

## **Stress and Coping: From Theories to Application**

Deepali Sharma, Ph.D.

Days and timings: Thursday, 10:00 a.m. to noon;

Location: Carl-Zeiss-Str., 3 SR 129

Seminar begins: April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2006

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There are two parts to the seminar, first being the nature of stress. We will examine research on questions such as: Why do some people become distressed as a result of stress whereas others do just fine? When is stress a good thing? How do early stressful experiences influence the developmental trajectories for individuals? The second part deals with coping responses and here we will explore the concept of stress management and interventions at individual, group, and community level. We will further examine research issues such as: Is there evidence that some coping responses are better than others? Are coping responses situation-specific? For addressing the above questions we will consider various conceptualizations of stress and coping responses, as well as theoretical and methodological issues related to research on stress, coping, and outcomes. We will also explore current research on physiological, cultural, and developmental components of stress and coping. This seminar aims to foster critical and active thinking and discuss ways to apply ideas to ourselves towards becoming more proactive and in-control.

### **Course Outcomes**

1. Students will be knowledgeable about current research on stress and coping theoretical models.
2. Students will be able to better understand the processes of stress and coping across a wide spectrum such as developmental outcomes, common and extreme stressors and variability in circumstances.
3. Students will know how to formulate stress and coping analysis and plans.

### **Teaching Methods**

Formal presentation of content through oral presentations, reading assignments, in-depth class discussions, and submission of written papers will be utilized to achieve course objectives. Details are discussed below:

Student 'Autobiography': A paper about yourself!

Goal Writing: Weekly, intermediate and long term goals.

Personal Stress Management Journal: During the semester, you will be requested to maintain a personal stress-management journal. The journal should include weekly typed entries, at least 2 pages per week. The purpose is to become more self-aware of your own stress and

coping responses, and observe and trace development of other coping techniques. Journal content is confidential, and will be returned to you after the final submission.

Oral presentations: On a topic of your choice based on the list provided in the syllabus. It is possible for two students to make a combined presentation and divide the sub-topics amongst themselves. In addition, the presenters will be expected to act as facilitators, meaning that they would have read the assigned readings carefully and then would discuss thought-provoking questions to the class as a whole. Questions may address how the readings integrate with broader course topics, hypotheses generated by the articles, strengths and weaknesses of the study, directions for further research, and so forth.

Final Exam: The final exam will be a paper based on the course consisting of both multiple choices and subjective questions.

Attendance: It is my assumption that one of the reasons you have decided to take this course is to learn something about stress and coping. Attendance will be taken regularly, primarily so I can learn names. In most courses there is a direct relationship between class attendance and grades and finally, it is nice to see familiar faces every week!

Extra classes: Semesters have a way of starting slowly but then they suddenly seem to develop wings after the first two weeks. The first exercise in our coping with the stress of a ‘flying semester’ will be to have some extra classes on Saturdays and these are mentioned below in the weekly schedule. I promise to fill the Saturday classes with some weekend flavour to compensate for the extra attendance.

...And finally: If you want to contact me, meet me personally regarding the syllabus, the assignments and such, please do not hesitate. I have included my e-mail address and office telephone number and will welcome student appointments.

## **Syllabus**

Below is mentioned the weekly schedule, readings that are required for the week, and also recommended readings (given after the end of the syllabus).

### **Main Book:**

Aldwin, C. M. (1999). Stress, Coping, and Development: An integrated perspective. New York: The Guilford Press.

### **Week 1: 20<sup>th</sup> April 2006**

Introduction: Outlining the course expectations, personal introductions, and discussing the class plans for the semester. This will be followed by the introduction and overview chapter from the book ‘Stress, coping, and Development’.

### **Foundations of Stress and Coping: Theory, Research, Practice**

#### **Introduction and Overview**

Aldwin, C. M. (1999). Introduction and purpose of the book. Chapter 1 (pp. 1-11).

Aldwin, C. M. (1999). Conceptual issues in stress research. Chapter 2 (pp. 12-20).

### **Week 2: 27<sup>th</sup> April 2006**

- **Due:** Student Autobiography (2-3 pages)

#### **Stress: History, Definitions, Research Applications**

Aldwin, C. M. (1999). Definitions of stress. Chapter 3 (pp. 21-43).

Aldwin, C. M. (1999). Design and measurement issues in stress research. Chapter 4 (pp. 44-69).

Hobfoll, S., Shwarzer, R., & Chon, K. (1998). Disentangling the stress labyrinth: Interpreting the meaning of the term stress as it is studied in health context. *Anxiety, Stress, and Coping, 11*, 181-212.

