

**NPTEL
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Course Name

Stress Management

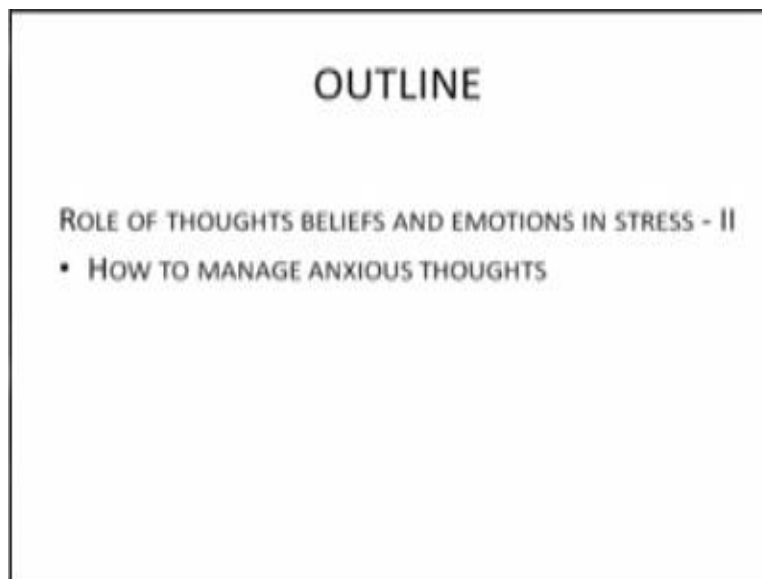
by

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**Lecture 14: Role of Thoughts Beliefs
and Emotions – II**

Hello everybody welcome back to this course stress management in this week's modules on developing resilience to stress.

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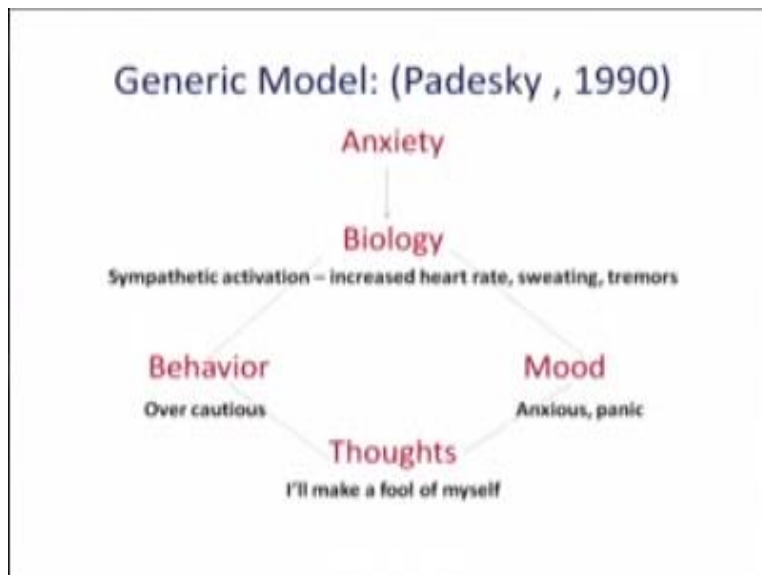


Today we will speak about how to manage the anxious thoughts so this is the second session of roles of role of thoughts beliefs and emotions in stress and in today's session we will discuss about some of the strategies of managing stress so you have learned the theoretical aspects of what is stress the personality factors relating to stress and then we have discussed about the

physiology of stress and in the first two modules we have talked about the stress thoughts emotions and also the relating to stress and we have spoken about the skills that are important for stress management so actually to evaluate how stressed how anxious and individual is and how to measure personality we have briefly discussed that.

In today's sessions this will be a little different from all the other theoretical sessions this and the next one we will focus on the active plans and active management programs that you can actually take up by yourself or teach somebody who is undergoing stress.

