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presents

## Develop coping skills - Ebook

*"The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind." - William James*

Life today is becoming increasingly complex; stress is an inevitable part of life. It is thought that young people today are under more and different types of stress, compared with people from previous generations such as; increased pressure, competition, decreased resources for family support, increased access to means of self-harm, violence in the media and increased use of alcohol, drugs. When coping resources are inadequate stressful events may give rise to unhealthy outcomes. Stress or lack of coping resources may be one factor of many that contribute to suicide.

To successfully coping with life challenges the following are more important;

- Become more knowledgeable about stress
- Understand the process and effects of stress
- Identify your major sources of stress – situations, people, etc.
- Anticipate stressful periods and plan for them
- Develop successful stress management techniques and practice them

Think about...

- What you think?
- How you feel?
- What you do?

In stressful situation

**Model I**

Usually we act first then we feel and think about it

1. Acting
2. Feeling
3. Thinking

In this model, we react to situation

Reflexively

Impulsively

Mostly out of our control

**Model II**

When we think about it first then we feel the importance and finally we act

1. Thinking
2. Feeling
3. Acting

In this model we respond to the situation

Thoughtful

Deliberate

In control

About me,

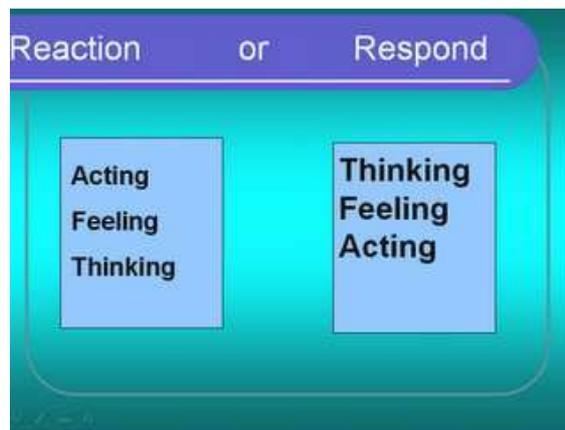
kumarmahi

Research scholar - psychology, in the area of stress coping.

please visit my blog for more details

<http://stress-coping.blogspot.com/>

Thank you



If you trained in such a way you can find a benefit out of your adverse life event

### Thinking, feeling, and acting

When I interact with people during my awareness programme, workshops, I have found many people are not ready to invest time to think about the way they think. Most of them are not aware of their own feelings and actions. Without knowing where we are going, what we are doing, we will not get what we want.

We think erroneously - lack of thinking skills

We feel out of control - poor emotional regulation

We act impulsively - poor self-regulated behaviour

Consider this analogy, our behaviour is like a triggering a gun, our thinking is a bullet, our feeling is loading a gun with bullet. We ourselves or others may trigger the gun either intentionally or unintentionally, can we control after that? There will be no harm if we remove the bullet from the gun before it trigger.

Most of the counseling techniques especially cognitive behaviour therapy focuses on how one think, feel and act. Through proper training we can learn to think constructively, learn to control our unwanted, distressing emotion and we can control impulsive, maladaptive behaviours.

### Threat or challenge

**"People are not disturbed by things but by the views which they take of them" (Epictetus).**

Thinking and feeling process occurs always in our mind in the background. Most of the time it is habitual and automatic, and we are not aware of it. Our actions (behaviour) are only output. Particular set of beliefs, purpose and meaning create particular perspective to our thinking, feeling, and action, which in turn it will give its own outcome or result.

If you change your purpose, meaning or perspective, your thinking, feeling and action will change. You will get different outcome.

You can get what you want by change your perspective, purpose or meaning of the stressful situation.

You need little training and discipline. But you can do it!

### Nature of thinking, feeling and acting

**"You can not always control circumstances. But you can control your thoughts".- Charles Poplestone**

Thinking, feeling and acting are reciprocal in nature. Each one influences and influenced by other two.

#### 1. Our usual thinking will be:

- Inference about the event
- Imagination
- Fantasy thinking
- Solution about the problem etc...
- Slow in nature

This in turn will produce situation specific emotions

Consider this example

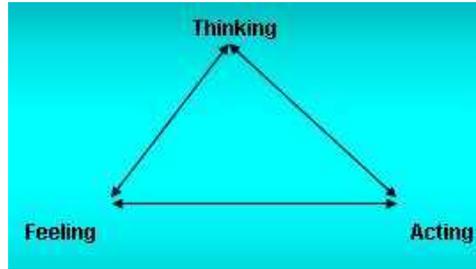
You are ideally sitting in your room. No one is around you.

What will be of your thinking and feeling?

Feel boring, imagine something

**2. When we encounter stressful situation, if the situation is uncertain,**

Speed up our thought  
 Negative in nature  
 Thought will produce mixture of emotions.



