

Stress: Two Sides of a Coin

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Introduction

To cope with a stressful situation, the human body channels its energy; heart rate increases, breathing accelerates and alertness increases. This is a reaction to adapt to the constraints of the environment. It is therefore important to avoid stressful situations as much as possible and to work on the perception of these and the response to them.

Negative and Positive Side of Stress

The concept of stress is still unclear for researcher. Until now, we often differentiate two forms of stress: the good and the bad [1,2]. On the side of "good stress", we place the motivation, the desire to succeed as well as the positive reactions that occur when meeting a challenging situation: surprise, interest, greater creativity, self-transcendence and perseverance (to name that these) [3]. On the side of "bad stress", there is anxiety, the fear of failure and this panoply of reactions that make difficult situations even more difficult: head or stomach, dark thoughts, irritability, difficulty concentrating, and more [4-10]. Does this mean that stress is a necessary evil? In fact, it's up to us to choose how do we react to events? It is present when we mobilize resources to better perform. However, it is associated above all with those moments when we feel overwhelmed by events and our ability to adapt is put to the test. We note that when it comes to their university education, some students are passionate about the opportunity to take on new challenges. For others, this idea is inevitably accompanied by scary questions: "How am I going to get there? Where would I find time?" [11]. Each of us reacts differently when faced with a new or demanding situation. The signs of stress can be classified into four broad categories: physiological, cognitive, emotional and behavioral responses [12-14]. For each of these forms of stress, estimate how often you usually react. The body's reactions are the easiest to recognize. They once prepared us to fight or flee: the heart rate and breathing accelerate, the blood pressure increases and the muscles tense [1-3,6,12,13,15-17]. Today, it is unusual to encounter a survival situation at the corner of a university corridor [18,19]. This is why symptoms such as heavy sweating, headaches (caused by blood pressure), urge to urinate, and stomach upset (caused by muscle contraction) are often more disturbing than necessary. Stress also affects the way we think. When confronted with obstacles, some people tend to overestimate the difficulty. They quickly feel overwhelmed by negative thoughts and easily anticipate the worst. This stress can cause memory lapses, prevent concentration, make decision

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making more difficult and cause insomnia. Not really what you need in an exam session! Stress can be the source of many emotions. Some suddenly appear: surprise, anger, fear [20,21]. They can be difficult to control. Others, such as irritability and impatience can gradually settle. They are sometimes a sign of a long accumulation of small worries and frustrations that can severely affect the quality of life. For some people, prolonged exposure to stress can even lead to depression [22,23]. Stress can lead us to change our lifestyle. For example, some people lose their appetite while others cannot help nibbling. Behavioral responses to stress can affect our health and that of others. This is the case for example when one increases his consumption of cigarette or alcohol "to relax". Fortunately, there are better ways to relax and solve your problems in the long run. A healthy lifestyle is the best defense against stress [2,12,16,24,25]. When you're in top shape, it's easier to deal with everyday surprises. You know the habits to adopt: maintain a healthy diet, sleep enough, get regular exercise and avoid alcohol and cigarettes. Of course, no one expects you to get there overnight! Learning to see the bright side is a developing talent. A speech positive inner work often goes hand in hand with good communication skills, negotiation and problem solving. Speaking to "I" (I do not appreciate this delay) rather than calling others (you always arrive late!) is an

example of social skill that relaxes interactions [26]. Surround yourself with friends who possess these qualities can help you develop these skills in turn.

Perspective from Negative to Positive Side of Stress

The first step in managing stress is finding the source. Subsequently, one can look for ways to limit it. For example, you can end a relationship that brings more stress than pleasure or delegate certain tasks to colleagues [27,28]. Since stress is a

matter of perceptions, it can be beneficial to work on how to see things. Indeed, it may be necessary to learn to play down various situations. By accepting that it is not always possible to control certain aspects of it, one can concentrate one's energy on concrete actions. The help of a specialist can be useful to reframe the perception of stressful situations. In addition, adopting healthy lifestyle habits can help to overcome stress. Sleep, among other things, is an important factor in health and well-being. A tired person has a lot more trouble coping with stress. Some good nights sleep can change everything.

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