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So just a brief about the relationship to remind you that there is a relationship between the thoughts moods and behavior and biology also so how our body responds to the in a thoughtful in a stressful situation the thoughts moods and in this case the behavior and the physiology of the individual are all interlinked so this brings us to we must remember this when we are talking of the stress management techniques because the stress management techniques by itself is not address only the thought or the mood but as all these are interlinked the change in the thought process will bring about a change in the mood.

So if I start believing that this is not a very anxiety-provoking situation this is not so stressful naked deal with it I can cope with it then my mood will be more positive so I will feel more confident I will feel less anxious and it will likewise we affect my behavior so the avoidance behavior will reduce and several times the safety behavior will also reduce so I will not be over cautious about a situation and this will also bring about changes in the physiology so the palpitations or the sympathetic activation will reduce.

So there will be less sweating of palms there will be less palpitation there will be less shortness of breath and overall this feedback will go back to the thoughts again took the brain again and the individual will start thinking that oh I am in company I am more in composure so I can control the situation so this feedback loop goes on and on and like we saw in the vicious cycle of negatives of self-esteem where low self-esteem is induced like a vicious cycle.

So the feedback loop going and enhancing the low self-esteem in the other in the positive thought also what happens is this the moment you start feeling good you get positive thoughts and the more positive thoughts you get you have more adaptive behavior again if you have more adaptive behavior you will get more opportunities to perform well and the thoughts will also become more positive and mode will become positive and all this will affect the physiology so if you are feeling less stressed you will have less tension headaches. If you are feeling less stressed you will have less immune related illnesses.

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Understanding & Managing Stress

Recognise and admit that you are
feeling stressed

So what should we remember first whenever we are talking of understanding and managing stress we must recognize and admit that we are feeling stressed so if an individual is ignoring the stresses in his life we have done a stress audit earlier and we know how to identify the stresses in our life so the internal dimensions the external dimensions and then doing a stress analysis what are the primary areas that are being affected we done that earlier.

So now that you that is the first step towards recognizing and admitting that you are feeling stressed so there is nothing wrong in feeling stressed but it is more important or there is all everything wrong in denying it so the moment you are aware of it half your work is done.

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So then it brings us to how to cope with the stressor and there are two types of control or here we speak about self-control and situational control so the says today we are going to discuss about the self control first.

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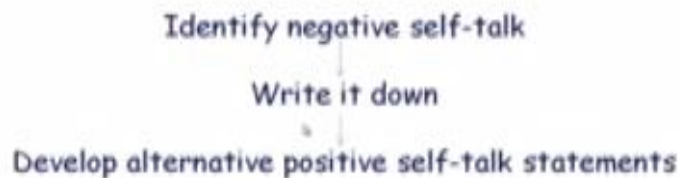


So self control techniques include constructive self-talk and cognitive restructuring and also other than these so these are the techniques that an individual may employ himself to bring about changes within himself the situational control techniques are by taking control of the environment now this is so you it is not feasible always to take control of the environment so how do we do it we adapt ourselves to the environment and adopt certain strategies to get more adjusted to the environment so in self control techniques we are actually looking at bringing about changes in ourselves.

So it may be lifestyle changes like relaxation and breathing exercise physical exercise a healthy lifestyle changes and the diet changes in the exercise plan changes in the sleep hygiene sleep routine now all this but these could be all lifestyle changes along with changes in the way we are thinking so it started with accepting that I am anxious I am stressed and then getting to corrective measures about dealing with stress so it is no point in ignoring the situation but rather this getting into more of constructive self-talk and cognitive restructuring.

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Constructive Self-Talk



So what is constructive says doc so identifying the negative self stuff we have spoken about negative automatic thoughts earlier so what you can do is you can start writing down that what other say in today a session after today's session you can put it down as what are the negative thoughts that come to my mind so if is there how what do I tell myself okay see if I tell myself Rajesh me you cannot do this well rush me you cannot you are not a good speaker I just me you cannot interact with well with people.

So throughout the day's happenings what happens is that throughout the day we interact with several people or maybe we get feedback from several people through our interactions and many times also while we are doing carrying on some individual activity by ourselves if I am studying and I see that I am not being able to focus so it may be the self-talk maybe rather be you are you cannot focus on this you are no good at anything so this see what is happening is I am generalizing over generalizing.

