

Strategies of Stress Management for Drug user Adolescents

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Stress is a universal unavoidable feature of life. Stress is body's automatic response to any physical or mental demand placed on it. Stressful situation arises when there is a discrepancy between expectation and what one really gets. Stress is subjective in nature. Stress is considered in terms of appraisal of life circumstances as harmful. It is complex and constantly changing process. It is a nonspecific bodily response to environmental stimuli. When there is imbalance between internal and external demand that arise in a situation and the capacity of an individual to meet the same demands, stress is caused. But it is inevitable part of life. 'Stress is arousal of mind and body in response to demand made on them' and as such it cannot and should not be avoided, rather it has to be managed properly and effectively.

Identify the sources of stress in life -Stress management starts with identifying the sources of stress in life. This is not as easy as it sounds. True sources of stress aren't always obvious, and it's also not easy to overlook stress-inducing thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, to identify true sources of stress we should look closely at our habits, attitude, and excuses. Since everyone has a unique response to stress, there is no "one size fits all" solution to managing it. No single method works for everyone or in every situation, different techniques and strategies are followed for stress management.

Dealing with Stressful Situation

The following Four A's are very useful in dealing the stressful situation



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(1) **Avoid the Stressor**-Not all stress can be avoided, but sometimes it is healthy to avoid a situation that needs to be addressed as follows -

- Learn how to say "no"
- Avoid people who stress you
- Take control of your environment
- Avoid hot-button topics

(2) Alter the situation

If a stressful situation can't be avoided try to alter it in following ways -

- Be willing to compromise
- Be more assertive
- Manage time in a better manner

(3) Adapt to the stressor

If one can't change the stressor change can be made in oneself. People have to try to adapt to stressful situations and regaining sense of control by changing expectation and attitude in following ways -

- Reframe Problems
- Look at the big picture.
- Adjust standards

(4) Accept the stressor

The alternative is to accept the stressor in following ways -

- Focus on the positive side
- Don't try to control the uncontrollable things.
- learn from mistakes
- Share feeling
- Learn to forgive mistakes

Drug Addiction-In recent years the incidence of drug addiction in adolescents has been increasing. The researches have been undertaken in different parts of India. It was found that often parents of these adolescents were also drug user. This implies the significance role of home in the development of maladaptive habits. It was also found when one is struggling with drug addiction; sobriety can seem like an impossible

goal. But recovery is never out of reach, no matter how hopeless one's situation is. Change is possible with the right treatment and support and by addressing the root cause of addiction. We should not give up- even if tired and failed before. The road to recovery often involves bumps, pitfalls, and setbacks. But by examining the problem and thinking about change, one can go on the right path.

Strategies for stress management for drug users Adolescents-

Drug abuse often generate from misguided attempts to manage stress. Many people turn to alcohol or recreational drugs to unwind and relax after a stressful day or to cover up painful memories and emotions that cause to feel stressed.

Adolescents generally feel drugs are the only way to handle unpleasant feelings, but it's not. Adolescents should learn to get through difficulties without going to addiction. Different quick stress relief strategies work better, there are healthier ways to keep stress level in control including exercising, meditating using sensory strategies to relax, practicing simple breathing exercise, and challenging self-defeating thoughts. The key is to find the way that works best for adolescents. Following strategies are proved useful in stress management of adolescents-

- Exercise releases endorphins, relives stress and promotes emotional well-being, running jumping rope, or walking around the block are good stress relievers.
- Step outside and sit before the warm sun and in fresh air. Enjoy a beautiful view or landscapes are also efficient stress relievers for students.
- Yoga and meditation are excellent ways to bust stress and find balance.
- Play with dog or cat, or enjoying the relaxing touch of pet's fur are also efficient stress relievers for students.
- Listen to calming music and light a scented candle are also stress relievers.
- Breathe in the scent of fresh flowers that reminds of a favorite vacation also help in reducing stress.
- Closing eyes and thinking of a peaceful place such as a sandy beach are also stress relievers.

- Hot cup of tea and looking at old album also help in reducing stress.
- Reading beautiful saved SMS or messages on WhatsApp are also efficient stress relievers.
- Hot bath or showers are also stress relievers.

Role of Family in stress Management -During stress brain needs time to recover and rebuild connections that have changed while addicted. During this time, drug cravings can be intense. Adolescents can be supported by family members in making a conscious effort to avoid people, places and situations that trigger this urge. Family can support drug user adolescent in following ways -

- To make a break from old friends who are still taking drugs.
- To help adolescent to avoid bars and clubs. Drinking lowers inhibitions and impairs judgment which can easily lead to relapse. Drugs are often readily available and the temptation to use can be overpowering.
- To help adolescent in avoiding any other environments and situations that associate with drug user.
- To help adolescents to stay away from painkillers, sleeping pills and anti-anxiety medication.
- To help adolescents to get involved in some distracting activity. Reading can be a hobby, going to a movie, exercising, jogging, biking are good examples of distracting activities.
- Talking about cravings and urges among adolescents can be very helpful in pinpointing the source of the craving and also helps to discharge and relieve the feeling and will help in restoring honesty.
- Adolescents should be supported to take drug treatment. When life is filled with rewarding activities and a sense of purpose, addiction can be reduced easily by pick up a new hobby and spark imagination or something the particular teenager have always wanted to try.
- Adopting a pet is helpful in managing stress, pets are a responsibility but caring for an animal makes adolescents feel loved and needed. Pets can also take out of the house for exercise.

- Help them to involve in community work.
- Regular exercise, adequate sleep and healthy eating habits help them in stress management.
- Relapse is a common process from drug addiction. If stress management is not done properly relapse often occur in adolescents.

As we all know in recent years the incidence of drug addiction in adolescents has been increasing at a very fast pace. Surveys have shown that cigarette smoking, alcohol, tranquilizers and sedatives are very prevalent among adolescents of both rural and urban areas. It was also found that first encounter with the drug generally takes place in school setting and the major cause of drug addiction is stress of high intensity which arouses out of inferiority, rejection, isolation, poverty, aggression, loneliness, low intelligence, mental illness etc.

This has led researcher to understand the antecedents and correlates of stress among adolescent. It was found when stress is of moderate level it improves performance, when it is too little, it develops boredom and when it is too high, it should be managed. For drug users adolescent regular exercise, sports are powerful stress reliever, Aerobic exercises, music relax both mind and body. Simple sharing of our feeling with others can also help us in relieving some of the stress. Role of family is very significant in stress management, social and emotional support from friends and family members can also reduce stress to a great extent.

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