

Countering Stage Fright

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Hello students, I am here Professor Smita Jha, discussing countering stage fright, and today I am going to discuss types of stage fright. You know that stage fright or performance anxiety is a very big issue in professional life or professional career. What are the basic reasons for this stage fright or performance anxiety? And we have discussed in detail the very definition of stage fright and related issues. So today, this is the high time to discuss types of stage fright so that well within the time, you can neutralize or minimize such anxiety to be a good performer. The term anxiety is used in a lot of different contexts. So much so, that we are often left wondering what the word really means.

That is to say, so much of bafflement, so much of anxiety, confusion. So it depends on the context situation. Anxiety is experienced differently by everyone and therefore can mean different things to different people. Friends, I told you that this anxiety varies from person to person.

Individual differences are there. So it is very important to know the self. And that is why in my previous discussion, I requested you to go for self-introspection. Adding even more to the confusion is the difference between healthy and unhealthy anxiety. See, sometimes, some type of anxiety or sensitiveness is good- that makes you prompt, alert, to be good in your presentation.

But when such anxiety affects your health, it becomes a serious issue. Yes, there is such a thing as healthy anxiety. Now, for example, because you must be thinking that what is healthy anxiety. Now, for instance, some stress before a big test can help you to stay motivated and this is what I said just now- making you alert, prompt. And a few nerves before a presentation can feel energizing or exciting.

So it's when the levels of stress become so high that they are unmanageable or you begin to avoid certain situations because of them, it becomes what is known as unhealthy

anxiety- when it affects seriously your health, your mental frame. Clinically speaking, there are five major types of anxiety disorder which are given as a diagnosis from a doctor. Because some kind of restlessness, helplessness, and in Hindi it is "ghabrahat"- that you cannot say that you need to go to a doctor and this is a serious health issue. But when it is on your nerve, and it is making your life very unsettled, you need to go to a doctor for proper diagnosis. As I said that there are several types of mental anxiety or performance anxiety, but there are certain, a few, which we can discuss here, and the first among is generalized anxiety disorder.

I discussed this earlier also, generalized anxiety disorder. What is generalized anxiety disorder? Well, there are several types of anxiety disorders. And major anxiety are generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, a specific phobia, agoraphobia, social anxiety disorder, and also separation anxiety disorder. So, we need to know of all such disorders which may cause serious consequences while giving performances. People with generalized anxiety disorder, which in short is called GAD, G-A-D, GAD, generalized anxiety disorder.

So this generalized anxiety disorder worry uncontrollably about common occurrences and situations. It is also sometimes known as chronic anxiety neurosis. See, the term itself sounds very serious. It is called chronic, means a serious patient, chronic anxiety neurosis related to the nervous system. Generalize anxiety disorder or GAD in short, is marked by excessive, exaggerated anxiety and worry about everyday life events for no obvious reason.

People with symptoms of generalized anxiety disorder tend to always expect disaster and cannot stop worrying about health, money, family, work or a school or maybe you know unrelated issues. So, the question is that what are the symptoms of generalized anxiety disorder? Well, this generalized anxiety disorder or GAD affects the way a person thinks, your personality, your thought process, your entire orientation and it can lead to physical symptoms. So mental health professionals use a standard set of criteria to diagnose, to locate generalized anxiety disorder. Those symptoms can't be caused by a medical problem or other conditions, and last at least six months. See how serious it is, and the duration of its continuation is six months.

What are the criteria include? Excessive ongoing worry and tension without any reason. Even that is not in your periphery. Means, you are not in the present, maybe in the past, maybe in the future, and that is going to hamper your work. Unrealistic view of problems, unrealistic. "If I go, what will happen? If it happened, then what will happen?" Very unrealistic impractical view of problems, you can say "created problem.

" Created problem to kill your personality and certainly it is going to hamper your performance. Restlessness or a feeling of being edgy. Why you are restless, you don't know. But yes, you are unable to concentrate. Try to know that what is there in you that you are unable to concentrate.

