

Short Answer Questions – II

Q. 1. Differentiate between adaptation and adjustment.

Ans. We face challenges in our lives. The difficult circumstances, problems and obstacles often block our path leading towards chosen life goals. We change ourselves or adapt according to the demands of the circumstances by means of inbuilt tendencies or through learned behaviours. The term **adaptation** refers to the process of change in organisms or species to accommodate a particular environment. For example, we put on warm clothes during winter or work hard as per requirement. This enables our survival when we adapt to environmental and social circumstances.

Adjustment is to attain a state of equilibrium by fulfilling certain needs. Hungry people, for example, are stimulated by their physiological state to seek food. When they eat, they reduce the stimulating condition and are thereby adjusted to the particular need. Thus the adjustment process involves:

- i. A need or a motive
- ii. Non-fulfillment of the need
- iii. Exploratory behaviour accompanied by problem-solving
- iv. Satisfaction by fulfillment of the need

Q. 2. Differentiate between Eustress and Distress.

Ans. Eustress describes the level of stress that is good and positive and is one of a person's best assets for achieving peak performance and managing minor crisis. Distress is the manifestation of stress that causes our body's wear and tear. It produces unpleasant effects, hampers our productivity, emotionally upsets us and causes our performance to deteriorate.

Q. 3. Describe the cognitive theory of stress (primary appraisal and secondary appraisal).

Ans. The perception of stress is dependent upon the individual's cognitive appraisal which is of two types, primary and secondary. Primary appraisal refers to the perception of a new or changing environment as positive, neutral or negative in its consequences. Negative events are appraised for their possible harm, threat or challenge. Harm is the assessment of the damage that has already been done by the event. Threat is the assessment of the possible future damage that may be brought about by the event. Challenge is associated with expectations of the ability to cope with the stressful event. Secondary appraisal is the assessment of one's coping abilities and resources and whether they will be sufficient to meet the harm, threat or challenge of the event.

Q. 4. Describe the factors affecting the appraisal of the stressful events.

Ans. The factors affecting the appraisal of the stressful events are:

- i. **Past experience:** If one has handled similar situations very successfully in the past, they would be less threatening for him or her.
- ii. **Controllable:** A person who believes that she/he can control the onset of a negative situation or its negative consequences will experience less amount of stress than those who have no such sense of personal control.

Q. 5. Explain the concept of stress giving examples from daily life.

[CBSE Delhi 2011]

Ans. Stress is described as the pattern of responses an organism makes to stimulus event that disturbs the equilibrium and exceeds a person's ability to cope. Stressors like noise, crowding, a bad relationship, daily commuting to school or office are events that cause our body to give the stress response. Happenings in our daily lives such as noisy surroundings, commuting, quarrelsome neighbours, electricity and water shortage, traffic snarls cause stress. Attending to various emergencies are daily hassles experienced by a housewife.

Q. 6. What are the effects of stress on the psychological functioning of an individual?

[CBSE (AI) 2012]

Ans. The effects of stress are described as follows:

- i. **Emotional Effects:** Those suffering from stress experience mood swings, show decreasing confidence, suffer from feelings of anxiety, depression or increased physical and psychological tension.
- ii. **Physiological Effects:** Under stress there is an increased production of hormones such as adrenaline and cortisol. These hormones produce marked changes in heart rate, blood pressure levels, metabolism and physical activity. Changes such as release of epinephrine or nor-epinephrine, slowing down of the digestive system, expansion of air passages in the lungs and constriction of blood vessels also occur.
- iii. **Cognitive Effects:** Cognitive effects of stress are poor concentration and reduced short-term memory capacity.
- iv. **Behavioural Effects:** These include disrupted sleep patterns, increase absenteeism and reduced work performance.

Q. 7. What is GAS? How does Selye's model relate prolong stress to bodily response.

Explain.

[CBSE Delhi 2011, 2015]

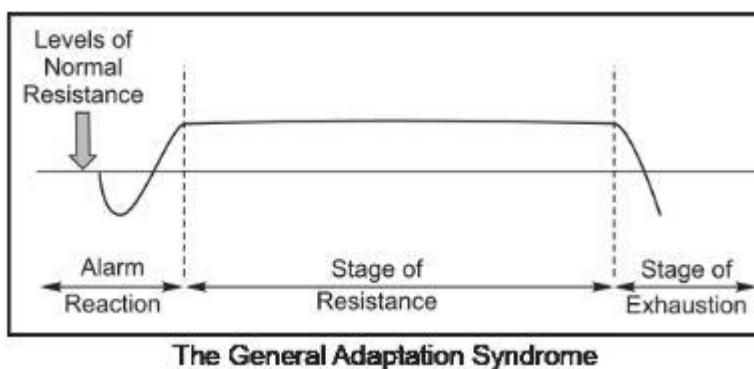
OR

Explain the reaction of body to stress according to General Adaptation Syndrome.

