

A study of Stress Management Techniques to Overcome the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

Managing Stress is the biggest challenge especially if we are talking about the current scenario of Covid-19 outbreak; this is very strenuous for each and every individual to overcome by it. In this article we can get an overview about the stress and its management techniques, which can work in this pandemic situation. Stress is very common concept in today's era. Stress can differ for any person or any situation. Stress management includes different techniques like proper planning, listening body needs, listening to mind's needs, asking for help, time management, relaxation exercise, approaches based on mindfulness. This article assess and study the different symptoms, causes and aspects of stress, stages of stress and approaches related to stress management. The aim of the study is to identify the stressors, symptoms of stress and how to manage that stress to overcome the anxiousness of covid-19. There is a process intended to create and maintain a positive environment to beat the stress, which is generated by the pandemic. This article is based on secondary data collected through various secondary sources i.e. Articles, news, papers, blogs. The study was undertaken to assess the stress management techniques to overcome COVID-19 Pandemic.

Key words: Stress Management, Eustress, distress, COVID-19, Social Distancing

Introduction

This is Era in which individual's carries a lot of burden and pressure related to their family, work, parenting, relationships and many more simultaneously, which creates a big trouble in their lives and ultimately it generates stress. Stress is a common phenomenon of modern life. Stress can have different definition for each and every individual, as every human being is different, their views, thoughts, beliefs, their mind everything is different. We can't define it in same manner for every individual but as per the definition of the dictionary stress is "Stress is state of any physical, mental, emotional and behavioral reactions to any perceived demands or threats" Stress is generally occur if pressure of any situation is greater than the resources any person have to deal with that circumstances. It can be due to so many reasons, which any person can identify as it can be vary from person to person. We can relate same thing with the recent situation of pandemic COVID-19, as per the definition, stress arises if any person don't have resources to overcome the pressure generated by the demanding situation, COVID-19 is that pressure which all human beings are feeling all around the world. As resources to deal with COVID-19 is negligible in comparison to its dreadfulness. No vaccine is available, no authentic and verified treatment is available all over the globe. This is creating a real anxiousness in between human beings globally. Stress susceptible people experience many health related problems and experience difficulties in their live. Even though stress can't get totally removed from the individual's life but yes it can be minimized by using different stress management techniques, which can help individuals to leading a healthy and joyous life. That's why is important to talk about this stress management techniques to overcome or we can say to reduce the stress level in this pandemic situation, which can generate a big stress level for countries as well, it is necessary for countries too, that their citizens should be relaxed and able to manage their stress, so that no tremble situation arises in country. As it is said that what happened to any person is just 10% rest 90% is their attitude and reaction towards the situation. So if individuals will be able to manage their stress they

can help their country indirectly by creating a positive environment and it is well said that if you will not manage stress then that stress will manage you, if that stress will manage your mind and thoughts then it can create trouble for you and for others too by using you in such a manner in which you will not be able control your emotion, reactions and attitude in terms of aggressiveness, in terms of spreading negativity, any country can't bear any negativity for of now. This is battle for everyone to beat the COVID-19 definitely physically but mentally simultaneously. These stress management techniques will help individuals to cope with their stress.

Statement of the problem

Stress is a common phenomenon of modern life. That is the biggest challenge in this COVID-19 pandemic, to managing it properly is the foremost concern for any country on the priority basis, to keep calm their citizens and giving them strength to cope up with the stressful situation by managing it properly. Stress susceptible people experience many health related problems and experience difficulties in their live. Even though stress can't get totally removed from the individual's life but yes it can be minimized by using different stress management techniques. Any country can't bear any negativity for of now. This is battle for everyone to beat the COVID-19 definitely physically but mentally simultaneously. These stress management techniques will help individuals to cope with their stress. The principle aim of this research is to examine and study of different stress management techniques which can work in this COVID-19 pandemic situation as an overall to dealing it.

Research Methodology

Secondary research of this paper is got examined through different books, internet, business journals and magazines, desk research, library and newspaper articles. For the purpose of researching the different stress management techniques, which can work effectively in pandemic situation, it was relevant to research through the usage of all of the above. The secondary research indicated effective way and methods to overcome the stress .This is based on qualitative method and studying the ways of managing stress by using Secondary data sources available i.e. Articles, blogs, videos, case studies etc. as per the content relativeness of stress management.

