

Module 43

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Stress and Health

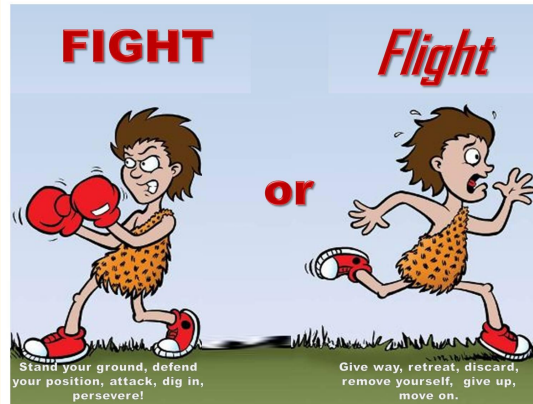


The Main Idea

Whether or not an event is challenging or if one feels threatened by it is entirely subjective. Stress (the process of appraising and responding to such events) arises from how we *perceive* the event (which may be categorized as a stressor), whether it be a catastrophe, a significant change in one's life, or a daily hassle. But it could be positive, a brief, *momentary* period of stress can mobilize the immune system to fend off infections and heal wounds, as well as even motivating one to conquer his or her problems. Should stress be prolonged however, is when we could see an increased risk in chronic disease (mainly in children), people who have lost their jobs have been recorded to experience problems with the heart and death.

Important Points

- Walter Cannon viewed the stress response as a “fight-or-flight” response system.
- Researchers identified an additional stress-response in which adrenal glands secrete glucocorticoid stress hormones.
- Prolonged stress can damage neurons, quickly leading to cell death.
- Facing stress, women may have a tend-and-befriend (support and seek support from others) response. Men may withdrawal socially, turn to alcohol or become aggressive.



Key Terms

1. Tend-and-befriend response-

Under stress, people (especially women) often provide support to others (tend) and bond with and seek support from others (befriend).

2. General Adaptation Syndrome-

Selye's concept of the body's adaptive response to stress in three phases--alarm, resistance, exhaustion

3. Stress-

The process by which we perceive and respond to certain events, called stressors, that we appraise as threatening or challenging

Multiple Choice

1. Which of the following is an example of stress?

- a. Ray is tense and anxious as he has to decide which college to attend.
- b. Sunga is assigned an extra shift at work.
- c. Joe's parents are allowing him to stay home alone while they go away for a weekend.
- d. Linda remembers to repay a friend the \$10 she owes her.
- e. Enrico learns of a traffic accident on the Interstate.

2. The general adaptation syndrome (GAS) begins with

- a. resistance.
- b. appraisal.
- c. exhaustion.
- d. alarm.
- e. challenge.

3. Which of the following is likely to result from the release of oxytocin?

- a. A fight-or-flight response
- b. A tend-and-befriend response
- c. Social isolation
- d. Elevated hunger
- e. Exhaustion

FRQ

Question:

Xavier has a huge math test coming up next Tuesday. Explain two ways appraisal can determine how stress will influence his test performance.

Answer:

- If Xavier sees the test as a challenge he will be aroused and focused on his test performance, so the arousal will effect him positively.
- If Xavier sees the test as a threat (to his grade), he will be too distracted by his stress and this will impact his test performance negatively.