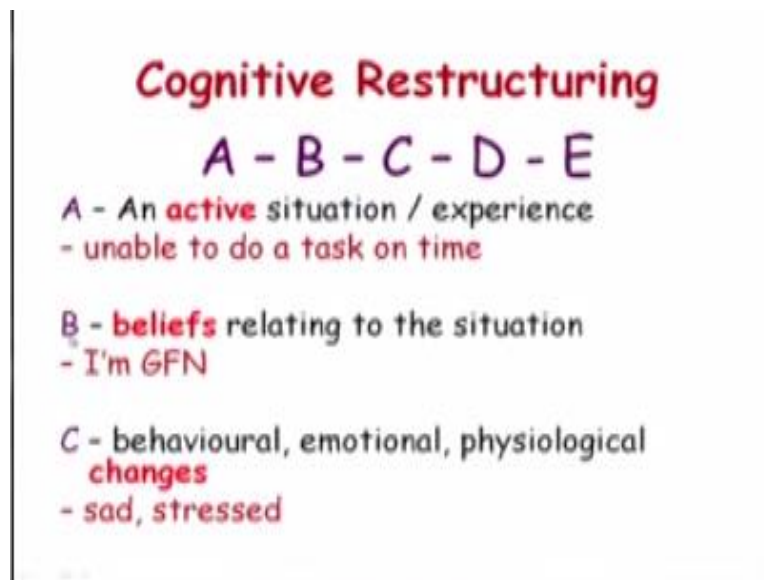
So identifying the negative self-talk is very important many times people who have an external locus of control actually blame it on others or focus on others behaviors or their thoughts are the situation as the reason for their stress but they ignore the self-talk that they themselves too so

now you could write down there to see what are the negative self talks that you what are the negative self comments you keep what are the discussions that you have with yourself so if you can put down on a document and write it down and develop alternate positive self-talk statements so many times very simply put that many times they can be like just opposite of I am no good now I am good challenge that statement so I am good at ABCDE who said I am not good so challenged that.

So cannot talk to yourself as if you know you are your own counselor you are telling yourself that well there are who said you are bad so you are on a debate with yourself who said that you are not good at this there are other things that are you are good at or later this is something that you are good at maybe at this point in time you feel that you are not good so give yourself positive self-talk statements and also it is so you are challenging yourself on your negative self-talk and you are also boosting yourself with positive tax.

So I have seen this works very well with students where you know you can write it down on your monitor on your screen saver you can put a positive quote for yourself you identify something that goes very well with you something positive and you put it down and you so that you can look at it every time and tell yourself yes that is what I need to do but yes should come more from within so it is like yes I can do it.

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Now cognitive restructuring what exactly is cognitive restructuring this was given by Ellis as an ABC model and this has been extended to A B C D E and let us see what A stands for it stands for an antecedent or the active situation or the experience that you are going through so whenever there is a stressful situation and you have your there were stressed responses anxiety responses say if you had panic symptoms after a stressful situation in a stressful situation but you can do later is where you can put it down as in the ABCDE model.

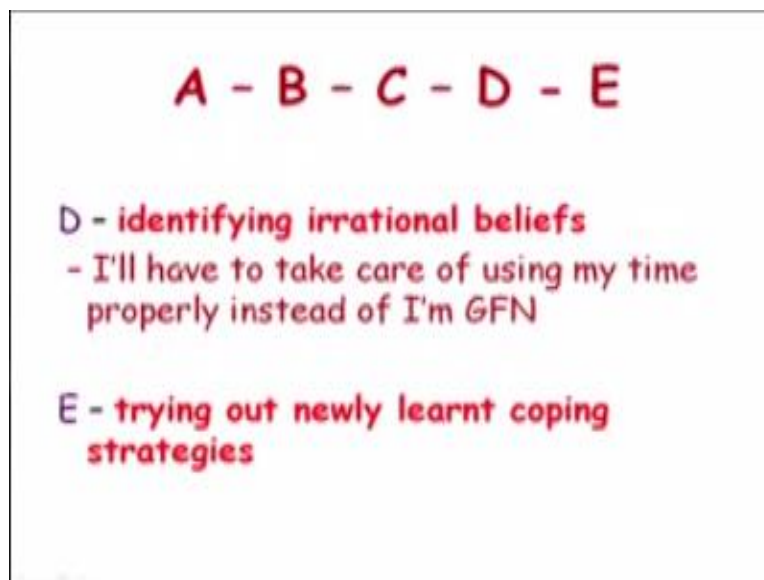
So A stands for the active situation so in this case say I was panic during a performance so not being able to complete the task on time I took this example what is the belief that is triggered we spoke about the theory last time of the in the previous session about the anxiety model and so you know what the belief is so what beliefs are work or schemas are so what are the beliefs that are related to the situation.