Types of Stress

1. Positive Stress (Eustress)

All stress doesn't come in negative category as it is said that "**Not All Stress are bad**". Some stress can be healthy. But it can also cause problems too; the secret to living with stress is to know about, how to manage it properly. Without some stress, people wouldn't able to get done a lot properly. Insufficient positive stress may leave us feeling bored. Some examples of positive stress is that is kind of releasing extra burst of adrenaline hormone, that helps in finishing examination paper, winning at any sports, or meet any other challenge is positive stress.

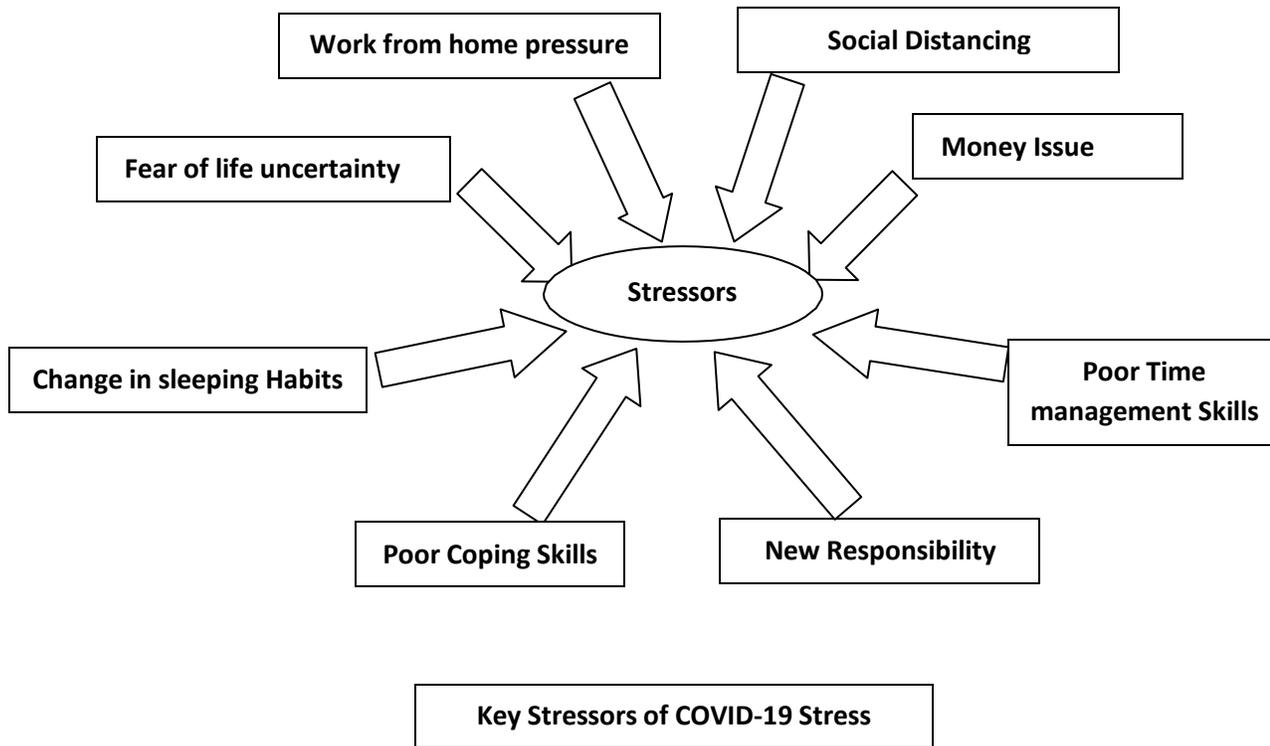
2. Negative Stress (Distress)

As per the mentioned above in positive stress, if any individual is feeling stressed but he is not capable enough to get return in a relaxed state, this stress becomes negative. It can leave us feeling overburdened. As the resources which are available to cope the stressful situation is not appropriate in comparison to the pressure their life has given to them. The changes in your body start to take their toll, often leading to mental and physical exhaustion and illness.

