**Stress Management**

Name:

Institution:

Course code:

Date:

**Stress Management**

**1. Define the concept of social support. Define and explain the four types of social support and provide an example of each type of support.**

Social support is all about relationships. It is a function of social relationships. Having relationships with friends, family, workmates, or being involved in a social group, whereby one gets support when in need. It involves being caring towards others and being there for them by providing them with information, resources, or assistance to help them when going through a problem. Social support has been shown to reduce stress and it may also improve immune functions. Through social networks created, most people get a sense of belonging and are less vulnerable to early death and ill health (Semmer, N.K et al. 2008).

There are four types of social support and they have different benefits. It includes; emotional Social Support- It's about being emotionally supportive to the person by showing them love, being empathic, and expressing trust. Showing concern towards the other persons’ feelings and affirming their worth. Emotional support is more about offering the other person a shoulder to cry on and making them know how much they are valued. An example of this support is calling a friend when they have lost a close relative and assuring them that all is going to be okay and assuring them of your support.

Informational Social Support, which involves providing information, advice or a suggestion to someone who is going through a challenging situation in their life. When someone is going through a situation that they don’t know how to handle, sharing some advice that will help them or showing them experts that will help in their situation. An example of such support is advising a couple that is experiencing issues in their marriage on things to do to help them or introducing them to a marriage counselor to help them.

Instrumental Social Support involves providing tangible aid or service. It involves sharing one's resources. It can either be financial or material. An example of this support is helping a friend pay for a loan or helping a friend when moving out. The last social support is Belonging Social Support which involves providing a sense of belonging. It can be through spending time with friends who feel left out or lonely or including them in a group. An example of this support is inviting your new friend in town, who loves reading, to your book club.

**2.** **Define autobiographical listening and describe the four ways of listening autobiographically**.

Autobiographical listening is a type of listening whereby the listener makes the conversation about themselves and interprets all the information through their own experiences. The listener is quick to respond and advice based on their own experiences rather than what the other person is talking about (Purdy, M.W 2010). People listen autobiographically through the following ways: Ignoring: This is whereby, the person is not listening to what the other person is saying. The listeners’ concentration is on other things rather than on the person speaking to them. Selective listening, which in this case, the listener is not paying full attention to the person speaking to them. The listener is only listening to pieces of what the person is saying and not listening to the whole conversation.

Pretending: The listener acts as if they are listening to the person talking to them but they are not listening. The listener responds with automated words such as "okay" or “right” so that they may seem to be listening. Attentive listening: The listener is listening close to everything that the other person is saying.

**3.** **Define empathic listening and describe its four stages. Explain how effective listening is the key to healthy communication.**

Empathic listening is listening to others attentively and creating a safe space by making an emotional connection with others, during a conversation. It involves the listener being considerate of what the person is saying and encouraging and supporting them rather than criticizing. The four stages of empathic listening include: mimic content, rephrase the content, reflect emotion and reflect approach whereby you reflect on the approach by rephrasing the content then reflect on the emotion (Floyd, K 2014).

Effective listening is the key to healthy communication. By not listening effectively, information will be distorted and not easily understood. Listening is an important communication skill that one needs to master for effective communication. By listening, one can understand the point of view of the speaker and critically assess what the speaker is saying. The speaker is also encouraged to communicate openly and honestly.

**4. Define and explain relaxation. Explain some benefits of relaxation. Explain what is meant by the statement, “cognitive techniques help stop the stress response from activating, while physical relaxation techniques help reduce stress by altering the psychological impact of stress.”**

Relaxation refers to a process that helps reduce stress effects on the mind and also on ones’ body. Benefits of relaxation include; improving the concentration and mood of the person, lowering blood pressure, maintaining normal blood sugar levels, lowering fatigue, frustration, and reduced anger, improved quality of sleep and activity of the stress hormones is reduced. Cognitive techniques help stop the stress response from activating means that these techniques help one identify the challenges around and yet develop positive thoughts by assessing their behavior and actions. Physical relaxation helps reduce stress by altering the psychological impact of stress means that by relaxing one can clear his mind and reduce stress impacts such as anxiety and depression.

**5. Define meditation and its components. Describe the four factors that are present in meditation.**

Meditation is a technique that involves an individual incorporating techniques such as focusing the mind on a particular thought or activity to train awareness and be able to achieve a stable and clear mental and emotional state ( Awasthi, B 2013). There are three main components of meditation; the first is awareness, the person needs to focus on developing awareness. Another component is nonjudgement which involves witnessing an experience without any criticism. Peace is also a factor. By learning mindfulness, one can find serenity despite what one is feeling.

Factors present in meditation include: refraining from catastrophic thinking reflects on the skills that help one detach from negative thoughts and not perceive them as a reality. Self-observation involves engaging oneself with curiosity and focusing and reflecting on self. Logical objectivity emphasizes on active solving of problems. Detached coping emphasizes detaching from negative external information.

**References**

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