**Consider this example**

You are waiting in the interview room. Your heart bounce, you feel uncomfortable, etc  
 You think about the result or consequences  
 You feel anxious, worry

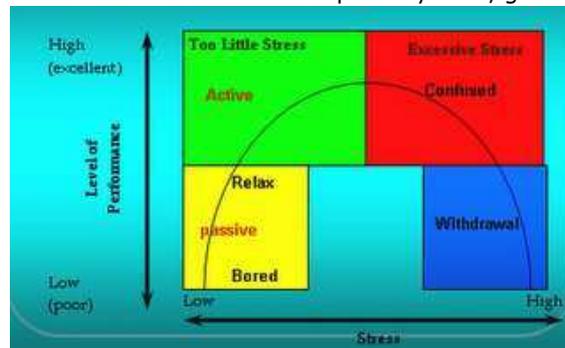
If you waiting for a long time and heard some one was already selected by the interviewer  
 Probably you feel anger

In our day today routine if you practice relaxation, meditation, exercise and dietary habits, it will help you to think and feel better. But if you have unfinished business in your mind or under extreme stress, it will not allow you to relax, meditate or follow daily routine. It is necessary handling of our thinking and feeling before it disturb you, otherwise it will disturb you!

**Stress, Use it otherwise you will loose it!**

***No matter how hard the past, you can always begin again. – Buddha***

What we are doing with our life situation. Where you are now and where you want to go. Either you are using or loosing our life energy. You can check it now. See the four squares yellow, green, red, and blue.



And characteristics which one you belong.

<p><b>Passive</b>                  Avoidance                  Low risk taking                  Lack of motivation                  Blaming                  Dependent                  Procrastinate                  Lack of skills</p>	<p><b>Active</b>                  Optimistic                  Self control                  Personal responsibility                  Goal directed                  Mastery oriented                  motivated                  Thoughtful</p>
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Confused	Under stress
Distracted	Non-Acceptance
Disappointed	Unfinished business
Pessimistic	Dissatisfied
Impulsive	Give up
No clear plan or goal	Withdrawal
Under mild/moderate stress	Helpless, hopeless
	Illness
	Disaster

The colour yellow, green, and red represent the traffic signal



You can stay temporarily if you are in yellow,  
 You can go if you are in green because you have learn to use your stress  
 You must stop if you are in red. You have to check your goal, value, believes, attitude... it is necessary to correct yourself before you proceed.  
 If you are in blue you may need assistance, help, advice from others  
 know more about your stress

" half of the problems in life are because, we act without thinking and the rest half is because we keep thinking without acting"

## Ask 4 questions

### 1. When?

Source: Thinking makes it so  
 Life events: How you take it,  
 Something happens to you and you think it is,

- Unwanted
- Undesirable
- Unacceptable
- Unpredictable
- Uncontrollable
- Unexpected
- Uncertain

### 2. How?

Distress: how do you feel?  
 Your thinking generate feelings  
 Primary emotions

- Anger

- Fear
  - Worry
- Secondary emotions
- Guilt
  - Shame
  - Envy etc..

### 3. Why?

Cause: what you make it

Our personal resources is very important to handle our thinking and feelings

What is lacking in you? Each one is important to handle life events

1. Knowledge
2. Skills
3. Objectives- purpose, meaning
4. Practice
5. Social support

### 4. What?

Effects: what happen to you if you do not handle properly of your life events?

It will affect the three important domains,

- **Personal** – how you feel about yourself in other words how you relate with yourself, your confidence, motivation, self esteem etc..
- **Inter personal** – how you relate with others, withdraw, aggressive, abusive etc..
- **Work/ task** – how you relate meaningfully with your task

#### Ask four questions

1. What you think when you upset of something?
2. How you feel when you think like that?
3. What you can do to reduce distress?
4. If not what will happen to you?

### Be proactive: Increase your personal resource

**"You are today where your thoughts have brought you; you will be tomorrow where your thoughts take you." - James Allen**

To become a survival of the fittest, we need to develop the following five skills. Lack of these skills may create stress.

#### 1. Critical thinking skill

Most of our day to day thinking is far from logical; we quite often jump to conclusions based on irrational ideas. Beliefs and attitudes shapes our perception, which will affect how we approach and cope with our life events. Critical thinking skills help us to reduce the errors in our thinking.

#### 2. Problem solving & decision making skill

Ineffective problem solving and hasty decision making are more likely leads to emotional distress and stressful consequences. Systematic approach to complex problems will help us to improve our quality of life.

#### 3. Communication skill

Most of our communication are partial we are poor listener. Appropriate communication prevents us from much stress. For example aggressive people dominate others; non assertive people avoid the issue.

#### 4. Interpersonal skill

Family and friends are important in helping us to cope with stress. Developing and maintaining satisfying relationship may be necessary during a period of stressful life situation.

#### 5. Self-regulation

We need to regulate our thinking, feeling and acting so that they are most appropriate to the situation which prevent from stress.

These five skills are complementary to each other and are essential for us to become preventive and proactive to our stressful life events.

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