So in this case it may be something like I am good for nothing what are the behavioral emotional and physiological changes that are happening when this thought is triggered and we are in the situation when the belief is triggered that I am good for nothing and then what other changes physical changes the emotional changes what are the behavioral changes.

So you may be sad one may be sad stressed it could be more of physiological changes or feeling exhausted feeling the low mood with disgust sad changes avoiding situation avoiding friends spending time more on the internet rather than interacting on a face to face this does happen with people who are socially anxious and they avoid public gatherings or group gatherings large gatherings.

So many times instead of going out and interacting people with people on a face-to-face level they prefer more of the virtual network so people cannot see me so I am talking to them over Facebook or Twitter or whatever social networks.

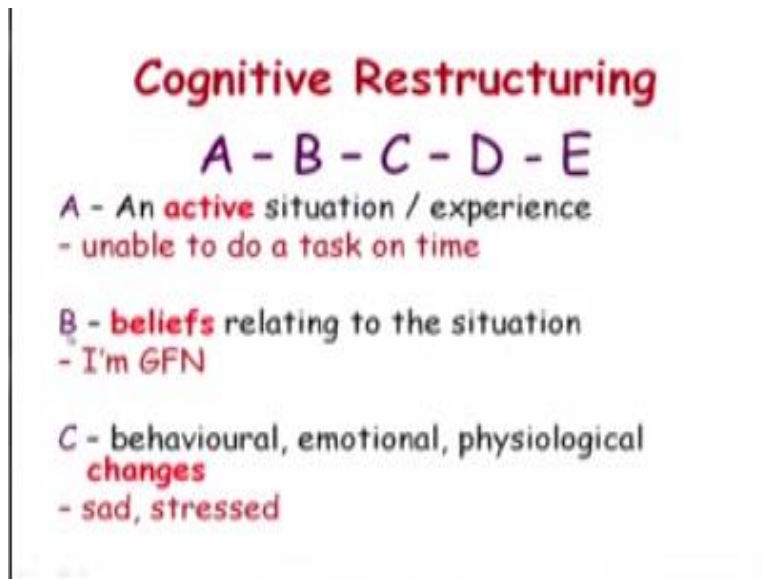
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So the D is identifying the irrational beliefs so after in this the situation after the beliefs are triggered and there are changes in the physiology and the behavior in the mood the next is identifying these irrational beliefs so what are the things that are bothering me what are the thoughts so I will have to take care of using my time properly instead of thinking that I am good for nothing.

So this could be that the alternating behavior pattern so they hear the challenging the belief and I thinking about what are the other ways it can be dealt with that will bring us to E where we are actually trying out the newly learned strategies and finally evaluating them so the D and E in this ABCD model is very important so when we are talking off say we have.

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So in A we have actually the situation so if you are going through an anxiety situation I rightly provoking situation or a stressful situation you can write this down so think about this is one active tasks that you could start doing you think about the last anxiety-provoking situation that you went through where you would ask one of your friends this and do this exercise when you put this down in an ABCD model.

So A would be the situation what had happened B is the what were the beliefs that were triggered what were the thoughts that were triggered C is whatever the behavioral changes what the how the what happened to your mood you could ask these questions what happened to your mood what happened to how we are you feeling were there any physiological changes were there what how did you behave so what were the behavioral changes.

