THE IMPACT OF STRESS

- According to Healthy People 2000, a report from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:
  - 70-80% of all visits to the doctor are for stress-related and stress-induced illnesses
  - Stress contributes to 50% of all illness in the United States
  - The cost of job stress in the U.S. is estimated at $200 billion annually, including costs of absenteeism, lost productivity, and insurance claims

http://faculty.weber.edu/molpin/healthclasses/1110/bookchapters/stresseffect.htm

COLLEGE STUDENTS AND STRESS

BY DR. GREGORY HALL

- Perceived obstacles to goal achievement, environmental change, life challenges, and periods of significant transition are common stress triggers for college students
- Some stress is positive, but too much stress is negative, and can adversely impact one’s physical health
- Learning to recognize the physical and psychological warning signs of stress is the key to good health
- Maintaining balance between your intellectual, social and personal development is the key to a well-adjusted college experience

HOMEWORK

- NEW: Must use complete sentences.
- Axis III: do not add symptoms of a disorder
  - i.e. insomnia in MDD or GAD
- Axis IV: only list stressors occurring within the past year
- If you list a disorder on Axis I or Axis II, you must give examples of symptoms in section “Criteria met by case and examples”

REVIEW

- Questions from lab or lecture?
- Questions from homework?

AGENDA

- Stress
- Cognitive distortions
- Mindfulness
WARNING SIGNS OF STRESS

• Changes in sleep patterns: taking longer to fall asleep; waking up tired and not well rested
• Changes in eating patterns
• More frequent headaches than is normal for you
• Shorter temper than is normal for you
• Recurring colds and minor illness
• Frequent muscle aches and/or tightness
• More disorganized than normal for you
• Increased difficulty in task completion
• A greater sense of persistent time pressure
• Increased generalized frustration and anger

WHAT MAKES SOMETHING “STRESSFUL”?

• Events that we perceive as endangering our physical/psychological well-being
• Negative events that are
  • Uncontrollable (e.g. loss, natural disasters, illnesses)
  • Unpredictable (e.g. inconsistent parenting, job layoffs, accidents)
  • Change/challenge to capabilities (e.g., exams, new relationships)

PERCEIVED STRESS SCALE

0=never; 1=almost never; 2=sometimes; 3=fairly often; 4=very often
1. In the last month, how often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?
2. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?
3. In the last month, how often have you felt nervous and “stressed”?
4. In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?
5. In the last month, how often have you felt that things were going your way?
6. In the last month, how often have you found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do?
7. In the last month, how often have you been angered because of things that were outside of your control?
8. In the last month, how often have you felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?

PERCEIVED STRESS SCALE

• PSS-10 scores are obtained by reversing the scores on the four positive items, e.g., 0=4, 1=3, 2=2, etc. and then summing across all 10 items.
• Items 4, 5, 7, and 8 should be reverse-scored
• Scores range from 0-40.
• How “stressed” are you?

STRESS-HEALTH CORRELATIONS

• CORRELATIONS have been found between PSS scores and:
  • Upper respiratory tract illness and infection
  • The common cold
  • Bacterial infection in pregnancy
  • Speed of wound healing
  • Coronary artery disease
  • Numerous hormone, neurotransmitter levels
  • Many psychological diagnoses- depression, anxiety, PTSD, sleep disorders, eating disorders

THE COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE
**Cognitive Appraisal**

- Evaluating stimuli is called **cognitive appraisal** and involves using one’s memories, beliefs, and expectations.
- Person’s interpretation of stimulus determines response to it.

**Cognitive Theorists: Explanation of Abnormal Functioning**

Maladaptive thinking (cognitive distortions) is the cause of maladaptive behavior.

- **Examples of cognitive fallacies**
  - **All-or-nothing thinking**: You see things in black-and-white categories. If your performance falls short of perfect, you see yourself as a total failure.
  - **Overgeneralization**: You see a single negative even as a never-ending pattern of defeat.
  - **Mental Filter**: You pick out a single negative detail and dwell on it exclusively so that your vision of all reality becomes darkened, like the drop of ink that discolors the entire beaker of water.

**Other Cognitive Fallacies**

- **Personalization**: You see yourself as the cause of some negative external event which in fact you were not primarily responsible for.
- **Disqualifying the positive**: You reject positive experiences by insisting they “don’t count” for some reason or another. In this way you can maintain a negative belief that is contradicted by your everyday experiences.
- **Jumping to conclusions**: You make a negative interpretation even though there are no definite facts that convincingly support your conclusion.

**More Cognitive Distortions**

- **Catastrophizing** (aka fortune telling): You predict the future negatively without considering other, more likely outcomes.
- **Mind Reading**: You believe you know what others are thinking, failing to consider other more likely possibilities.
- **“Should” and “must” statements**: You have a precise, fixed idea of how you or others should behave and overestimate the consequences of not following these guidelines.

