

## LECTURE - 15

### MANAGEMENT OF ANGER AND STRESS

#### MANAGEMENT OF ANGER

In the chaotic world of today, day to day life situations are filled with a lot of negative emotions leading to anger, stress, and depression, fear, insecurity, threats, disappointments, and frustrations are common problems in almost every society, which generate a lot of anger in human mind. Emotions are very complex in their origin and in their effects. Emotions appear early in life and have significant impact on emotional reactions. Each emotion has an inherently adaptive function, but growing children must learn to regulate and modify their emotion expression, so that they do not become maladaptive. Emotions and emotional styles are the building blocks of a person's unique, relatively stable, and consistent pattern of personality, which dispose him or her to feel, think, and behave in a particular way

Anger, the most often expressed human emotion, expressed several times a day by any individual can be the consequence of many internal and external factors **Internal factors** include the type of personality, lack of problem solving skills, unpleasant memories, effects of hormones, anxiety, depression, hostility, tension, agitation, problems of the nervous system, etc. the presence of a prior negative affect state may intensify anger and lower the ability to control self **External factors** include negative parental practices, situational and environmental factors (traffic jams, barking dogs, horn honking, loud noise, etc.), effect of peers and media, socio-economic status, social stress, etc.

In today's fast growing, competitive, and technologically advanced life, positive emotions have lost their meanings. Terrorist activities around the world have threatened humanity and made everyone feel insecure all the time. Many negative emotions especially insecurity and fear can be transformed into the emotion of Anger. Hence people at every developmental stage, from a small child to an old person, are in the grip of the deadliest emotion that is Anger. Anger among school children is increasing day by day. Students are known to carry weapon in their school bags: massacres using guns are being reported in schools around the world. In youths, emotional problems and marital disappointments are increasing, leading to a number of negative emotions. Unfortunately, youth often indulge in aggression, and commit serious crimes like robbery, driving accidents, drug abuse, dating violence, and date rape. Sensation seeking and other impulse control behaviours are also on rise, which have strong relation with anger and aggression .

Gender roles affect a number of aspects in our lives. Emotional expression including anger is one of such aspect. Research in gender difference in expression of anger is conflicting. These gender differences in anger expression may be due to developmental or socialization differences among boys and girls. social upbringing of boys and girls affects anger expression .It is generally seen that girls are socialized to be calm, not to be angry at any cost. Generally, females are expected to be emotional, sensitive, and nurturing in interpersonal relationships, which differentiate them from males in their behaviours. Throughout their

development, girls internalize their negative feelings because they are aware that anger expression is likely to result in social rejection and emotional distress.

### **Why do we need to manage our anger?**

Feeling angry is a normal reaction, which is functional for an individual but when it leads to behaviours like aggression and violence; it becomes a source of distress to the individual and others. People do not generally understand the long –term emotional distress and physical ill effects caused by anger and they continue to bear the negative consequences of anger. Anger is a major cause of straining and often spoiling inter-personal relations. In a fit of rage, a man can spoil or destroy a good relationship, which has taken “ages” to be built, in a matter of few seconds or minutes. By losing one’s patience and self-control, a provocative situation is created for self and for others.

Anger hampers growth, productivity, and effectiveness. It hampers work output whether in the family or workplace. It incapacitates a person from seeing things from the right perspective, rationally, and objectively. Some people feel angry most of the time, whereas others report feeling angry very rarely. A person with continuous episodes of anger has a five-time greater chance of dying before the age of 50. Anger elevates blood pressure, increases risk of stroke, heart disease, cancer, depression, and other physiological problems.

Hence, anger management or learning to control your anger is a must for every human being, be it a small child, a young person, or an elderly citizen. It is important to handle your anger in a positive manner. If you learn some basic anger management techniques then you can get a sense of self- control over your inner or external responses to various situations.

### **Anger Management Tips:**

- Make a list of things that make you angry with this you can identify if there are some unmet needs and the feelings you have regarding these. Once the true feelings have been analyzed then they can be constructively expressed, instead of losing one’s temper.
- Make a detailed analysis of each episode of anger both past & present. Like what made you angry? Who made you angry? How long did your anger last? How did you behave & feel? Whom did you hurt emotionally? Do you feel your anger was justified etc?
- Develop Empathy: Empathy means the ability to understand the situation of others.
- Develop Tolerance and patience: Recognize that all problems cannot be resolved immediately. When you start trying to control anger it may be difficult initially, but it is possible as a first step to at least reduce its frequency and intensity. Learn to analyze the situation neutrally without any emotional involvement. Rational thinking control temper.
- Remember ‘smile and the world smiles at you, cry and you cry alone. If you greet someone with a smile and a nice hello, you will receive a nice response in return. If on the other hand, you respond with a frown on your face or approach someone with a

grumpy face it will hamper effective and positive communication and you are likely to provoke anger in the other person.

