

CHAPTER 7: SOCIAL STRESS & HEALTH

- 1) impact of stress on health is substantial
- 2) exposure to it is unequally distributed in a pop.
- 3) members of racial minority groups are burdened by additional stress from discrimination.
- 4) stress can continue over life course → cause of differences in health bet. adv. & disadv. groups.
- 5) impact of stress = reduced when people have ↑ levels of personal mastery (being in control of situations), self esteem, + social support.

★ STRESS: heightened mind-body reaction to stimuli inducing fear or anxiety in the individual.

↳ starts w/ threatening or burdening situation

↳ EX) unpleasant working conditions, financial strain, job loss, divorce, migration, imprisonment, death of spouse, ^{discrimination}

★ COOLEY, THOMAS, + GOFFMAN: reflect symbolic interactionist perspective of human behavior

↳ SYMBOLIC INTERACTION THEORY → individual seen as creative, thinking organism who is able to choose their behavior instead of reacting more/less mechanically to influence of social events

↳ COOLEY → "LOOKING-GLASS SELF"

↳ our self concepts are result of social interaction where we see ourselves reflecting in other people

3-CONCEPTS →

- 1) we see ourselves in our imagination about how we are viewed by the other person
- 2) we see in our imagin. other's judgement of us
- 3) result of what we see in imag. we feel → self-feeling (satisfaction, pride, humiliation)

} CAUSES STRESS !!

↳ THOMAS: "definition of situation"

↳ if def = stable → behavior = orderly

↳ rival def comes → ^{habitual} behavior = disrupted, disorganization/uncertainty

} ability of a person to cope w/ crisis situations = related to socialization experiences that taught them how to handle new situations.

★ SAME CRISIS WILL NOT PRODUCE SAME EFFECT UNIFORMLY IN ALL PEOPLE! ★

↳ comparisons to past crisis → revise judgement / action

GOFFMAN: DRAMATURGICAL or "LIFE AS THEATRE"

↳ people need info about others for social interaction to be possible

1) appearance

2) past exper. w/ similar person

3) social setting

4) info thru person's words/actions

↳ IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

* FACE → positive social value that indiv. claim for themselves, by the line that others assume they have taken during an encounter

↳ image of self projected to others

↳ most important personal possession → center of security/pleasure

"WRONG FACE" → info about person's social worth can't be integrated into their line of behavior

"OUT OF FACE" → participation in encounter w/o line of behav. expected to take

"FACE WORK" → actions match the face they are projecting

↳ 2 Views of Self: 1) self as an image of an indiv. formed from flow of events in an encounter

2) self as a kind of player in ritual game who copes judgementally w/ situation

* SELF IS A SACRED OBJECT *

↳ role specific behavior isn't just about doing the role but about giving the appearance that we are fulfilling it (showing thru outfits, etc)

↳ stress arises when there is failure in this

* KEY VARIABLE IN STRESS: PERCEPTION OF AN INDV. *

* DURKHEIM: LARGER SOCIETY:

↳ as members of society, people constrained in behavior by laws + customs

↳ "SOCIAL FACTS": every way of acting, fixed or not, capable of exercising on the indiv. an external constraint. (Values, norms, + other social infl.)

↳ 1897 STUDY: SUICIDE

↳ social fact caused by societal factors

↳ suggested 4th type of suicide: FATALISTIC

↳ indiv. kill themselves b/c situation = hopeless

OTHER 3 = 1) EGOISTIC: detached from society, on their own and overwhelmed by that stress

2) ANOMIC: dislocation of normative systems, norms/values not relevant

3) ALTRUISTIC: so strongly integrated into demanding society so only escape ^{→ SUICIDE}

↳ avoidance of stress, people rather conform to society rather than taking stress.

↳ due to society's insufficient presence in indiv.

↳ social factors: need for food, shelter, etc and isolation, job loss, COVID → increase smoking/drinking ^{→ STRESS}

↳ social support from family, friends, community can buffer this

* CANNON → real measure of health isn't the absence of a disease but the ability to adapt env.

↳ "HOMEDOSTASIS": adapt to env. → human body prepared to meet internal + external threats to survival (real / symbolic)

↳ EX) stimuli in cities like traffic, loud noises

↳ person's reaction may not match the threat (over/under react)

"FLIGHT OR FLIGHT": pattern of physiological change

* AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYS: controls heart rate, blood pressure, gastrointestinal

↳ automatic functions, not under voluntary control of CNS

↳ balanced betw. relaxation + stimulation → HYPOTHALAMUS

* PARASYMPATHETIC: dominant when there is no emergency.

↳ regulates vegetative process of body

↳ SYMPATHETIC: during emergency → governs autonomic functions + increase heart rate, inhibit bowel mov.