

## Stress and Coping

- **General adaptation syndrome**
  - Three-stage physiological stress response that appears regardless of the stressor that is encountered
  - Hans Selye
  - Worked with rats and exposed them to stressors
  - Stressors produced host of similar physical symptoms
    - First comes alarm phase (fight-or-flight)-body rapidly mobilizes to its resources to respond to the threat, activation of sympathetic nervous system, first reaction to stressor and resistance diminished
    - Next is the resistance phase-body tries to adapt and cope with its stressor by shutting down unnecessary processes such as digestions, growth, and the sex drive, if body/individual adapts to stressor then increased resistance occurs
    - Last is the exhaustion phase-body's resistance collapses, creating damage that can include susceptibility to infection, tumor growth, aging, irreversible organ damage, or death, alarm reaction sign reappear
  
- **Type A & B personalities**
  - **Type A**
    - Individual demonstrates a competitive orientations towards achievement, a sense of urgency about time, and a strong tendency to feel anger and hostility
    - Risk for heart attacks
  
  - **Type B**
    - Relatively low levels of competitiveness, urgency about time, and hostility
  
  - **Phony Type Bs**
    - People who appear to be Type Bs on surface, but underneath they are tense, hostile, and troubled
    - More risk than Type A for heart attack
  
- **stress and health**
  - decreased immune function in response to grief
  - positive life events led to increased immune functions
  - stress increases spread of cancer
  - stress of caring for someone with chronic illness delays wound recovery
  - engage in behaviors that compromise immune function

- stay up late, eat irregular, drink more
  - increases release of hormones that suppress immune function
    - adrenaline, cortisol
  - chronic stress is major contributor to coronary heart disease
- **Hardiness**
  - Thick skinned, able to take stress or abuse that could be devastating to others
  - Sense of commitment
  - Belief in control
  - Willing to accept challenge
- **Control**
  - Joseph Brody
    - 2 monkeys, executive responds quickly they avoid the electric shock
    - thought being in control led to detrimental health since executives died
    - takes 2 monkey who learned fastest to be in charge so it wasn't random
  - Weiss
    - Did study with rats and added control group
    - Shock more stressful for rat who depended on executive to stop shock
  - Langer & Rodin (1976)
    - Random assignment of control and non-control
    - Given plant and asked to take care of it and chose day for movie night (control)
    - Non-control given plant and nursing home people took care of it and didn't get to chose movie night
    - More death in non-control group
- **Social Support**
  - aid gained through interacting with others
  - women response to stress is to *tend-and-befriend* by taking care of people and bringing them together
  - heart attack victims have slower recoveries if spouse is not supportive
  - longitudinal study of social connections and mortality
    - individuals w/ fewer social connections had greater risk of death
  - Internet usage
    - Gave people internet and computers
    - Internet usage negatively correlated with family interaction
    - Smaller social circle

- More time online, greater the feelings of depression and loneliness
- **Appraisal**
  - primary appraisal-interpretation of a stimulus as stressful or not, is this important to me?
  - Secondary appraisal-determining whether the stressor is something you can handle or not, what strategy can I use to maximize positive outcomes and minimize negative outcomes
  - Threat-stressor you believe you might not be able to overcome
  - Challenge-stressor you feel fairly confident you can control
- **Coping strategies**
  - Repressive coping-avoiding situations or thoughts that are reminders of a stressor and maintaining an artificially positive viewpoint
  - Rational coping-facing the stressor and working to overcome it
    - Acceptance-coming to realize that the stressor exists and cannot be wished away
    - Exposure-attending to the stressor, thinking about it, and even seeking it out
    - Understanding-working to find the meaning of the stressor in your life
  - Reframing-finding a new or creative way to think about a stressor that reduces its threat
  - Problem-focused coping-focus on strategy, decisions
  - Emotion-focused coping-focus on emotions involved, manage strategies
  - Relaxation-technique for reducing tension by consciously relaxing muscles of the body, mindfulness meditation-teaches individual to be fully present in each moment; to become aware of his or her thoughts, feelings, and sensations; detect symptoms before they become a problem
    - Relaxation response-condition of reduced muscle tension, cortical activity, heart rate, breathing rate, and blood pressure
  - Meditation-practice of internal contemplation, a period of quiet, improve control over attention
  - Aerobic exercise-exercise that increases heart rate and oxygen intake for a sustained period
    - Effects result from increases in the body's production of neurotransmitters such as serotonin
    - 3 to 4 times a week for 20-30 min
    - effective anti-depressant for mild depression