

Role of Reasonable Outlook to Sustain Mental Health

Dr. Pratibha Rastogi

Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Jyoti College of Management Science and Technology, Bareilly, India

Email: [pratibha01rastogi\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:pratibha01rastogi[at]gmail.com)

Abstract: *The term health is not easy to define; its meaning varies from community to community and person to person. According to Webster health is defined as “The condition of being sound in body, mind or spirit, especially freedom from physical disease or pain.” At present the life has become more complicated than ever before. The social, cultural and spiritual environment are changing rapidly and affecting one’s physical and mental health. The advancement of human civilization has raised not only men’s physical and mental needs but also the related problems. Today society is being polluted with corruption, violence, terrorism, poverty, hunger, selfishness and environmental decay. All these result in mental and physical unrest. This leads to ethical conflict lack of brotherhood, exploitation, cheating, robbery, murder, suicide, sexual abuse and incurable diseases, which converge into mental health crisis. It is present in all sections of society. People have a kind of conflict, stress and depression due the ever-changing society, traditions, culture, norms, values, ethics, thoughts and generation gap. We are well aware that any magical wand cannot improve these conditions. In these conditions we can adjust only by adopting the reasonable approaches such as:-*

‘Simple living, high thinking’

‘Do everything and expect nothing’ ‘Death is the ultimate truth’

‘Life has both roses and thorns’.

In such conditions only our thinking can protect and consoles us. Through positive and reasonable outlook we can face any difficulty of life. So to protect our mental health in current scenario it becomes necessary that we have to follow the path of reasonable outlook.

1. Introduction

The term mental health is not so easy to define; its meaning varies from community to community and person to person. For a person it is the ability to enjoy life and deal with the challenges with positive attitude; for another one it may be absence of mental illness or presence of emotional and spiritual thoughts, which help in establishment of social justice, equity culture and personal dignity. According to Webster health is defined as “The condition of being sound in body mind or spirit especially freedom from physical disease or pain.” Mental health is actually a balance that is dynamic. When a person shows harmony in his conduct with his own self and consequently with the people around him, called mentally healthy. K. A. Menninger in *The Human Mind* has written, “Let us define mental health as the adjustment of human beings to the world and to each other with a maximum of effectiveness and happiness. It is the ability to maintain an even temper, an alert intelligence, socially considerate behaviour and happy disposition.” (Sharma & Sharma 1996). The above views conclude that mental health is not only subjective experience rather it is highly affected by external social factors too. In the fast going life style the modern concept of mental health is defined as the capacity of keeping oneself relax in the most adverse conditions through integrated adjustment.

At present the life has become more complicated than ever before, the social cultural and spiritual environment are changing rapidly and affecting one’s physical and mental health. The advancement of human civilization has raised not only man’s physical and mental needs but also the related problems. Today society is being polluted with corruption, violence, terrorism, poverty, hunger, selfishness and environmental decay. All these result in mental and physical unrest and leads to ethical conflict, lack of brotherhood exploitation, cheating, robbery, murder, suicide,

sexual abuse, incurable disease etc. and that entire convert into mental crisis. Lesser mental health leads to lesser adjustment and greater conflicts while a mentally healthy person can interpret or deal with any new situation accordingly and always maintain a healthy and benevolent attitude towards life.

Various Issues Affecting Mental Health

Social Issues: Society always plays a very significant role in the development of a person from a common living being to a responsible human being. Performance of duties is not an easy task; it causes many mental and physical problems. Our society is changing rapidly; our customs traditions and living style are affecting from western culture and create a controversial atmosphere all around. One group of the society is wants to go forward and adopting western culture while another group wants to carryover our old traditional culture, this situation creates mental disturbances and complications in the relations of two generations. Today marriage, high status, nuclear family, high expectations, busy life schedule, money mindedness, lack of warmth in relations, lack of time for amusement, selfishness, exploitation and cheating all are affecting on our mental health badly.

Cultural Issues: The culture of any society is an identity of its habitants, their life-style, eating manners, behavioral norms, conduct thought, customs and traditions, art and skills, music and dance, languages and literature, ideals and values, beliefs and philosophy in which they have faith. Every child learns about his/her culture automatically through the family and community. At present with advancement of globalization the new generation is highly influenced by western culture, which is not very accepted by the elders and generate a cold war in the society. The youths and old all are under stress. The old are in great depression

while youths are misguiding in lack of healthy communication.