**Identifying Cognitive Fallacies**

1. Joe didn’t get first place in the spelling bee. Now he sees himself as a total loser.
   - **All-or-nothing thinking**
2. Alexandra’s teacher has requested a meeting with her. Alexandra is certain that her teacher plans to tell her that her paper topic sucks.
   - **Jumping to conclusions**
3. Rudy didn’t make the varsity cross-country team. Now he believes that he’ll never be a talented runner.
   - **Overgeneralization**

1. Jose is sure that he’s going to fail his organic chemistry class, even though he’s never gotten less than an A in his life.
   - **Disqualifying the positive**
2. Milan asked Susie out on a date and she said no. Milan is sure that no one will ever go out with him.
   - **Overgeneralization**
3. Karen didn’t get an A on her math exam. She concluded that she’s a failure at life.
   - **All-or-nothing thinking**
IDENTIFYING COGNITIVE FALLACIES

1. Joe and Sam are best friends and are taking a class together. Joe always studies hard and does well, but he usually has to convince Sam to study with him. Before the 2nd exam, Joe studies by himself and gets an A. Later Joe finds out Sam didn’t study and got a D and feels responsible for Sam’s poor grade since he didn’t ask him to study with him.
   • Personalization

IDENTIFYING COGNITIVE FALLACIES

1. Joel is climbing a route that he has tried 20 times and has never topped out on. About halfway up, his hand slips off a greasy hold and he takes a short fall. He continues the route and tops out for the first time. Even with his success, the only thing Joel can think about for the rest of the day is falling halfway through the route.
   Mental Filter

ALL-OR-NOTHING THINKING VS. OVERGENERALIZATION

1. Joe got 3rd instead 1st place in the spelling bee. He feels like a failure.
   • All-or-nothing-thinking
2. Milan asked Susie out on a date and she said no. Milan is sure that no one will ever go out with him.
   • Overgeneralization
3. Karen didn’t get an A on her math exam. She feels like a loser.
   • All-or-nothing-thinking
4. Rudy didn’t make the varsity cross-country team. Now he believes that he’ll never be a talented runner.
   • Overgeneralization

GROUP TIME!!!

• Get in small groups and make your own examples for each type of cognitive distortion!
• Try to come up with one cognitive distortion in each category.
• Then come up with an “adaptive” cognition for each cognitive distortion.

WAYS TO DEAL WITH STRESS

COPING WITH AND REDUCING STRESS

• How do you deal with stress?
  • Social support
  • Exercise
  • Faith
  • Music
  • Finding meaning in or benefit from stress
  • Retail therapy?
  • Substances?
MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUES

- What is mindfulness?
  - “A means of paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally.”
- Use of guided mindful meditation, yoga, stretching, group dialogue, homework assignments, audio CDs

HOW HAVE MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUES BEEN INCORPORATED IN PSYCHOTHERAPY?

- Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy
  - Prevention of relapse in depression
- Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction
  - Chronic pain and stress reduction
- Foundation of Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills Training

MBSR

- Mindful standing yoga
- Your thoughts?
  - Were you Purposeful? Present? Nonjudgmental?

MINDFULNESS IN DBT: PARTICIPATE

- ENTER INTO PRESENT EXPERIENCES. Let yourself get involved in the moment, letting go of ruminating about the past, about the future, about yourself or others. “Opt in.” Engage. Immerse yourself in the present.
- THROW YOURSELF COMPLETELY INTO activities of the current moment, not separating yourself from ongoing events and interactions.
- BECOME ONE WITH WHATEVER YOU ARE DOING, completely forgetting yourself.
- ACT INTUITIVELY from wise mind. Do just what is needed in each situation—a skillful dancer on the dance floor, one with the music and your partner, neither willful nor sitting on your hands.
- Go with the FLOW, respond with spontaneity.

NON-JUDGMENTALLY

- See but DON’T EVALUATE. Take a nonjudgmental stance. Just the facts. Focus on the “what,” not the “good” or “bad,” the “should” or “should not.”
- UNGLUE YOUR OPINIONS from the facts, from the “who, what, when, and where.”
- ACCEPT each moment; each event is like a blanket spread out on the lawn. It accepts both the rain and the sun and each leaf that falls upon it.
- DISCRIMINATE the constructive from the destructive, the helpful from the harmful, the wholesome from the unwholesome, the safe from the dangerous, but don’t judge them good or bad.
- ACKNOWLEDGE your values, your wishes, your emotional reactions, but don’t judge them.
- When you find yourself judging, DON’T JUDGE YOUR JUDGING.

DBT EXERCISE: THROWING SOUNDS
ALTERATIONS IN BRAIN AND IMMUNE FUNCTION PRODUCED BY MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

Sample: 25 assigned to MBSR group, 16 assigned to WLC

Measures
- EEG: pretreatment, posttreatment, 4 months follow up
- Antibody titers after wk8 vaccination

STRESS AND ANXIETY LEVELS

BRAIN ACTIVITY

Meditators showed greater left lateralization immediately after MBSR. These results endured 4 months after treatment.

ANTIBODY TITERS