### **Week 3: 4<sup>th</sup> May 2006**

#### **Coping: Conceptual Issues and the Role of Emotion**

Aldwin, C. M. (1999). Conceptual issues in coping research. Chapter 5 (pp. 72-82).

Folkman, S., & Lazarus, R. S. (1991). Coping and emotion. In A. M. Monat and R. S. Lazarus (Eds.), *Stress and coping: An anthology* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) (pp. 207-227). New York: Columbia University Press.

Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1991). The concept of coping. In A. M. Monat and R. S. Lazarus (Eds.), *Stress and coping: An anthology* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) (pp. 189-206). New York: Columbia University Press.

Stone, A., Kennedy-Moore, E., & Neale, J. (1995). Association between daily coping and end-of-day mood. *Health Psychology, 14*, 341-349.

### **Week 4: 11<sup>th</sup> May 2006**

#### **Coping: Theoretical Issues and Psychosocial Dimensions**

Aldwin, C. M. (1999). Theoretical approaches to coping. Chapter 6 (pp. 84-107).

Moos, R. H., & Schaefer, J. A. (1993). Coping resources and processes: Current concepts and measures. In L. Goldberger and S. Breznitz (Eds.), *Handbook of stress: Theoretical and clinical aspects* (2nd ed.) (pp. 234-257). New York: The Free Press.

Prinstein, M., La Greca, A., Vernberg, E., & Silverman, W. (1996). Children's coping assistance: How parents, teachers, and friends help children cope after a natural disaster. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*, 25(4), 463-475.

Tennen, H., Affleck, G., Armeli, S., & Carney, M. (2000). A daily process approach to coping: Linking theory, research, and practice. *American Psychologist*, 55, 626-636.

### **Week 5: 18<sup>th</sup> May 2006**

#### **Stress, Coping and Development**

Aldwin, C. M. (1999). Developmental studies of coping. Chapter 12 (pp. 216-239).

Aldwin, C. M. (1999). Transformational coping. Chapter 13 (pp. 240-270).

Costa, P. J., & McCrae, R. R. (1993). Psychological stress and coping in old age. In L. Goldberger and S. Breznitz (Eds.), *Handbook of stress: Theoretical and clinical aspects* (2nd ed.) (pp. 403-412). New York: The Free Press.

Hyson, M.C. (1983). Going to the doctor: A developmental study of stress and coping. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 24 (2), 247-259.

### **Week 5: 20<sup>th</sup> May 2006 (Saturday)**

#### **Positive aspects of stressful events**

Affleck, G., & Tennen, H. (1996). Construing benefits from adversity: Adaptational significance and dispositional underpinnings. *Journal of Personality*, 64, 899-922.

Folkman, S., & Moskowitz, J. (2000). Positive effect and the other side of coping. *American Psychologist*, 55, 647-654.

Lyubomirsky, S. (2001). Why are some people happier than others? The role of cognitive and motivational processes in well-being. *American Psychologist*, 56(3), 239-249.

Suh, E., Diener, E., & Fujita, F. (1996). Events and subjective well-being: Only recent events matter. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 70(5), 1091-1102.

**Week 6: 25<sup>th</sup> May 2006** (Holiday but seminar is rescheduled for **Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> May 2006**)

**Stress Management**

- Carlson, C., & Hoyle, R. (1993). Efficacy of abbreviated progressive muscle relaxation training: A quantitative review of behavioral medicine research. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 61*(6), 1059-1067.
- Deckro, G., Ballinger, K., Hoyt, M., Wilcher, M., Dusek, J., et al. (2002). The evaluation of a mind/body intervention to reduce psychological distress and perceived stress in college students. *Journal of American College Health, 50*, 281-287.
- Lazar, S., Bush, G., Gollub, R., et al. (2000). Functional brain mapping of the relaxation response and meditation. *Autonomic Nervous System, 11*(7), 1-5.
- Rice, P. L. (1992). Progressive muscle relaxation: Premises and process. In P. L. Rice, *Stress and health* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) (pp. 286-307). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Scheier, M., & Carver, C. (1993). On the power of positive thinking: The benefits of being optimistic. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 2*, 26-30.

**Week 7: 1<sup>st</sup> June 2006**

**Health**

- Folkman, S., & Greer, S. (2000). Promoting psychological well-being in the face of serious illness: When theory, research, and practice inform each other. *Psycho-Oncology, 9*, 11-19.
- Hammen, C. (2005). Stress and Depression. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology, 1*, 293-319.
- Petrie, K., Booth, R., & Pennebaker, J. (1998). The immunological effects of thought suppression. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 75*(5), 1264-1272.
- Siegel, S. D. (2005). Stress and health: Psychological, behavioral, and biological determinants. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology, 1*, 607- 628.