And sometimes, you forget also. You forget to speak as per the program. Trouble concentrating. This is what I said. If you have a personality that is shaky, that is restless, that is hyper, You would not be able to concentrate and even the extemporaneous speech or classroom talk or presentation is a flow coming automatic and that is because of your concentration.

Tiring easily or being fatigued because you are not physically fatigued, you are mentally fatigued. You are tired of thinking, you are tired of unhealthy situation created by you. Increase crankiness or irritability- when you are unable to focus and you want to focus. You are unable to concentrate. You are not able to give a good performance.

Naturally, you will be irritated. Unnecessary. Trouble sleeping. Sleepless nights. Muscle tension or muscle aches and soreness.

Naturally, when the entire body is aching, is not in the right frame, and your brain is producing hormones that is not healthy for you, several problems occur, and that affects your health. So people with generalized anxiety disorder often also have other anxiety disorders such as panic disorder, phobia, obsessive-compulsive disorder, clinical depression, or problems with drug or alcohol misuse. See in my day to day dealing with students I have seen even obsessive-compulsive disorder very frequently. Depression, workload, too much of ambition, and yes the problem of drug and alcohol is there in general among the youth. So what are the causes and risk factors for generalized anxiety disorder? And you should know so that, as I said, well on time, you can check these disorders.

Experts don't know the exact causes of generalized anxiety disorder. In other words, there is no book or textbook or rules that can make a fine line for the generalized anxiety disorder. Several things, including the genetic quality, brain chemistry, and environmentalist traces appear to contribute to its development. Genetic, genetic is very, very important because you must have noticed, that the worthy son of a worthy father-genetic goes on. Also the brain chemistry and the environment from which you are coming, that is also very important to decide the mental frame of a person.

Now, genetics, if we talk, some research suggests that family history plays a part in making it more likely that a person will have generalized anxiety disorder. And this

means that the tendency to develop generalized anxiety disorder may be passed on in family, generation after generation, because this is engraved in the DNA. But no anxiety genes have been identified. This is also a fact. There is no gene calling that this is the genetic anxiety gene.

And families may also pass down the tendency through lifestyle or environment. So besides genetics, the lifestyle or your environment, surroundings that are also responsible for the causes of this generalized anxiety disorder, that is GAD. If we talk of brain chemistry which is one of the important factors for this GAD, this is very complex. See, brain is very complex and it is said that there are wires, there are cables as many more than that is there on the earth. Imagine the nerves, the fine nerves, the cable.

So brain chemistry is not only complex, difficult to understand. GAD has been linked to problems with certain nerve cell pathways that connect particular brain regions involved in thinking and emotions, nerve cell pathways. These nerve cell connections depend on chemicals called neurotransmitters that send information from one nerve cell to the next. If the pathways that connect particular brain region do not work well, problems related to mood or anxiety may result. Medicines, psychotherapies or other treatments that are thought to work on these neurotransmitters may improve the signaling between circuits and help to improve symptoms related to anxiety or depression.

As I said that there are several more than million trillion cables are there in brain and the energy is like atom. So understanding brain and atom is a difficult task. And if anything unhealthy happens anywhere, the entire brain system start functioning in an unhealthy manner which may cause anxiety or depression. Related to this, as I said earlier also, environmental factors. So genetic brain chemistry and environmental factors.

What are these environmental factors? Trauma and stressful events such as abuse, humiliation, some kind of hindrances, trouble created by others, death of a loved one, personal life trauma like divorce and changing jobs or schools may contribute to generalized anxiety disorder. The condition can also worsen when stress feels out of hand. You know, one by one. I mean, the very first thing is that you have to control it. But when it is out of control, then it is a serious matter and you need to go to the doctor.

The use of and withdrawal from addictive substance like alcohol, caffeine, nicotine can also worsen anxiety. And as I said, this is very much prevalent among the youth. The young chap, victim of drug addiction, it is very difficult to take him back. But then nothing is impossible. Try with positive intention- can help a person to get away from the disaster, any disaster in life.