Stress generated by COVID-19 pandemic comes in negative stress category, as the stress which is generated as because of the pandemic situation is kind of stress by which can't get rid of within few hours, and to came in relaxing situation again is not at all easy task.

Stressors

Stressors are those factors, which cause the stress in any individual, there are so many stressors, which can create stress, but here we are going to discuss only those stressors which we can relate with the COVID-19 situations.

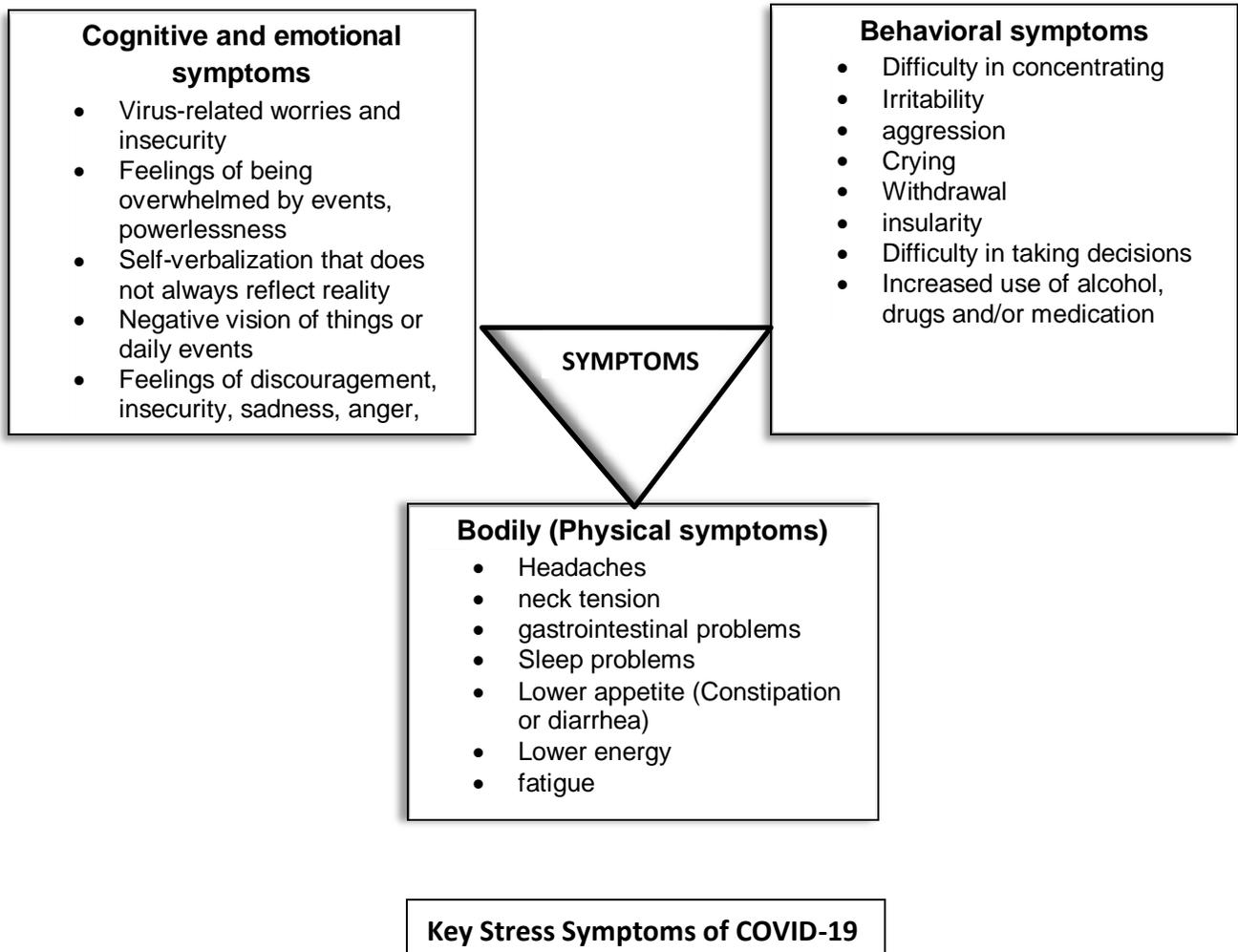


COVID-19 is spreading like anything now days, everybody is living in fear of what will happen in future, what will happen to them and to their family is biggest fear for every human being. They have to complete their task by doing work from home, which too creating real mess in their life, now they have to be in the family atmosphere but need to work for their organization, which their companies are expecting, , to fulfill their expectations they are working day and night to complete their task, which is creating stress. no socialization is allowed, social distancing is real problem of stress , humans are social animals, they can't live without their friends, society, which is generating stress in mind of individuals, and money is also a strong stressor, as without money there is nothing, companies are doing cost cutting by throwing out employees or by cutting their salary. Money is big concern for lower class employees, workers works on wages in factories, contract based labors etc. which is creating stress, now coming towards the issue of, time management, they are not able to managing their time properly, both in case of peoples having extra time or in case of lack of time, both is creating stress because of not managing their time properly.