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A - B - C - D - E

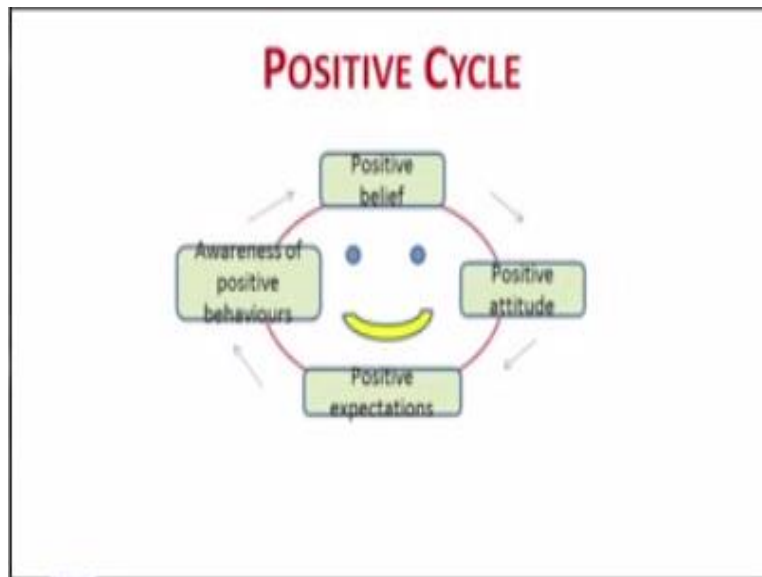
D - identifying irrational beliefs
- I'll have to take care of using my time properly instead of I'm GFN

E - trying out newly learnt coping strategies

And D how did you deal with it so did you actually you can get this they do go by the irrational belief so that would be a maladaptive behavior so avoiding the situation or getting more ill because of the stress or get you actually challenge the belief so did you identify that this is an irrational thought so maybe you know we spoke about the cognitive errors of maximization personalization catastrophization arbitrary inference selective abstraction so you could take this list in front of you and identify that okay.

I was I having any of these ways of thinking errors in thinking patterns working in my case and then you can tryout alternative strategies to deal with it so you have to so here you are your own counselor you are bringing about new techniques and you will try them and see I the next time how it helps you or whether it does.

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So first and foremost you will have to start with the positive belief system so far we were talking about anxiety as a negative feature where it was helping us where it was actually debilitating our performance it was affecting the thoughts so bringing about negative thoughts it was lowering the mood and it was affecting our performance now we are going to take this as a positive cycle so what we are trying to do is we are going to use it as you stress so the belief or the one is that I can deal with this stress I can deal with the I can control the situation.

The other is that this also brings about gives a feedback to the individual that I can I am in control we spoke about learned helplessness earlier and so what we are doing is we are removing that learned helplessness phenomena from the individuals thoughts, so I am NOT helpless I can do things actively to help myself so it starts with a positive belief that I can help myself and that will bring about a positive attitude.

So that will bring about exploding other ideas to helping yourself exploring other avenues and it will also bring about positive expectations, so it is not like oh I am good for nothing so there is nothing in store I can't do much so instead of that it will be more of positive expectations you

will look out for positive ways to deal with things I suppose if you are unable to do a task by yourself you if you have the positive attitude to look for other avenues to deal with it.

So instead of taking the maladaptive behavior of leading the task aside and being on face book or watching two films or just going off to sleep instead of that you will explore other avenues so maybe you will Google other TED talks on the topic or maybe find out people who are working on it so form a team and ask your friends around or maybe go and talk to your teachers but if it is a professional maybe he will try and explore other avenues say if I have lost a job.

I instead of thinking that oh it is no use and there is nothing much that I can do we will explore other avenues to help himself so there will be positive expectations so when there are expectations you will look out for opportunities and more awareness of positive behaviors and improvements so you know even this thing this thought about mastery I can do something and I can do it well that gives confidence that builds confidence no confidence is nothing but a positive feedback loop.