**Week 7: Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2006**

**Personality and Coping**

- Bolger, N. (1990). Coping as a personality process: A prospective study. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 59*(3), 525-537.

- Brissette, I., Scheier, M., & Carver, C. (2002). The role of optimism in social network development, coping, and psychosocial adjustment during a life transition. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82(1), 102-111.
- Day, A., & Jreige, S. (2002). Examining Type A behaviour pattern to explain the relationship between job stressors and psychosocial outcomes. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 7, 109-120.
- Hewitt, P., & Flett, G. (1996). Personality traits and the coping process. In M. Zeidner & N. S. Endler (Eds.), *Handbook of coping: Theory, research, applications* (pp. 410-433). New York: John Wiley.

### **Week 8: 8<sup>th</sup> June 2006**

#### **Acculturative Stress, Coping, and the Role of Culture**

- McCarty, C., Weisz, J., Wanitromanee, K., et al. (1999). Culture, coping, and context: Primary and secondary control among Thai and American youth. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 40, 809-818.
- Berry, J. (2003). Conceptual approaches to acculturation. In K. M. Chun, P. Balls Organista, and G. Marin (Eds.), *Acculturation: Advances in theory, measurement, and applied research* (pp. 17-37). Washington DC: American Psychological Association.
- Essau, C., & Trommsdorff, G. (1996). Coping with university-related problems: A cross-cultural comparison. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 27, 315-328.
- Organista, P. B., Organista, K. C., & Kurasaki, K. (2003). The relation between acculturation and ethnic minority mental health. In K. M. Chun, P. Balls Organista, and G. Marin (Eds.), *Acculturation: Advances in theory, measurement, and applied research* (pp. 139-161). Washington DC: American Psychological Association.

### **Week 9: 15<sup>th</sup> June 2006 (Holiday but seminar is rescheduled for Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> June 2006) Recap of topics covered so far and preparation for the final test**

### **Week 10: 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2006**

**Final test!**

### Further recommended readings:

- Aldwin, C. M. (1991). Does age affect the stress and coping process: Implications of age differences in perceived control. *Journal of Gerontology*, 46, 174-180.
- Coyne, J., & Racioppo, M. (2000). Never the twain shall meet: Closing the gap between coping research and clinical intervention research. *American Psychologist*, 55, 655-664.
- Dohrensend, B. P. (1998). *Adversity, stress and psychopathology*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Encyclopedia of Stress (2000). New York: Academic Press.
- Evans, G. W. & English, K. (2002). The environment of poverty: Multiple stressor exposure, psychophysiological stress, and socioemotional adjustment. *Child Development*, 73(4), 1238-1248.
- Folkman, S., & Lazarus, R. (1985). If it changes it must be a process: Study of emotion and coping during three stages of a college examination. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 48(1), 150-170.
- Goldberger, L. & Breznitz, S. (Eds.) (1993). *Handbook of stress: Theoretical and clinical aspects* (2nd ed.). New York: The Free Press.
- Jensen, M., & Karoly, P. (1991). Control beliefs, coping efforts, and adjustment to chronic pain. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 59, 431-438.
- Lazarus, R.S. (1999). *Stress and Emotion: A New Synthesis*. New York: Springer.
- Lehrer, P. M., & Woolfolk, R. L. (1993). (Eds.). *Principles and practices of stress management* (2nd ed.). New York: The Guilford Press.
- Miller, T. W. (Ed.). (1997). *Clinical disorders and stressful life events*. Madison, CT: International Universities Press, Inc.
- Monat, A. M., & Lazarus, R. S. (Eds.) (1991). *Stress and coping: An anthology* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: Columbia University Press.
- Seeman, T., Dubin, L., & Seeman, M. (2003). Religiosity/spirituality and health: A critical review of the evidence for biological pathways. *American Psychologist*, 58, 53-63.
- Smith, J. C. (1993). Active coping: Cognitive and combination approaches. In J. C. Smith, *Understanding stress and coping* (pp. 254-268). New York: Macmillan publishing company.
- Smyth, J., & Pennebaker, J. (1999). Sharing one's story: Translating emotional experiences into words as a coping tool. In C.R. Snyder (Ed.), *Coping: The psychology of what works* (pp. 70-89). New York: Oxford University Press.

- Sue, D. W., & Sue, D. (1990). *Counselling the culturally different: Theory and practice* (2nd ed.). New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- Uno, D., Uchino, B., & Smith, T. (2002). Relationship quality moderates the effect of social support given by close friends on cardiovascular reactivity in women. *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 9(3), 243-262.