Next issue is new responsibility, as peoples are at home, new responsibilities of dealing with home chores with work from home for companies are giving tough time, especially for the working women, and poor coping skills to that situation is actually creating real issue in life of humans, that require proper balancing in their life, and strength of their mind which requires proper training of mind to cope up with any circumstances. Last issue which I found so relevant, that change in sleeping pattern is also creating trouble in case of stress, as their mind is trained for particular sleeping time, which suddenly got changed because of pandemic situation, everybody is at home, now all are sleeping late in night and are waking late too, which is creating trouble for mind and it is creating stress in individuals. These all stressors are creating negative thoughts in their mind and fear of life uncertainty is difficult to overcoming it, which is generating stress.

Symptoms of COVID-19 Stress

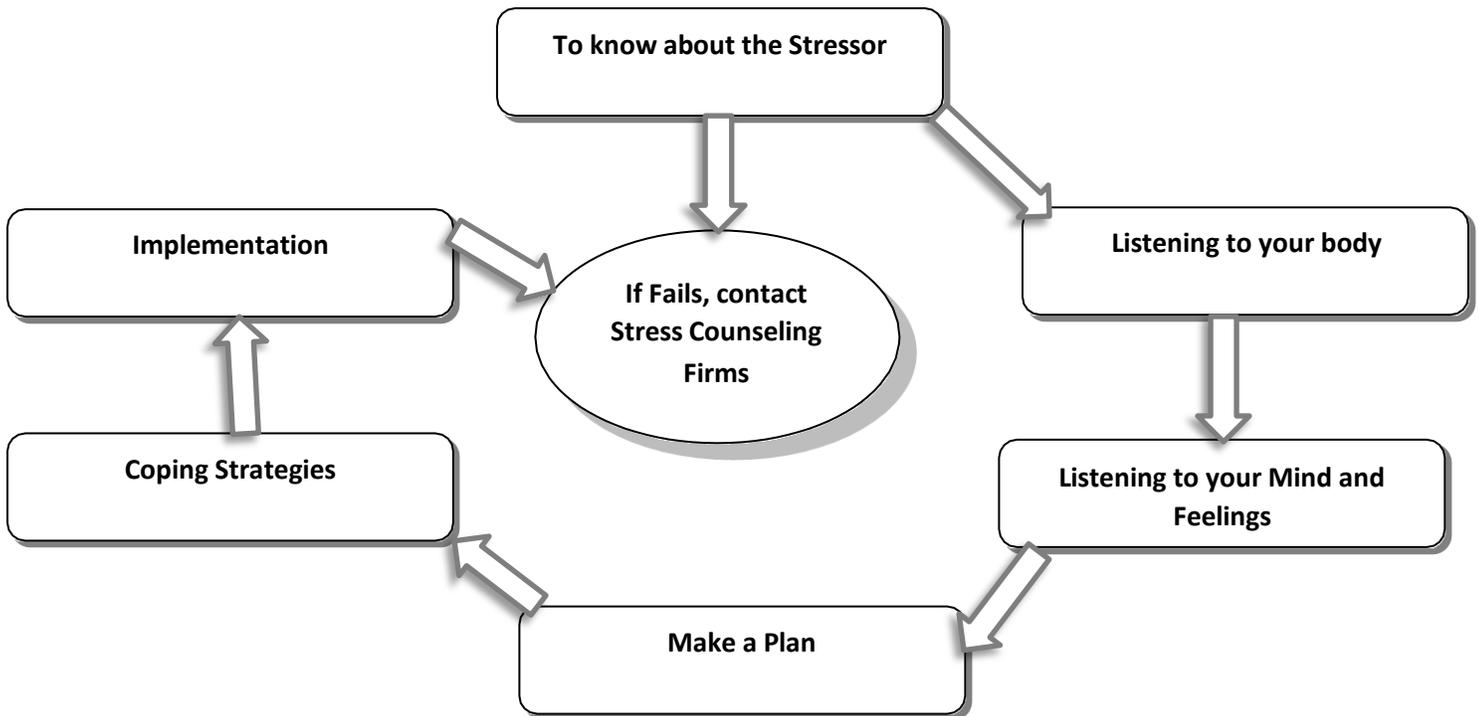
Stress can be judged by the different symptoms, which we can see and judge on the basis of reaction, behavior like, sweaty palms, nervousness, headache, lack of sleep, moodiness, frustration, aggression, anger, lack of concentration, memory problem, feeling of out of control, trouble thinking clearly etc. but here we are going to discuss on Symptoms related to COVID-19 stress ,which can be Physical, mental, behavioral features which is indication of existing stress because of this pandemic situation, these symptoms can helps individuals to identify that they are suffering from COVID-19 Stress, still consulting with doctor is required , as these symptoms can be related to any serious health issue too.



