that result from health problems, such as being bed ridden or following a strict diet. Lastly, environmental stressors include pollution, noise, heat, congestion, etc.

Identification and Management

In order to identify stressors, it is recommended that you refer to the different types of stressors and list those stressors that relate to your personal life. You may categorize it according to internal or external stressor, and then to the subtypes of stressors, such as family, work, environment, etc.

After recognizing your stressors, you can begin identifying which stressors require total elimination, partial reduction or coping. For instance, feelings of pessimism may be totally eradicated and replaced by those of optimism for better stress response. If your concentration is diminished by loud noise, you may use ear plugs or tell your officemates to lower down their voices a bit. In terms of coping, you can cope up with stressors through the use of effective time management techniques.

Source URL: <https://explorable.com/knowning-your-stressors?gid=1600>

Links

[1] <https://explorable.com/general-adaptation-syndrome>

[2] http://www.umm.edu/patiented/articles/what_stress_000031_1.htm