- Learn to trust others. Trust reduces trigger for anger.
- Learn to divert attention from your anger through massage therapy, gardening, physical exercise in any form—running, jogging, swimming, etc.
- Light music in the background can help in relaxation.
- Doing creative things calms your mind like painting or drawing, making handicraft items or pottery, knitting or embroidery etc.
- Humor defuses anger. Read, listen or tell jokes, or watch a cartoon or comedy when you are feeling angry. Each person will have to do a trial and error and choose a way that helps him best to calm down and control anger.
- Count 10-100 before you speak out when you feel angry, counting is a good way to control angry words.
- Practice meditation as it helps in case one has an angry temperament. Meditation is known to have a calming effect and reduce the episodes of anger.
- Get a partner to help you It could be your spouse, friend, relative or anyone whom you are close to and take his/her help to achieve the goals you set e.g., ‘I will not get angry for a day’, I will not fight for one week’, I will not shout or yell for month.
- Learn progressive muscle relaxation. Progressive muscle relaxation involves tensing and relaxing various muscle groups. There is a five –point tension relaxation cycle that you go through for each muscle group
  1. Focus: Focus attention on a particular muscle group.
  2. Tense: Tense the muscle group.
  3. Hold: Maintain the tension for five to seven seconds.
  4. Release: Release the tension in the muscle group.
  5. Relax: Spend 20-30 seconds focusing attention on the letting go of tension and further relaxing of the muscle group.
- You can chant a mantra Like ‘OM’ or ‘Om Namai Shivaya’ chanting of OM brings tranquility to mind.
- Walk away when another person is shouting. When you are angry you should go away from that situation and sit alone quietly in a garden under a tree to calm down.
- Expend your anger before you meet the person you are very angry with. Imagine the person sitting in front of you and permit yourself to say all you wanted to. That will take away all your pain anger and resentment.
- Learn to be at peace with yourself being alone gives time for self-reflection, which leads to self-awareness and helps self-improvement.
- Look into the mirror when you are angry to see an unpleasant face.
- Improve your time management. Don’t set up unrealistic timetables and deadlines
- Practice a healthy lifestyle. Eat healthy, exercise, and have adequate sleep Lack of sleep causes sleep deficits and sleep deprivation syndrome that manifests as irritability and temper outbursts.
- Learn to think and express positive emotions. Learn to accept and recognize that YOU can be wrong and be the first to admit it.

- Learn to ask for forgiveness and also learn to forgive. Forgiveness is also a tool for reducing anger, and increasing self-esteem and hopefulness toward one's future .
- Don't lose your temper during discussions or arguments. Changing the way we think works very well. This is called cognitive reframing. Try to replace your angry and irrational thoughts by more rational and calm thoughts.

## MANAGEMENT OF STRESS

Stress is a common problem that affects almost all of us at some point in our lives. Learning to identify when you are under stress, what is stressing you, and different ways of coping with stress can greatly improve both your mental and physical well being.

### What is Stress?

Stress is the combination of psychological, physiological, and behavioral reactions that people have in response to events that threaten or challenge them. Stress is derived from the Latin word "*stringere*" which means "to draw tight. Stress is a general term applied to the pressures people feel in life. Stress is your body's way of responding to any kind of demand. It can be caused by both good and bad experiences. Stress can be good or bad. Sometimes, stress is helpful, providing people with the extra energy or alertness they need. Stress could give a runner the edge he or she needs to persevere in a marathon, for example. This good kind of stress is called **Eustress**. When people feel stressed by something going on around them, their bodies react by releasing chemicals into the blood. These chemicals give people more energy and strength, which can be a good thing if their stress is caused by physical danger. But this can also be a bad thing, if their stress is in response to something emotional and there is no outlet for this extra energy and strength. Unfortunately, stress is often not helpful and can even be harmful when not managed effectively.

### Causes of Stress

Many different things can cause stress -- from physical (such as fear of something dangerous) to emotional (such as worry over your family, finances or job.) Identifying what may be causing you stress is often the first step in learning how to better deal with your stress. Some of the most common sources of stress are:

1. **Survival Stress** - You may have heard the phrase "fight or flight" before. This is a common response to danger in all people and animals. When you are afraid that someone or something may physically hurt you, your body naturally responds with a burst of energy so that you will be better able to survive the dangerous situation (fight) or escape it all together (flight). This is survival stress.
2. **Internal Stress** - Internal stress is when people make themselves stressed. Have you ever caught yourself worrying about things you can do nothing about or worrying for no reason at all? This is internal stress and it is one of the most important kinds of stress to understand and manage. This often happens when we worry about things we

can't control or put ourselves in situations we know will cause us stress. Some people become addicted to the kind of hurried, tense, lifestyle that results from being under stress. They even look for stressful situations and feel stress about things that aren't stressful.