Stress Management

Stress management is the way, techniques and programs to deal with the stress in individual's life, intended to help that person in dealing with the stress. Main aim of stress management is to reduce the stress level in individuals life to lead better functioning of day to day activity.

Conceptual framework for managing Stress level in COVID-19 Pandemic



To Know about the Stressor

First step towards the stress management is to know about that there is some stress. If we accept there is a problem than half problem gets resolved. To solving it first step any individual should take is start noticing and gathering information about which stressor is bothering him, as everyone is different , their stressor will be different too, one cause which can bother one person is not necessarily will bother another person, may be that another person can deal with any stressor which is bothering someone. So to accept it that everyone is different will help individual to accept the real stressor, but if person is unable to find out the factor , which is creating trouble for him, then there are so many different stress counseling firms in market, they can take help from them to, they work in professional manner. They will find out the real stressor for that person by asking him questions in prescribed manner.

Listening to your body

To take of your body is much required to keep your mind relaxed, which technique will work on any individual is all depends on that person only, as everybody is different their bodies requirements are also different, so they have to work on that to get know about what their body is actually demanding, they should try to understand by the symptoms of the body, which it gives, so that individual can understand that their body is in trouble and required something to cope up.

Listening to your Mind and Feelings

Pampering yourself is important step towards the stress management. Our pain feels fresh, tender, private. Generally Humans even don't admit that they are feeling hurt by anyone or by anything, but indirectly humans hurt themselves by this and ignoring our emotional state makes our life easy but for short time span, we even don't know how that will burst in future and how big will be the result of not listening to our emotions. our emotional health is vital for a host of reasons. It's vital for our relationships, career, and physical health, so

listening to mind, our heart, and our feelings is vital step to overcome the stress, for this individual should get engaged in the activities that bring joy and composure.

Make a Plan

Creating a proper plan can help you manage your stress. As we require proper planning in our whole life so that, after spending so much time on anything we would not regret of spending time on things which doesn't matter to us. In the same way proper planning in dealing with stress will help undoubtedly. After you know about your body and mind's need, next step you can take is make a proper plan to overcome a stressful situation, for this start writing down the times you feel stressed. Then start noticing what you do in that situation, which kind of behavior outcome you have in any particular circumstances lastly what helps you to get reduce it and or what makes it worse for you? Which problems or stresses go away by themselves? Which needs your attention? But don't force yourself to get quick results, as results take time, for attaining any goal, throughout the journey; Keep your goals realistic, over expectation too can create stress. Lastly you can give yourself rewards along the way to your journey.

