

# PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH

## THE HEALTH TRIANGLE

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# THE HEALTH TRIANGLE

# MENTAL HEALTH: DEFINITIONS

- -Mental health is defined as 1) being comfortable with yourself, 2) feeling good about your relationships with others, and 3) being able to meet the demands of life.
- -Mental illness: 1) having low self-esteem, 2) incapable to relate to others, 3) not able to cope with problems, 4) having difficulty distinguishing among fantasy, imagination, and reality.

# PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH: HOW?

- Know yourself. ( A prerequisite for being comfortable with it.
- Understand about emotions and learn to cope with and express emotions in healthful ways, ( for good relations with others and prevention of mental trouble ).
- Know about stress and how to cope with it in healthful ways.

# EXPLORING THE SELF

- Self-knowledge: key element in learning to accept yourself.
- Personality: an individual's unique pattern of characteristics, physical, mental, emotional, and social.
- Heredity, culture, environment, and self-concept influence personality.
- Self-concept: beliefs about yourself determined by self evaluation of your strengths and limitations.

# EXPLORING THE SELF

- The self: a complex entity of many selves.
- Ideal self: your conscience.
- Public self: opinion you want others to form of you.
- Private self: is the actual you.
- Ideal, public, and private self influence your personality and self-concept.
- Similar ideal, public, and private self contribute to mental health.

# EXPLORING THE SELF: MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

- Knowing and satisfying basic needs promote physical and mental growth.
- Five levels of needs identified by Maslow: 1) physiological needs: food, water, sleep to sustain life, 2) safety and security, provided by parents, 3) love and affection, provided by the family, 4) self-esteem: acquired as you develop skills, 5) self-actualization: a lifetime process of always doing your best to fulfill all your potentialities.

# EXPLORING THE SELF: DEVELOPING A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

- Examining your philosophy of life is another way of knowing yourself.
- Philosophy of life reflects your values. (your parents influence your values)
- Philosophy of life influences your thoughts. Thoughts influence emotions. Emotions influence performance.

# EXPRESSING EMOTIONS: DEFINITIONS

- Emotions: feelings that arise in response to life situations.
- Happy emotions, e.g., being loved, have a holistic effect on lifestyle and contribute to optimum health.
- Unhappy emotions result from situations of loss and rejection, e.g., loss of love, loss of control, 3) loss of confidence. Negative influence on mental health.

# EXPRESSING EMOTIONS IN HEALTHFUL WAYS

- Learning to cope with / express emotions is important for mental health.
- Anxiety: worry about anticipated/imagined situation. Risk behavior: pretending you are not anxious. Healthful behavior: 1) identify ( what is causing my anxiety? ;how can I deal with the situation?). 2) Exercise.

# EXPRESSING EMOTIONS

- ANGER: usually follows a hurt.
- Bottling it up harmful.
- Express it in healthful ways, e.g., talk ( or pretend to talk ) about your hurt feelings.
- GUILT: feeling of having done wrong.
- Denying it may intensify the feelings of guilt.
- Admit you have done something wrong, apologize, and accept responsibility for your actions. This usually relieves the guilt.

# EXPRESSING EMOTIONS: DEPRESSION

- Depression: feeling of sadness, hopelessness, or helplessness, resulting in loss of pleasure and interest in usual activities.
- Up to 50% of patients are not aware that they are depressed.
- Talking to someone, engaging in exercise, eating a balanced diet, may help; if not, professional help may be needed.

# DEFENSE MECHANISMS

- Instead of expressing emotions, a person may use defense mechanisms.
- A defense mechanism is a behavior that is used to cope with uncomfortable situations or emotions.
- Defense mechanisms may help solve problems by suppressing emotional responses and allowing you time to think.
- It is important to evaluate your use of defense mechanisms, because they may also be used to avoid solving problems.

# DEFENSE MECHANISMS: EXAMPLES

**DISPLACEMENT:** transferring emotions from the original source to another object

**RISK BEHAVIOR:** you take your feelings out on others, alienating them; the conflict is not resolved.

**PROJECTION:** shifting the blame and responsibility for your actions/thoughts to someone else.

**RISK BEHAVIOR:** you do not take responsibility for your actions.

# DEFENSE MECHANISMS: MORE EXAMPLES

**RATIONALIZATION:**  
giving acceptable reasons for a behavior that are not the real reasons

**RISK BEHAVIOR:**  
rationalization keeps you from feeling guilty rather than taking the appropriate action.

**REGRESSION:**  
reverting behavior to childish ways.

**RISK BEHAVIOR:** your behavior is emotionally immature. Problems are handled like you did as a child.

# LIFE MANAGEMENT SKILLS

- Develop a positive self-concept by developing strengths, recognizing limitations, and understanding your feelings.
- Make your ideal, public, and private selves consistent with each other.
- Take steps to satisfy your basic needs.

