DELHI LAW ACADEMY

PSYCHOLOGY & BEHAVIOUR

SYMPTOMS & EFFECTS OF STRESS

All aspects relating to Stress & Stress Management have been simplified and summarized by the Delhi Law Academy in 20 pages.

This sample contains the first 5 pages…

SYMPTOMS OF STRESS:

•	The way one responds to stresss varies depending upon his/her personality, early upbringing and life experiences.

•	Everyone has their own pattern of stress response. Hence, both the symptoms and their intensity varies from individual to individual.

•	The symptoms of stress can be physical, emotional and behavioural.

Emotional symptoms include:

•	Becoming easily agitated, frustrated, and moody

•	Feeling overwhelmed, like you are losing control or need to take control

•	Having difficulty relaxing and quieting your mind

•	Low self-esteem, lonely, worthless, and depressed

•	Avoiding others

Physical symptoms include:

•	Insomnia - lack of sleep

•	Low energy

•	Headaches

•	Nervousness and shaking, ringing in the ear, cold or sweaty hands and feet

•	Upset stomach, including diarrhea, constipation, and nausea

•	Aches, pains, and tense muscles

•	Chest pain and rapid heartbeat

•	Frequent colds and infections

•	Loss of sexual desire and/or ability

- Dry mouth and difficulty swallowing

- Clenched jaw and grinding teeth

Cognitive symptoms:

- Forgetfulness and disorganisation

- Poor judgment

- Constant worrying

- Racing thoughts

- Inability to focus

- Being pessimistic or seeing only the negative side

Behavioural symptoms of stress include:

- Changes in appetite — either not eating or eating too much

- Increased use of alcohol, drugs, or cigarettes

- Procrastinating and avoiding responsibilities

- Exhibiting more nervous behaviours, such as nail biting, fidgeting, and pacing

EFFECTS OF STRESS:

- There are **four major effects of stress**:

  - <u>Emotional</u>

  - <u>Physiological</u>

  - <u>Cognitive</u>

  - <u>Behavioural</u>

Emotional Effects

- Those who suffer from stress are far more likely to experience mood swings and show erratic behaviour that may alienate them from family and friends.

- Emotional effects are expressed in terms of certain psychological symptoms such as anger, anxiety, depression, nervousness, irritation, tension, boredom, aggressiveness, moodiness, hostility and poor concentration.

Physiological Effects

- Stress influences the biological system of the human being.

- When the human body is placed under physical or psychological stress, it increases the production of certain hormones, such as adrenaline and cortisol.

- These hormones produce marked changes in heart rate, blood pressure levels, metabolism and physical activity.

- Although, this physical reaction will help us to function more effectively when we are under pressure for short periods of time, it can be extremely damaging to the body in the long-term effects.

- Stress leads to increasing heart rate, constriction of blood vessels, increase in blood pressure and increase in breathing rate.

- In long term, this may result into malfunctioning of internal gland and consequently the body disorder (biological illness).

Cognitive Effects

• If pressures due to stress continue, one may suffer from mental overload. This suffering from high level of stress can rapidly cause individuals to lose their ability to make sound decisions.

• Cognitive effects of stress are poor concentration, and reduced short-term memory capacity

Behavioural Effects

• Stress affects our behaviour in the form of eating less nutritional food, increasing intake of stimulants such as caffeine, excessive consumption of cigarettes, alcohol and other drugs such as tranquillisers etc.

• Sometimes stress produces anxiety, apathy, depression and emotional disorder. This leads to impulsive and aggressive behaviour.

• Some of the typical behavioural effects of stress seen are disrupted sleep patterns, increased absenteeism, and reduced work performance.