Coping Strategies

As more of the people are at home now days, they require adopting a healthy life style to overcome the stress. There are abundant techniques to overcome the stressful situations like meditate, and do something you enjoy, listen to music. While doing something Pause and take a few long and deep breaths. Focusing on your breathing will help you relax! You should try to do moderate intensity activity for 30- minutes, dance, and strike a yoga pose, anything that your body prefers. i.e.-

- **Choose a healthy life style-** Drink plenty of water, every day, Limit the amount of alcohol you consume, Include lots of fruits and vegetables in your diet, Limit the amount of sugar and fat. Try to get 7-9 hours of sleep each night, Try to go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, even on the weekends.
- **Meditation and Deep Breathing-** if your body and mind is not feeling relaxed then deep breathing and meditation will help in that. While doing something Pause and take a few long and deep breaths.
- **Give some time to your hobbies-** Write in a journal. Write a poem, Create art. Make music, cook some good food. No matter what you do, don't ignore your feelings! They are telling you something.
- **Learn to say No-** you can't please everybody, so learn to say no, if you and your body is not comfortable for anything.
- **Ask for help-** Talking to your friends, family member, your guide, mentor any trustworthy person can help you if you are not capable enough to cope by your stress.
- **Get the facts-** Gather information that will help you accurately determine your risk so that you can take reasonable precautions. Find a credible source you can trust such as WHO website or, a local or state public health agency.
- **Limit your TV time-** Limit worry and agitation by lessening the time you and your family spend watching or listening to media coverage that you perceive as upsetting.
- **Believe on trustworthy sources-** there are so many sources available on net, but most of them are not trustworthy, so to get an actual data, trust on trustworthy sources such as the CDC, WHO, and any local public health authorities.
- **Keep yourself away from CORONA talks-** Don't let coronavirus dominate every conversation. It's important to take breaks from stressful thoughts about the pandemic to simply enjoy each other's company—to laugh, share stories, and focus on other things going on in our lives.
- **Stick with Routine-** Most of the individuals are at home in this crucial time, but that doesn't mean, do anything without proper routine. Maintain a routine at home as well as you can. try to stick to your regular sleep, reading, working, meal, or work schedule. This can help you maintain a sense of normalcy.
- **Follow guidelines-** follow the guidelines of WHO for keeping you and your family safe and preventing the spread of the virus.
- **Be a calming influencer-** If any of your friend or loved ones are getting panicked, try to help them gain some perspective on the situation. Instead of creating trouble for them on behalf of false rumors, refer them to reputable news sources. Being a positive, uplifting influence in these anxious times can help you feel better about your own situation too.

Implementation

Now after knowing different coping strategies for COVID-19 stress, Individual must know about , which technique will work on them, as he only knows him and his body. Everybody is different so its needs are. He should choose technique wisely and implement it, be patience about the results, as results take time, and if one technique is not working try to adopt any other simultaneously. On other hand if he is not in the condition to implement it, facing severe issue of stress, depression and anxiety they should immediately contact Health counselor, they can help according the medical condition of that person.

Conclusion

The Content presented reveals that its normal to have stress in COVID-19 Pandemic, It's an Agitate time. We are in the middle of a worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, most of the cities and even whole countries are shutting down. Some areas have already been affected by coronavirus and rest of the others is towards the same. and all of us are watching the headlines and wondering, "What is going to happen next?" for many of us , this uncertainty all because of the corona is the toughest thing to deal with, but there are many things we can do in this crisis time too- to manage Stress and anxiety. Even this stress is not all negative, some part of it is positive too as it will help us to keep our mind attentive towards the necessary precaution required to keep away that corona virus. After analyzing many Articles, blogs, research work and WHO report on that topic, the opinion is that the issue of Stress is also a big problem to deal with, which forefront to some apparent problems and issues in the definition in COVID-19 Stress. Further more detailed study is required in that Field. Which can help in overcoming that situation.

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