Spiritual Issues: Spirituality is often defined as the relationship to a something that is sacred; it may be the inner power, religiousness, high moral values, pious feelings etc. The original culture of India is spiritual and religious and children become familiar with it naturally. But in present nuclear families and selfish community the spirituality is remaining far behind. The society is lacking of peace, love and faith. More than 90% people are facing the problems of depression and anxiety due to insecurity, loss of loving ones, lack of money, terminal diseases and loneliness etc. The so-called spiritual and religious stakeholders are behaving like Hippocrates and rarely have any spiritual height in their character and work. Even spiritual places and pilgrims are become the center of tourism. Man has no peace at all, neither at home nor at pilgrims or ashrams of the saints.

Economic issues: Today, economic crisis is the crucial problem of every country. Everybody has a craze to attain it and when he/she fails becomes puzzled and the mental health gets affected badly. While we know that money has great importance in man's life but its possession is not a guarantee of happy life. At present the whole world is facing the problem are recession, even the most efficient person has no job security. The depreciation is affecting the lower and middle class so much; they are taking suicidal attempts due to poverty and adversity, even they are not able to fulfill their essential daily needs of food, cloth and house. On the other hand the elite class is living a lavish life and wasting the money in pump and show. The society seems as divided into two classes, one that is becoming richer and richer day by day while another is becoming poor every day. Such conditions are really very painful, pitiful and generating mental disturbance.

Except the above social, cultural, spiritual and economic crisis there are so many other reasons too which affects the mental health of a person. Such as future planning, instability of job and business, cheating, corruption, old age problems, settlement of kids and so on. All such conditions always affect the mental health of a person directly or indirectly.

Difference between Mentally Healthy and Unhealthy

In the words of Kuppuswami, Mental Health means the ability to balance feelings, desires, ambitions and ideals in one's daily life. It means the ability to face and accept the realities of life. Hence, a mentally healthy person possesses some specified characteristics which help him to enhance his personality and contributing to a great extent for the welfare of the society with his real thoughts and experiences. A mentally healthy person has good tolerance power, self-confidence, practical attitude towards life, emotional stability, high and positive aspirations, strong will power, capacity of self-evaluation etc. In other words a mentally healthy person is aware of his strengths and weaknesses and capable to change himself according to conditions. On the other hand when a person cannot deal with realities of life, loses his temper frequently, lacks self-confidence, feels physically unhealthy and under stress, shows aggressiveness or submissiveness and sometimes becomes an escapist, is called mentally unhealthy. Such people always need some

support from their family and society.

Helping Agents to Overcome Mental Crisis

We know that in present circumstances life is full of difficulties and the environment is not favorable for mental health. So the question arises how do we protect our mental health? Who is the real supporter of our good mental health? In present era each section of society is under stress and uncertainty. In such tough times our family, teachers, community, NGOs, counselors, senior citizens and social workers can help us in reducing our mental sufferings.

Family is called the first school of the child, where he learns to express, control and refine the emotions, thoughts and feelings. But in the absence of suitable atmosphere the child becomes maladjusted. The delicate child influenced by the character and behavior of parents, siblings and other members of the family. An ideal family atmosphere helps in building a strong and positive character of the child, which will lead ultimately to a healthy society.

As we know the teacher is called the Nation Builder. He always plays a very significant role in development of a child. His role is become more significant and vast as he is regarded as the most reliable person by society in developing responsible citizens. So the teacher can prevent the mental imbalance of the children by their knowledge, character, values, counseling, guidance and affectionate behavior. Through his small sincere efforts he can make them aware with the factual social conditions such as exploitation, corruption, conflicts, crimes, alcoholic effects and job situations etc.

Along with family and teachers the senior citizens of the society, psychiatrist and NGOs can help to prevent the poor mental health and provide a peaceful, secure and favorable atmosphere for every sector of the society. The community and government can also help in balancing the mental health of the people by organizing recreational facilities, giving freedom to present their views and speaking together for religious and cultural upliftment and tolerance.

Individual Efforts to Protect Mental Health

Though mental health is a personal matter but it is highly affected by the external factors whether they are related to society, economic status, cultural change, religious differences, political instability, downfall of values, and recession in world market etc. In such conditions maintaining of good mental health is a big challenge for each one whether a person is male or female, working or non-working, child or elder, rich or poor, traditional or advanced. We are well aware that we do not have any magical wand to improve these conditions. On the basis of the clinical experiences, critical observations of experienced eminent personalities following attributes can help an individual to protect his/her mental health:

- **Positive Attitude for Own self:** Until and unless one do not realize that he/she has taken birth on this earth for a special cause, he has to live the life that is given once only, the life is priceless not worthless and their mental health can never be stable. So one must always have a positive attitude for his/her existence in this world.