The way it enhances the idea the positive loop that I am NOT I am NOT bad I am good and I can do this well I can I can deal with things so what you need to do is you need to enhance this positive cycle so I would ask you people to write this down that you know what could be your positive belief, say think about a task that you have to do in a couple of days and say put down a purse positive belief.

And then you see what are the expectations you just look at yourself as to what are the positive attitudes that you could take towards it what are the expectations that you may have and how you know over time you see whether these there are improvements and you are actually exploring other avenues and you will see that this positive belief is enhanced.

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2 approaches for coping....



Now that brings us to the situation in control so we primarily discussed about the self control techniques and three of them we will take up in the next session.

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Self control

Constructive self-talk

Cognitive Restructuring

Relaxation and Breathing exercises

Physical Exercise



Healthy Life style

That in the next week session that is of the different techniques of relaxation and physical exercise and health of healthy lifestyle changes but now we get back to the second type of coping techniques or situational control.

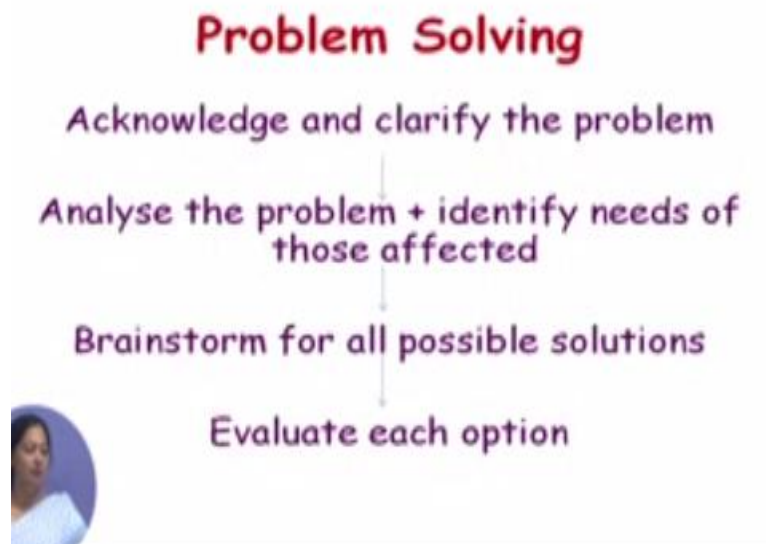
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2 approaches for coping....



So we will discuss about the positive problem-solving techniques primarily assertiveness we are going to take up in the next session.

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So what is problem solving problem solving again says states that you have to acknowledge and clarify a problem you need to have a problem you need to understand the problem well analyze the problem and identify the needs of those affected brainstorm for all possible solutions evaluate each option.

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Problem Solving

Select best option and implement plan

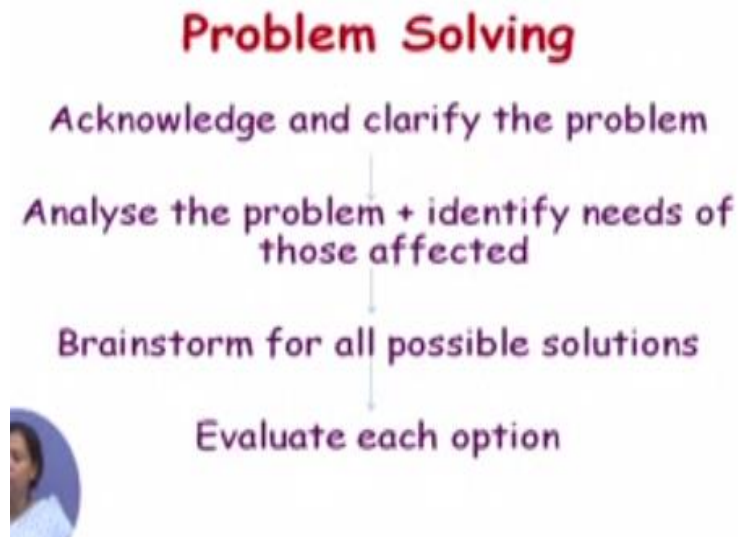


Evaluate the outcome



Select best option and implement plan and evaluate the outcome so most of the times for problem solving.