3. ***Environmental Stress*** - This is a response to things around you that cause stress, such as noise, crowding, and pressure from work or family. Certain things are beyond your control. Identifying these environmental stresses and learning to avoid them or deal with them will help lower your stress level.
4. ***Fatigue and Overwork*** - This kind of stress builds up over a long time and can take a hard toll on your body. It can be caused by working too much or too hard at your job(s), school, or home. It can also be caused by not knowing how to manage your time well or how to take time out for rest and relaxation.

### **How does stress affect you?**

Stress can affect both your body and your mind. People under large amounts of stress can become tired, sick, and unable to concentrate or think clearly. Sometimes, they even suffer mental breakdowns. If you are suffering from extreme stress or long-term stress, your body will eventually wear itself down. But sometimes, small amounts of stress can actually be good.

Some **short-term stress** -- for example what you feel before an important job presentation, test, interview, or sporting event -- may give you the extra energy you need to perform at your best. But long-term stress -- for example constant worry over your job, school, or family -- may actually drain your energy and your ability to perform well.

### **Physical and mental signs of stress**

**Long-term stress** or stress that is occurring over long periods of time can have an even greater effect on your body and mind. Long-term stress can affect your body by:

- Changing your appetite (making you eat either less or more)
- Changing your sleep habits (either causing you to sleep too much or not letting you sleep enough)
- Encouraging 'nervous' behaviour such as twitching, fiddling, talking too much, nail biting, teeth grinding, pacing, and other repetitive habits
- Causing you to catch colds or the flu more often and causing other illnesses such as asthma, headaches, stomach problems, skin problems, and other aches and pains
- Affecting your sex life and performance
- Making you feel constantly tired and worn out

Long-term stress can also have serious effects on your mental health and behavior. If you are under stress for long periods of time, you may find that you have difficulty thinking clearly,

dealing with problems, or even handling day-to-day situations as simple as shaving, picking up clothes or arriving somewhere on time. Some mental signs of long-term stress include:

- Worrying and feeling anxious (which can sometimes lead to anxiety disorder and panic attacks)
- Feeling out of control, overwhelmed, confused, and/or unable to make decisions
- Experiencing mood changes such as depression, frustration, anger, helplessness, irritability, defensiveness, irrationality, overreaction, or impatience and restlessness
- Increasing dependence on food, cigarettes, alcohol, or drugs
- Neglecting important things in life such as work, school, and even personal appearance
- Developing irrational fears of things such as physical illnesses, natural disasters like thunderstorms and earthquakes, and even being terrified of ordinary situations like heights or small spaces

While occasionally experiencing one or two of the above symptoms may not be cause for concern (everyone has a few nervous habits and difficulties in their lives!), having a number of these symptoms may mean you are under more stress than you think. But realizing you are under stress is the first step in learning to deal with stress.

When you've recognized you're stressed, but what can you do? There are a number of long-term strategies you can take that include changing your lifestyle, removing yourself from stressful situations, and accepting the times when you will be under stress, but for immediate stress relief – STOP, BREATHE.

#### **For quick relief from stress:**

- Breathe deeply
- Relax your muscles
- Make a change. Step back from what you're doing and/or what's stressing you; Turn on music and dance around. Go get a cool class of water or juice, or a hot cup of cocoa or herbal tea. Go outside for a breath of fresh air and enjoy the sun, rain, or snow. Take yourself out of your stressful situation for a few minutes and do something different! You'll come back relaxed and with a much better perspective on the situation.
- **Laugh aloud.** Laugh at a comic strip. Laugh at a movie you just saw or joke you just heard. Laugh at yourself. Just try not to laugh at other people -- that would make you guilty of causing others stress.

#### **How to lead a stress free life?**

While quick fixes can make a difference, sometimes we need to make larger changes in our life to deal with stress. Again, keeping your body healthy helps you bounce back more quickly from stress and can have a great impact on your mental stress levels and health.

- Exercise regularly
- Adopt a hobby
- No smoking
- Eliminate or reduce caffeine
- Eat Healthy
- Sleep regularly and have enough sleep
- Learn relaxation techniques like meditation etc.
- Avoid overusing alcohol
- Don't take drugs
- Identify what is causing stress
- Recognise what you can change
- Reduce the intensity of your reactions
- Re-examine your attitude.
- Be positive. Don't crib for what you don't have rather count your blessings.
- Examine your priorities in life
- Organise yourself
- Develop emotional support system and use it
- Let the stress come out. Laugh. Cry. Scream
- Don't blame yourself. Some stress can't be avoided. Do your best and Leave upon nature to take its own course.