
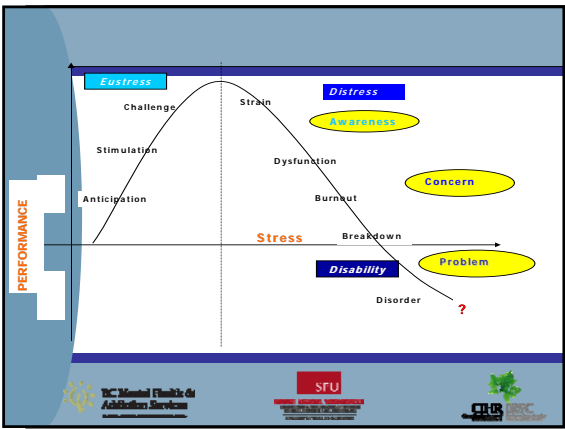


Developing Psychological Immunity in Pathogenic Work Settings

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Assumptions

All environments are potentially pathogenic


Effect of the pathogen is proportional to the strength of the worker's immune system



Who is the Psychosocial Health Officer for the Organisation?




We need to detect the pathogens (the psychosocial hazards) within the organisation, to which we are most vulnerable.




In order to respond correctly we need to classify these as:

- Irritants
- Bacteria
- Viruses
- Allergens




Characteristics of irritants:

- Abrasive
- Area becomes inflamed
- Create potential for bacterial infection




Treatment of irritants:

- Remove the irritant
- Use a buffer
- Rest the area
- Soothe the area




Treatment of irritants at work:

- Confront the irritant to decrease level of irritation
- Transfer the irritant or yourself
- Schedule to work a different shift
- Learn to “Float” psychologically




Characteristics of bacterial infection:

- Access to body through a break in the skin
- Potential for infection to spread
- Possible death of organism




Treatment of bacterial infection:

- Repeated cleansing - antiseptic treatment
- Use antibiotics
- monitor
- Immunise against future infections




Treatment with antiseptics and antibiotics at work includes

- Correcting level of Role Overload
- Correcting Role Insufficiency
- Clarifying Role Ambiguity
- Delineating Role Boundaries
- Defining responsibilities
- Eliminating Psychological Toxins




Factors to consider in treating bacterial infection

- Is infection localised or is it spreading?
- Why did it start in the first place?




Characteristics of viruses:

- Systemic not usually local
- Usually not amenable to treatment - need symptomatic relief
- Usually time limited
- Can lead to death




Treatment of viruses:

- Treatment focus is preventative -e.g. flu injection - given to the vulnerable
- Mobilise body's defenses to kill the virus
- Symptomatic relief




Treatment of viruses at work:

- Work with the virus not against it
- Realise that it will pass through the system
- Refocus on your own work
- Reevaluate your work life balance




Characteristics of allergens:

- Not a pathogen
- Indicates areas of heightened sensitivity - need to avoid
- Leads to massive overresponse of the individual's system
- Overresponse can lead to death




Treatment of allergens:

- Avoid allergen if possible
- Reduce immune response
- Desensitise with gradual exposure to the allergen
- Determine cause of overresponsiveness




Treatment of allergens at work:

- Avoid individual or situation as much as possible - relocate?
- Increase focus on your own work
- Gradually desensitise to individual or situation



Treatment of allergens at work:

- Examine why you are so reactive to that individual or situation




Improve overall immunity by learning:

- Resilience skills
- How to deal with difficult people
- Clear communication skills
- To obtain clear definitions of demands and boundaries



Thank You

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The bottom of the slide features three logos: on the left, the UBC logo with the text 'UBC Museum Ethnology & Archaeology Services'; in the center, the SFU logo with the text 'S.F.U. School of Planning and Urban Design'; and on the right, the CHS logo with the text 'CHS Centre for Health Systems Research and Analysis'.