- **Less Expectation from Others:** A person faces difficulties and disturbances when he/she has more expectations from others and those are not fulfilled seriously. It creates conflicts, mental agony and hypertension. So to avoid all these conditions one must have less expectation with oneself and others.
- **Logical Thinking:** One cannot lead his/her life in fantasy only he/she must face the realities and think about things logically. At every phase of life whether it is related to getting success, making relations, performing duties etc. one must evaluate the terms and conditions logically. Only logical thinking has the power to reduce the unnecessary conflicts and burden within a minute.
- **Forgetting Unnecessary Things:** For good mental health it is necessary that we give importance for good things and forget that is unnecessary and unreasonable. Otherwise one cannot concentrate on valuable things it will divert our mind from our goals and create hindrances in the way of our success.
- **Having Contentment:** It is said that man's desires are endless and he/she always plea for that which he does not have and never feel satisfied for that which they already have. This is a normal human tendency and causes lots of conflicts. Though we cannot surpass them but we can control over our desires through the feeling of contentment.
- **Raising Self-confidence:** Getting success is not an easy task. We have to do hard work with planning, positive attitude and faith with our abilities. The present era is of cutthroat competition so one must be mentally prepared that despite all efforts one may face failure. So in unfavorable conditions one must not lose ones self-confidence.
- **Self Analysis:** Everybody is familiar with his/her weaknesses and strengths, motives and desires, efforts and expectations. So it is necessary that one must evaluate his own objectives and develop an insight.
- **Emotional Maturity and Adjustment:** Life is full of struggle and ups and downs; a man has faced them the whole life. So it becomes essential that he have to learn to face them with an attitude that effort has to be made whether it leads to success or failure.
- **Forming of Good Habits:** We know that good thoughts make good character. Reading healthy literature, playing games, enjoying life, spending time with family members, engaging in some social work etc. can help in developing a feeling of self-satisfaction.
- **Belief in Almighty:** Whenever the situations become complicated and out of control, the best option is to leave it to the Almighty with a belief that everything will become correct. But this does not mean that personal efforts should not be put in.

Some Realistic Approaches to Sustain Mental Health

The performance of a person depends on his/her thinking. If thinking is positive, logical and enthusiastic the situation can be handled easily. If this is not done it may lead to lose temper and lack of self-confidence. The person may become aggressive or escapist. Maximum people are undergoing stress and conflicts of thoughts in ever changing society. To survive in such conditions, it become necessary to do struggle and increased the power of taking risks and make

valuable life meaningful again. Though the increasing corruption, terrorism, cheating, selfishness etc. are making life difficult but to face them one has to imbibe changes in oneself rather than try to change situations. Through developing logical thinking and following the realistic approaches one can maintain his mental health good. Many thinkers and authors' of quality literature of Sanskrit, Hindi and English have put forward realistic approaches in their work, some of them are:

- Simple living, High thinking. (**Lifestyle**)
- Do everything and expect nothing. (**Desire**)
- Death is the ultimate truth. (**Bitter Truth**)
- Life has both roses and thorns. (**Reality**)
- Woods are lovely dark and deep But I have promises to keep

And miles to go before I sleep (**Goal**)

- We look before and after And pine for what is not; Our sincerest laughter With some pain is fraught;

Our sweetest songs are those

That tells of saddest thoughts. (**Discontentment**)

- Success is counted sweetest By those who never succeed. To comprehend a nectar

Requires sorest needs. (**Need & Necessity**)

- "Beauties in vain their pretty eyes may roll

Charms strike the sight, but merit wins the soul. " (**Real beauty**)

- Vain, very vain, my weary search to finds

That bliss which only centers in the mind. (**Search for happiness**)

- As you sow so shall you reap (**Result of deeds**)

2. Conclusion

We know that circumstances do not remain same. They change with time and affect us physically, mentally and spiritually. To maintain our personality and sustain our individuality we have to make continuous efforts according to the changing times. Our positive and realistic thinking can reduce stress, grief, depression and frustration to great extent. Good mental health is an issue of great importance for the development of the society. Therefore combined and cooperative efforts of family, community and government are necessary to sustain mental health. At last on the basis of my life experiences it can be said that an effective, logical and realistic thought process can prevent us from facing any sort of mental crisis because as you sow so shall you reap not only in soil but also in mind too.

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