# MORE LIFE MANAGEMENT SKILLS

- Be aware when you are using defense mechanisms, try to identify what you are trying to avoid.
- Develop a philosophy of life that influences your thoughts, emotions, and body's performance in healthful ways.
- Express love, hurt, anxiety, anger, and guilt in healthful ways.

# MENTAL DISORDERS: TYPES

- **ANXIETY DISORDERS:** Persistent or recurrent manifestations of fear but cause of danger not recognized.( Some anxiety in day-to-day living is normal ).
- Types of anxiety disorders include PHOBIAS, obsessive/compulsive, and general anxiety disorders.
- **DISSOCIATIVE DISORDERS:** Abrupt but temporary loss of memory or identity due to psychological factors.

# MENTAL DISORDERS: MORE TYPES

- **MOOD DISORDERS:** Extreme moods that interfere with daily living such as depression and bipolar disorder. ( It is normal to experience different moods, e.g., loving/happy moods, hurt/anxious moods ).
- **PERSONALITY DISORDERS:** Adults with unusual patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting that interfere with daily living.

# MENTAL DISORDERS: SERIOUS TYPES

- **SCHIZOPHRENIA:** Breakdown of logical thought processes. Delusions. Hallucinations, e.g., delusions of persecution or grandeur in paranoid schizophrenia.
- **SUICIDE:** not necessarily a mental disorder. Often related to loss or rejection, e.g., loss of love, control, confidence, or health.

# MENTAL DISORDERS: SUICIDE

- **SIGNS:** Drastic changes in personality, eating and sleeping habits; withdrawal from family and friends; loss of interest in personal appearance or work...
- **IF SUSPECTED:** Inform others ( family, friends ); encourage suicidal person to talk, but don't give false reassurances that everything will be OK; seek professional help.

# RECOGNIZING MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

- **SIX WARNING SIGNS:** boredom with daily activities; illness and mental distress; chronic anxiety and guilt; failing performance at work; unexpected failure in personal relationships; fear of being unmasked if private and public self are different.

# MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS: WHAT TO DO?

- Change risk behaviors, e.g., lack of exercise.( warning signs indicate it is time to do so ).
- Seek help: this may range from talking to family or friends to consulting a professional mental health specialist.

# STRESS: DEFINITIONS

- **STRESS:** a non-specific internal response of the body to any demand, ( stressor ), made upon it.
- Stressors may be physical, e.g., a race, mental, e.g., sitting for an exam , or social, e.g., asking for a date.
- **EUSTRESS:** a healthful response copes with the stress successfully.
- **DISTRESS:** Unsuccessful coping with, or harmful response to a stress, e.g., you are overwhelmed by anxiety and cannot perform.

# STRESS: HOLISTIC EFFECT

- A stressor in one area of health affects other areas. Examples include:
  - Anxiety ( mental health )
  - Hypertension, peptic ulcer ( diseases )
  - Increased rate of accidents ( safety and first aid ) . It is responsible to avoid driving a car when you are experiencing distress.

# THE GENERAL ADAPTATION SYNDROME

- The body responds to stress in three stages collectively referred to as the GDS.
- The alarm stage: adrenaline is secreted and prepares the body for action ( fight or flight ).
- The resistance stage: attempts to regain homeostasis ( internal balance ); the increased pulse, BP and RR of the alarm stage return towards normal.
- The exhaustion stage: if the resistance stage or a distress is prolonged, harmful changes occur and resistance to disease is lowered.

# STRESS MANAGEMENT SKILLS

- Knowing and using stress management skills helps keep you healthy,
- Diet and exercise are important, e.g., consuming 250 mg of caffeine over a two-hour period may trigger the alarm stage of GAS. Exercise releases endorphins, brings about feelings of well-being, and strengthens the heart and muscles.
- Learn to use techniques such as meditation, or progressive relaxation, to enhance relaxation.

