

Cyber Psych Links for

GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY: WITH SPOTLIGHTS ON DIVERSITY

Chapter 11

Life is short and stress is bad. Stress is bad. It can be the source of all sorts of problems, both psychological and physical. In fact, stress is often the underlying culprit for dozens of psychological (and physical) disorders. What is important to keep in mind, however, is that to experience stress is not disordered. To experience stress is quintessentially normal. What matters is how a person deals with—or copes with—the stress that occurs in his or her life. The Internet being what it is, when searching for stress-related websites, you surely will discover many “self-help,” “here is the best way to deal with stress” websites. Actually, most such sites are quite genuinely trying to be helpful, and many truly are. What I have focused on for the list of sites below are those that are sites that are related to issues discussed in Chapter Eleven.

For simplicity sake (again) I will organize this issue into just two sections, the first dealing with the nature of stressors and stress, the second addressing mechanisms for coping with stress.

STRESSORS AND THE NATURE OF STRESS (pp. 390-398)

“Stress” is a strange concept in psychology in that it is a response (to those stressors we encounter), and it acts as if it had stimulus properties (we are stimulated to do something to rid ourselves of stress—or at least to reduce it. These sites focus on the nature of stress and draw heavily from the work of Hans Selye.

<http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/nakedscience/stress/stressors.as>

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The Science Museum of London maintains this full (and fun) website. One part of the site is called, “Naked Science.” It is made up of scientific issues that affect “everyday life.” One such issue is *stress*. At this site you will find a slightly different slant on most of the issues we’ve discussed in Chapter 11.

<http://www.stress.org/Mementos.htm>

What a pleasant find! an article—with photographs—on “Reminiscences of Hans Selye and the birth of “stress.” It is a moving and significant little site, part of <http://www.stress.org>, which you also will find well worth a visit. The latter is the website of the American Institute of Stress.

<http://www.brainconnection.com/topics/?main=fa/selye>

An extensive essay in three parts on “Hans Selye: The Discovery of Stress.” It fills in the details that you just do not find in an introductory level textbook. Do not worry; it is not too technical, and it isn’t terribly long.

STRATEGIES FOR COPING WITH STRESS (pp. 399-403)

I hope that you are by now convinced that avoiding stress altogether is simply not possible. The best we can hope for are means of dealing with the stress we experience in our lives. Some of the strategies that people use are very effective. Sadly enough, some people fall into habits of using strategies to fight the stress in their lives that are not very useful at all. These sites look at both possibilities.

<http://www.mindtools.com/smpage.html>

This site, from MindTools is certainly very helpful and is very educational.

<http://www.imt.net/~randolfi/StressLinks.html>

The purpose of this website is to provide links to other sites dealing with “stress management and emotional wellness”—and there are tons of links here. There is a section on “Stress Management for College Students.” Explore! I would only caution (as a reminder) that you attend to the caveat from the site “Inclusion of a website’s link on this page does not necessarily imply endorsement of that site’s health related content. Users are reminded that anyone can post a Web page and an Internet presence does not assure content reliability or validity.”

<http://www.isma.org.uk>

The site of The International Stress Management Association, which originates in London, you probably could see no difference between stress in the UK and stress in the USA. The links on the homepage include one called simply “Links.” It is a very extensive list.

<http://www.stresstips.com>

A site is from Australia. What I like about it is that it is a simple, no-nonsense site. For example, the homepage has a link to “200 Stress Tips.” Check it out!

PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE PHYSICAL HEALTH (pp. 404-409)

Scientists have long appreciated that there is a link (or that there are links) between a person's mental health and his or her physical health. At some level, the conclusion is obvious. Of course, someone with a physical ailment is likely to feel depressed to some extent. Of course, someone who is depressed—much less delusional and hallucinating—is going to act in ways that are likely to produce physical symptoms. What health psychologists (and many others) are coming to realize is the subtlety of the many relationships between psychological and physical health. If nothing else, the observation that so many deaths (particularly in “Western” cultures) are caused (or exacerbated) by individual behaviors is reason for the increasing popularity of health psychology.

<http://www.apa.org/journals/hea.html>

The APA website is for its journal, *Health Psychology*. Online access is severely limited. Still, there always are a number of articles that can be accessed for free.

<http://www.health-psych.org>

Division 38 of the American Psychological Association is Health Psychology, and this is its website. Almost all of it is relevant and topnotch. Perhaps the most valuable link on this homepage is the one to “Online Resources.”

<http://www.healthpsych.com/index.shtml>

“Research, viewpoints, and practical suggestions about the practice of health psychology in medical and rehabilitation settings.” Who could ask for more? Check out the link “Health Psychology Factfinds.”

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs>

A most helpful source of up-to-date data. How many teenagers smoke? How many Americans have STDs? What is the overall picture of health in the United States? Maintained by the National Center for Health Statistics, here you will find answers to all such questions.

PROMOTING HEALTHY BEHAVIORS (pp. 409-414)

We have seen that psychology often has two faces. One involves the picture of those who are seeking to understand psychological functioning and engage in scientific research in order to do so. The other involves those who take current knowledge of psychological functioning—limited though it may be—and apply it to real-world problems. We call these psychologists, “scientist-practitioners. This differentiation is very clear in health psychology. In this section, we focus on two examples of psychological practice: establishing programs to help people stop smoking and establishing programs to reduce the incidence of STDs, AIDS in particular.

<http://www.ashastd.org/stdfaqs>

<http://www.cdc.gov/std>

There are many, many websites devoted to STDs, HIV/AIDS, in particular. These are some of the best, most reliable, up-to-date, and informative. The first is from the American Social Health Association. The second is from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.