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Many of you may be thinking that oh this is very simple and I do this very often I do know there is a problem I do not need to think again there is a problem okay and analyzing the problem of your fine I know that I will have to say suppose you are a student and you have to finish you have an exam okay in a week time so you know there is a problem there is an exam and you know the ways to deal with it so you know the analyze a problem you know well there are so many chapters that need to be covered.

And meanwhile there are other submissions that you have to make and along with that you also know that this is a very crucial exam so you have analyzed the problem you have identified the needs and now brainstorming all the possible solutions if I have many times when I asked students they tell me that yes I have done all this so where have you stopped why what happened no I brainstorm that this is the only solution and there generally one solution only.

No that is not true so the most of the times what we do is we just think out loud or I rather think and do not put it down so when we do not put it down explore all the opportunities, so we just think of one or two ways to deal with the situation so many times say if you have an exam and you have submissions to be made so if you put it down on a sheet of paper as a plan for the day

then you will know exactly what US you need to complete around and how many hours you can actually give for each task so or if you for the exam if you just write down how many chapters you need to deal with and around how much time each chapter will take so you will know it very much in detail as to you know approximately how much time would you need to finish something thoroughly finish something with a revision finish something with just a vision just to get a glimpse of it.

Most of the times it is just the vision and there is no revision at all before an exam so now if you so what you can do is you can put it down on a sheet of paper as a flowchart or as a plan and brainstorm all the possible solutions to do with it so if it is for example if you have classes during the day and at night you have your end after that throughout the week after that you have your exams immediately next week then you can make a flowchart where you know exactly how much time you have for to study.

And once you have all the chapters and their sub topics and subtopics written down you know how much time you can put for each day if you are a part of different other groups and societies say the drama society or the music or whatever you also know how much time that will take up so during the day so you could put this down if you have other submissions to make so that would also need some time so instead many times what we do is when.

Because we do not have these things at a in front of us at a glance so you know see evening if you are free for an hour you really do not know what to do or maybe there is so much to do that you cannot structure it as to this has to be done first and then there is a next one, so most of the times what we do is we avoid it and spend more time on the network online or maybe playing a game so now these so you need to brain storm all the possible solutions.

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Problem Solving

Select best option and implement plan
↓
Evaluate the outcome

Evaluate each option select the best option and implement the plan and finally evaluate the outcomes this is again another step of problem solving that is left without so most of the times when we follow a problem solving plan we do not evaluate the outcome the evaluation is very important because that I give you a feedback as to how to deal with it in the next time if you are facing such a situation.

So if you have a if you planned out a technique for the exam next week and after that after the exams are over if you have any of you evaluated that this was a good technique to follow maybe in the next exam or maybe in when you join a job if you are a student now when you join a job later then no during a performance these could be strategies that you could implement, so I would say that these are very simple strategies to follow. But you can start doing it by yourself and become your own stress management coordinator.

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Some tips....

- ▶ Take short breaks
 - ▶ Set priorities
 - ▶ Talk about your stressors with someone and put it in perspective
 - ▶ Participate socially
 - ▶ Develop interests and hobbies
 - ▶ Use humour to de-stress
 - ▶ Develop realistic goals
 - ▶ Anticipate stress
 - ▶ Stop keeping things for later
 - ▶ Get help
-

So some of the tips are if you are very stress take short breaks set priorities as I was talking of you know creating a plan for the day so you know once you have a plan for the day you need to put it down as priority one two three four five you can do it on a larger scale by putting it as a goal setting for the next one week or the next two weeks or next one month or maybe for six months if you are appearing for say a public exams it maybe CRE your cat or something else you can put it down as I have this too to be done in the next six months.

So what are if that is my goal to clear that exam so what are the things that I need to do now so you need to have some short-term goals some intermediary goals and then some long-term goals so first it is very easy to put down the long term goals but we do not realize that how to break that so you cannot finish one physics book in a day one GK book in a day for exams so what you need to break it down.