[CBSE (AI) 2013]

Ans. Selye observed that animals exposed to stressors show a similar pattern of bodily response. He called this pattern General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS). According to him GAS involves three stages:

- i. **Alarm reaction:** The presence of a stressor leads to activation of the adrenalpituitary-cortex system. This triggers the release of hormones producing the stress response. Now the individual is ready for fight or flight.
- ii. **Resistance Stage:** Under prolonged stress, the para-sympathetic nervous system calls for more cautious use of the body's resources in which the organism makes efforts to cope with the threat.
- iii. **Exhaustion stage:** Continued exposure to the same stressor or additional stressors drains the body of its resources and leads to the third stage of exhaustion. The physiological systems involved in alarm reaction and resistance become ineffective and susceptibility to stress-related diseases increases.

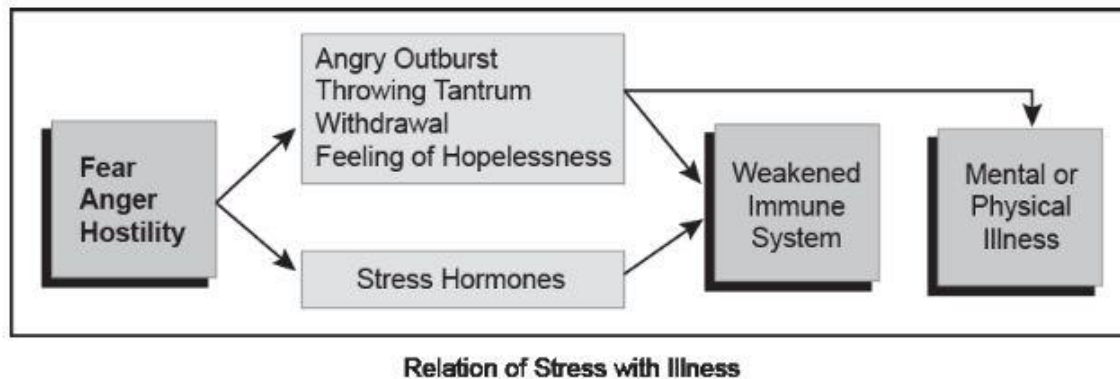


Q. 8. Describe the effect of stress on the immune system.

[CBSE Delhi 2015]

Ans. Release of stress hormone results in weakening of our immune system thus affecting mental and physical health. Weakened immune system has a serious effect on the individuals' health. Stress has **physiological effects** and can affect natural killer cell cytotoxicity, which is of major importance in the defence against various infections and cancer. Reduced levels of natural killer cell cytotoxicity have been found in people who are highly stressed, including students facing important examinations, bereaved persons and those who are severely depressed. Psychological stress is accompanied by **negative emotions or burnout situation** and associated symptoms such as depression, anxiety, irritability and aggression. Individuals may have panic attacks or show obsessive behaviours, mood swings or phobias. These individuals have feelings of hopelessness which is worsened by injury or disease. Studies reveal that immune functioning is better in individuals receiving social support.

Emotions such as fear, anger or hostility are associated with anger outbursts, tantrums, withdrawal symptoms and feelings of hopelessness thus leading to weakening of the immune system thus affecting mental and physical health.



Q. 9. Differentiate between problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies with examples.

Ans. According to Lazarus and Folkman the coping responses are of two types:

- i. **Problem-focused Strategies:** These strategies attack the problem itself with behaviours designed to gain information, to alter the event and to alter belief and commitments. For example, to make a plan of action.
- ii. **Emotion-focused Strategies:** These call for psychological changes designed primarily to limit the degree of emotional disruption caused by an event, with minimal effort to alter the event itself. E.g., to do things to let it out of your system.

Q. 10. What are the factors facilitating positive health?

Ans. Positive health includes good physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being. This includes a healthy body free from disease, effective personal relationships, a sense of purpose in life, self-regard, and resilience to stress.

This requires maintain of the following:

Diet: A balanced diet can lift one's mood, give more energy, feed muscles, improve circulation, prevent illness, strengthen the immune system and make one feel better to cope with stresses of life. The key to healthy living is to eat three main meals a day, and eat a varied well-balanced diet.

Exercise: Regular exercise manages stress, reduces tension, anxiety and depression. It helps the individual to maintain good physical and mental health. Exercise requires changing one's life-style. These produce a calming effect and may include yoga, aerobic exercises, jogging, swimming and cycling.

Positive Thinking: This involves being an optimist and avoid having a pessimistic outlook toward life. Optimists use problem-focused strategies, seek help and advice from others.

Social Support: Availing social support leads to less medical and psychological complications such as observed in pregnant women who getting social support and protection against stress cope life more successfully. The types of social support are tangible support, information support

and emotional support. Tangible support involves assisting one with money, goods and services such as providing notes to a friend who has been absent. Information support is providing one with certain resources such as a student who has appeared in a board exam helps his friend in telling him how the board exams are conducted. Emotional support helps to overcome anxiety, loss of self-esteem by the ones who love and care for you. Social support reduces psychological distress, depression or anxiety during times of stress. It helps in providing psychological well-being.