Introduction to the Psychology of Stress Management

Stress and the College Student (materials from Chapter 17)

Introduction to Class

- Roll & Welcoming Comments
- About the Class - general goals
- Syllabus details/assignment & attendance
- Class web page
  - www.mnsfld.edu/~fcraig/Teaching/PSY332/psy332.html

What Kinds of Stress do College Students Experience?

- Questions to be addressed in this class:
  - How do college students manage stress?
  - Are the bad, good and better ways of managing stress?
  - What happens to us when stress is not managed well?
  - Is all stress bad?
### Stressors Experienced by College Students

- "Change" (Lifestyle Change)
  - Achieving emotional independence from family
  - Choosing and preparing a career
  - Preparing for emotional commitment and family life
  - Developing an ethical system
- Grades
- Course overload
- Giving up or changing friendships

### Stressors Experienced by College Students, cont’d

- New friendships/lost & strained friendships
  - self-disclosure/emotionally supportive relations
  - see page 304-5-Intimacy Scale
- New intimate relationships (love)
  - matching/non-matching love-types
- Sexual relationships
  - social and personal pressures
  - imbalance between sexuality & intimacy

### STIs: HIV/AIDS

- 16% of AIDS cases in 20-29 years, 5/1000 college students
- Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)
  - Pathogen that compromises the immune system
- Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)
  - HIV reduces the immune system to ineffective levels
- Prevention
  - Abstain from sexual activities
  - Monogamous relationship
  - Proper protection
  - Avoid using drugs

There is no known cure for AIDS. Fluids/secretions such as blood, semen, or vaginal fluids. High-risk behaviors include:
- Intravenous drug users
- Infants born to HIV infected mothers
- Unprotected sexual activities
**Other STI’s**

- Sexually transmitted infections
  - Syphilis
  - Gonorrhea
  - Chlamydia
  - Genital warts
  - Genital herpes
  - Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID)
- Dealing with the Conditions/Avoiding the STI while finding intimacy (love w/o sex?)

**Other Stressors Affecting the College Student**

- Shyness
- Jealousy
- Breakups
- Aggression
  - Date/Acquaintance rape
  - Bullying

**The Older College Student**

- 37% of US undergraduates are over 25 yrs
- Stressors are similar to the younger college students, however, there are other stressors that are unique, such as:
  - Balancing Career and school
  - Balancing Family and school
    - financial/personal sacrifices
  - Self-doubt
    - measuring up to other students
    - right choice for long run?
    - can I make it?
### The Minority College Student

- Racism
- Language
- Cultural values
- Pressure to perform
- Failure Effects (stereotype affirmed?)

### Interventions: How Can We Manage ALL THIS?!?!?!?

- How can we manage stress and do it well?
- See page 316-318 (not just for shyness!)
  - Life situation/Self-Knowledge
  - Life-situation/Behavioral Changes
  - Adaptive Coping Responses
  - Perception / Cognitive Processing
  - Emotional arousal Control
  - Physiological arousal Control