# MENTAL HEALTH: LIFE MANAGEMENT SKILLS

- Assess mental health status regularly: do I have a plan to cope with stress? Do I eat a balanced diet and get enough exercise, rest and sleep...
- Avoid environmental stress, ( e.g., high levels of noise or air pollution ),.
- Talk over your problems with family or friends.
- Engage in a regular exercise program.
- Select friends with healthful habits
- Avoid driving when experiencing distress
- Learn to express emotions in healthful ways
- Be aware of signs of suicide and mental trouble

# GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT: CONCEPTION

- Fertilization occurs when ovum released from ovary is penetrated by sperm to form zygote in Fallopian tube.
- Zygote divides as it moves to uterus to form embryo which implants in uterine wall
- Placenta anchors embryo to uterus. Umbilical cord anchors embryo to placenta and brings O<sub>2</sub> and nutrients from mother to baby and wastes from baby to mother.
- A blocked Fallopian tube can cause an ectopic pregnancy ( extra-uterine ).

# PRENATAL DEVELOPMENT

- Prenatal development is the growth of a baby in the uterus from conception to birth.
- First trimester: by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> month, the embryo is recognized as human and is called a fetus.
- Second trimester: muscles develop. Fetus begins to move.
- Third trimester: development is completed.

# FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE PRENATAL DEVELOPMENT

- The mother's health status, diet, life style, and prenatal care influence outcome.
- Adequate amounts of proteins, Ca, Fe, and vitamins A, B, C, and D important. Poor nutrition can lead to slower fetal growth, premature delivery, low birth weight with increased risk to baby.
- Alcohol, smoking, and all drugs ( except those prescribed by physicians ) must be stopped; they may cross the placenta and harm the fetus.

# PRENATAL CARE

- Proper medical care can detect, prevent, and/or treat problems that may occur in some pregnancies:
- Toxaemia: sudden rise of BP, proteinuria, and edema, after the 20<sup>th</sup> week;
- Birth defects may result from drugs, poor diet, infections, e.g., rubella, or may be genetic;
- Genetic counseling ( if family history of genetic disease ), ultrasound, and amniocentesis ( after 16<sup>th</sup> week ), can decrease risk of birth defects.
- Anti-D vaccine given to Rh-ve mothers immediately after delivery of a Rh+ve baby prevents damage to another Rh+ve baby during the next pregnancy.

# STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

- Throughout the life cycle, from birth till death, physical mental, and social changes occur. Understanding and coping with these changes in healthful ways helps insure optimum health.
- Growth and development in children occur in predictable stages. Specific skills and experiences are acquired at each stage which prepare the child for the challenges of the next stage.

# STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

- Growth and development occur in predictable stages. Skills and experiences are acquired at each stage which prepare the child for the challenges of the next stage.
- Infancy: from birth to 1 year. Infants grow rapidly, and explore their environment especially when they begin to crawl.
- Childhood: 1 year till puberty. Self-esteem, decision making, and competence are acquired .Exposure to caring and loving people is important to foster a sense of worth and acceptance.

# STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

- Adolescence: between 12 and 19 years. Characterized by a growth spurt, 2ndary sex characteristics, existential questions ( what do I believe? ), greater independence from parents and considerable influence of peer groups.
- Parents can contribute to a healthy adolescence by 1) allowing children to develop independently, feel secure and practice self-discipline and 2) maintaining contact with their children by taking an interest in their activities and showing trust and approval.

# ADULTHOOD

- Adults are characterized by independence, self-responsibility, and seeking intimate relations ( the 30s ), adjusting life goals and seeking standards, e.g., quitting an unsatisfactory job and looking for a new one ( the 40s ), and , usually but not necessarily, satisfaction at what they have accomplished ( 50s and older ).

# COMPLETION OF THE LIFE CYCLE: OLD AGE

- Biologically, a person begins to age after maturity, around age 25, when cells die faster than they can reproduce.
- Old age is a state of mind ( you might still be young at age 75 if you keep up to date with current events and stay fit ).
- Chronic diseases in old age, e.g., heart disease, hypertension, and cancer, are often related to correctable risk behavior rather than old age.
- Choosing health-promoting behaviors when young helps insure good health when old.

# AGING: SOCIAL ASPECTS AND PROBLEMS

- Ageism: discrimination against a person based on age.
- Stereotyping: the assumption that people in a particular group will think or behave in a certain way. A common stereotype is that older people fail intellectually. Most people >age 65 are mentally fit. Only a few develop dementia ( deterioration of memory and other mental functions ).
- Loneliness when ageing friends or spouses die.
- Social isolation of older people can be avoided by spending some time with them, and encouraging them to seek new friends and participate in new activities.