This is also very important part that how is general anxiety disorder diagnosed. Because this is serious, this can be complex, this can be health attacking. Naturally you need to consult a doctor. If you have symptoms of GAD, generalized anxiety disorder, your doctor will begin an evaluation by asking questions about your medical and psychiatric history. Every good institution, they have a good psychiatrist clinic or a team.

And sometimes what happens? The students or the young generation, they feel shy to go to psychiatrist even so that they may not be called mad or eccentric. It is not like that. You try to know yourself. You may also get a physical exam. Lab tests don't diagnose anxiety disorder, but some can help doctors check for any physical illness that might be causing the symptoms.

The doctor bases their diagnosis of generalized anxiety system or this anxiety that is going to hit you very badly on reports of how intense and long-lasting the symptoms are, including any problems with daily life caused by the symptoms. The doctor then determines whether the person has a specific anxiety disorder or generalized anxiety disorder. For someone to be diagnosed with generalized anxiety disorder, symptoms must interfere with daily living and be present for more days than not for at least six months. As I said that we all are different from each other. Individual variation one from another and this variation reflects the mental condition of a person.

A panic attack is a sudden episode of intense fear that triggers several physical reactions. This is also a kind of anxiety disorder. Several physical reactions when there is no real danger or apparent cause. Panic attacks can be very frightening. When panic attacks occur, one might think that one is losing control, having a heart attack, and maybe even dying or maybe a paralytic attack.

It all depends on your mental control. How much you have control on your brain or on your nervous system. Never allow anything to make your life miserable. Therefore, it is very important to know these types of anxiety to assess yourself in the beginning. Don't let anything to ruin your life. Many people have just one or two panic attacks in their lifetimes.

And the problem goes away perhaps when a stressful situation ends. But if you have had recurrent unexpected panic attacks and spend long periods in constant fear of another attack, you may have a condition called panic disorder. Yes, this is rightly said or based on research, that a person gets panic attacks not very frequently (seldom), and it does not last for a longer duration. But when you get panic attack very frequently and for a longer duration, then this is the time to go to the doctor to know the real situation, of yourself, so that you may get the right treatment at the right time. Although panic attacks themselves

are not life threatening, they can be frightening and significantly affect your quality of life.

But treatment can be very effective. That is why you need to go to the doctor to maintain the quality of your life. See, life is a precious thing. And this has been given to you once only, nobody knows the past life and the future life- what will happen after death. So in the present life how much you do the best of yours, that depends on your understanding. The very important thing that the presentation or any kind of performance is not, shouldn't be the question of life and death as people generally consider it.

This is the part and partial of daily life as we eat, as we walk, as we talk, as we sleep. So, performance is also there like any other activities. But yes, perfection should be there and for that you may not behave as if that you are going to lose your life because you are going to lose the performance. Panic attacks typically begin suddenly, without warning and this can strike at any time.

There is no time. When you are driving a car, at the mall, sound asleep, or in the middle of a business meeting. You may have occasional panic attacks or they may occur frequently. So there is no fixed time for this. Because this is very much there within you in your mental setup.

I won't say genetic. To some extent it can be genetic, but yes, this becomes the part of your life. It can attack anytime. That is why in advance you need to know the symptoms and the related medicine. Now, what are the other aspects of panic attacks? That I will discuss in my next lecture. Because if we talk of stage fright, it is very important to know about the types of attacks or generalized anxiety disorder.

We all have anxiety, because if a person does not have any anxiety then he or she is very casual, callous, not very serious of his or her performance. So when you know about certain symptoms you have, that is the time to consult others. If you have a little bit anxiety because when you are coming to this stage and later on it is fine, that is not a serious issue. But as I said, if it occurs very frequently and for a longer duration, then it is going to affect your life heavily seriously.

And that is the time that you consult the doctor. For that, we know the scale or parameters or different variations of panic attack. And that, I will discuss in the next lecture of mine. Till then, thank you.