

Stress & Conflicts – Men’s Point Of View

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I. Introduction:

Men are divine and invulnerable by tradition. Stress is inevitable in life. How an individual acts and reacts to stress decides his wellbeing and health. Stress is the number one health threat in the developing and developed nation (WHO- 2009). Biologically men are having a bigger neocerebrum and less governed by their instinct. Men biologically have trouble in expressing their feelings in to words and latter more subjected to chronic physical illness then ,women which is further triggered by psychosocial causes. Men tend to withdraw towards self and women tend to seek emotional support .Stress is linked to six leading causes of death, including cancer, heart diseases, accidents and lung ailments and suicide.

SOURCES OF STRESS:

The causes of stress in men mostly due to health problems ,emotional and relationship problems ,major life changes like death of parents, spouse ,loss of job ,change of place getting married ,stressful family circumstances e.g. economical crisis, chronically illness in the family ,constant misunderstandings in the family , and conflictual belief and value systems

II. Stress and Its Manifestations

Stress is manifested in both physical and psychologically because the mind and the body are connected to each other e.g. stress decreases the immune status and infections are common when there is more stress. Labored breathing, Tightening of chest or chest pain , audible heart rate ,increased or diminished sex drive , myalgia ,neck pain and other body ache without pathological changes , changes in the bowel habits either diarrhea or constipation ,indigestion , perspiration , weight gain or loss and skin problems are all the commonest physiological manifestation of stress due to sympathetic nervous system hyperactivity. The psychological manifestation includes, restlessness, irritability, insomnia, job dissatisfaction , feeling worthless, depressed and unsatisfaction with self, incompetent or inefficient to fulfill the developmental roles, abuse of substances, lacking interest in social and occupational functioning.

HEALTH EFFECTS OF STRESS ON MEN:

- Higher testosterone has been linked with facial attractiveness and strong immune system in men. The stress hormone (cortisol) even play a suppressing role on testosterone.
- Depression and anxiety are mostly inherited by trait and make the individual highly susceptible for cardiac diseases through inheritance.
- Stress causes long term changes in sperm and reprograms the offspring HPA stress axis regulation.
- Chronic stress accelerates the development of prostatic cancer.
- Stress is the common reason for erectile dysfunction in men due to sympathetic nervous system response
- Social withdrawal is common among men due to stress

When measuring “stress”, scientists incorporate knowledge from three traditions. First, the **environmental perspectives** which list the stressors like the frequency of exposures to violent neighborhoods, chaotic workplaces, or countless other contexts. Second, the **psychological perspective** focuses on the how individuals evaluate stressors in terms of emotional distress. And third, the **biological perspective** focuses on biological systems involved in stress responses. Laboratories devoted to uncovering the complexities of stress phenomena therefore assess stress using different measures like questionnaires and the collection of biological markers like stress hormones .whatever the stress scale which we are using in practice are age-old scales which need updating based on the present sociocultural changes .when we are going to use these scales and measure

the stress even the gender difference in the stress level can be a myth. Increased cortisol, adrenalin, and blood pressure are all biomarkers of a stress or the “fight-or-flight” response activated by the perception of stress.

Especially the process of gender socialization makes the men behave differently than women in terms of their stress response. Women seeks variety of psychosocial supports when in stress and expresses as physical problems, where as men tries to suppress it either consciously or unconsciously and land up with psychological problems later manifested as a chronic physiological diseases.

Role ambiguity and harm ambiguity are the predominant stressor creating conflicts in any man. Role ambiguity can occur in the workplace, for instance, when there are no clear guidelines, standards for performance and no clear consequences. Role ambiguity is stressful because people are uncertain about what actions and decisions to make. Harm ambiguity occurs when people are not sure what to do to avoid harm

NURSING IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE:

Nursing views an individual as a holistic being and alteration in the homeostasis of any one dimension of the individual affect an individual. stress management strategies are aimed at having the following assumptions as stated below,

- Thoughts affect every cell in our body.
- Emotions affect the thoughts, and likewise, the thoughts affect your emotions
- Healthy lifestyle practices have a great effect on our body which in turn have profound effects on our thoughts, emotions and relationship.
- Type and the nature of the relationships have a great influence on the overall health and well being.

As Charles Darwin states “It is not the strongest that survive but those most adaptive to change.” Stress innovates, creates if positively perceived and destructs if maladaptive strategies are used. Socialization according to the changing needs of the society will help men to adaptively cope with the stress and conflicts.

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