So what do I need to do now to appear for the exams properly to clear the example after six months so you need to have some short-term goals some intermediary goals and some long-term goals so setting priorities and you know which is the which is a prior I so you put it down as one two three four five and talk about your stresses with someone and put it in perspective we have

discussed about this earlier that we must address stress when there is a stressful situation ignoring it does not help so participating socially so virtually participating with a lot of people I have 10,000 friends does not really help but participating on a face-to-face basis they are actually interpersonal interconnections help the brain to develop, so please understand please remember that it also helps our systems to work better our brains to work better our immune systems to work better and interactions also give us the feedback that is required for the neuron plasticity of the brain.

We enhance our ideas through interactions through understanding facial expressions and that will help you to be more emotionally intelligent so developed interest in hobbies use humor to de-stress this is something that I frequently see students use and this is a very good strategy so if you can enjoy if you can use humor not as a mind queue using humor to de-stress yourself by laughing at yourself for making fun of a situation not by abusing somebody or not by hurting somebody mind that really helps to reduce stress and develop realistic goals respect spoken about goal-setting.

Breaking it into subparts into smaller goals and intermediate goals short term goals and intermediate goals anticipate stress so this you know stressful people will say oh I know all the stressful things that I can actually come across we are not talking about apprehending the unforeseen and the sky falling down so we are not talking of that sort of stress but the preparing yourself say I have an exam and I know that this is what I need to do.

So what is your backup plan so I have a presentation and I have this on a power point on my pen drive what is your backup plan if your pen drive does not work because if it does not work and you do not have a back-up plan then there will be anxiety because of that so if you have a black backup plan then you are more safe now definitely I am talking about very small things that you could do now when you anticipate stress.

I am not talking about the sky falling down stop keeping things for later yes this is a very important thing that you need to keep in mind that's known as procrastination most of the people who are anxious are because of lack of time management and organizing skills who have a

problem with these so what happens is these such individuals generally procrastinate also anxiety in forests in a situation or thoughts about an anxiety situation anxiety provoking situation helps us makes us avoid this situation either in our also in our thoughts when in action so what do we do we keep it for later one of the examples being I am really scared of my guide so I do not meet him so if you have to meet your guide and that is really anxiety provoking one of the things that students generally do is avoiding talking to the teacher.

So they avoid the guy and do not need the person for months so now that you it is always better to address it we also keep another example would be that we keep our the subjects that we hate most as in we do not understand or we do not like we keep it for later to study later now that is a problem because you see it only on the last date for the exam and if you really stress get help talk to people talk to professional.

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To improve planning...

- Lists of tasks to be done posted on refrigerator
 - Choosing one day for appointments and errands
 - Master list for home chores done weekly, monthly
 - Identify individual strengths while exploring resources
 - Ask partner for input
 - Re-evaluate effectiveness
-

So to improve planning some of the things that you could do post it on your post things the urgent tasks that need to be due on your refrigerator on your desktop as a screensaver as an Ever note as a reminder keep one day for your appointments and errands so put it down as a plan for the day and even if it is one of the self control techniques is keep one task that you have decided

pre decided that you will finish hail storm rain whatever happens before you go to bed so that is also a way of enhancing self control I am NOT going to go to bed before I finish my task so do some make a plan for doing the chores of the day so it could be a master list of I need to wash my clothes and you know clean my cupboard and things like that so you have a chart for it and if you have to do it you have an agenda for the day you need to finish it before you go to bed you see that if you start doing this as a practice every day.

Then you will become more systematic and may will be able to deal with to become more confident in dealing with things and that will help you to deal with things much better and identify your individual strengths while exploring resources so once you are starting to work taking up initiating things you will also learn that you have several strengths so identify those strengths maybe you can put it down that well I did not know I could do this maybe this could be a small task for you today.

What are my strengths I did not know I had you could have some people and then learn to enhance those ask people for input and reevaluate effectiveness as I said that a problem solving is incomplete unless you evaluate the process, so you could take this task as a problem-solving to ask and you see how effective it is in your daily life, thank you.