**Psychology of Stress, Health and Well-being**
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Lecture: 15
Coping with Social Support

I welcome you all to the fifteenth lecture of the course titles Psychology of Stress, Health and Well-being. So this is the third lecture of module 5 and overall it is the fifteenth lecture. So todays lecture is titled as coping with social support. So how social support can act as a coping strategy. So before we talk about today's lecture, let us have a brief recap of the last lecture. That is, lecture 14.

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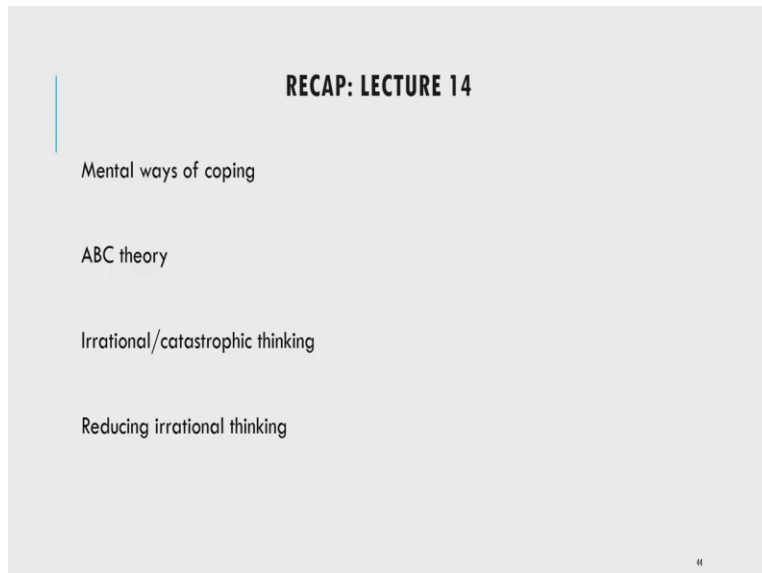
So, in the previous lesson, we talked about mental coping mechanisms. So, in the previous few lectures, we've been talking about coping strategies, specifically constructive coping techniques, as part of a series of lectures. So we started with physical ways of coping, such as relaxation exercises and physical exercises, and then we moved on to mental ways of coping, such as how to cope with stress, and how to use or solve issues with thought processes in the last lecture.

So our thought influences our emotions. And emotion influences our thoughts. So, there is a bi-directional relationship between them. It is generally difficult to change emotions directly. So whenever we talk about stress and anxiety, they have a lot of emotional

consequences associated with them. So intervention at the thought level is relatively easy and that can be used to change our emotions. So that was the idea of mental ways of coping. How can we address stress or cope with the stress by changing our thought or addressing our thought processes?

We have discussed that human beings are imperfect information processors, with the idea that we generally do not process information, especially related to ourselves, our future, about other people and world in general very objectively and factually. We are not very objective in most of the interpretation processes. So a lot of a biases and belief systems influences our interpretation of a situation. And many times we develop dysfunctional and distorted thinking processes from our childhood and it remains throughout our life.

In that context, we have discussed one theory called as ABC Theory proposed by Albert Ellis who is one of the big names in psychology, particularly in the field of psychotherapy. He tried to explain using ABC model how these thoughts and emotions influence each other. In this model, A is an activating event, B is belief system and C is consequences. This model proposes that generally we think that events causes emotional consequences. So, if something bad happens in our life, we experience negative emotions and we assume that it is the event (negative event in this case) that is causing negative emotions. However, according to Ellis, it is not the event that actually causes the consequences but something in between the event and consequences, that is the beliefs or belief systems. Various belief systems we subscribe to actually cause our emotional consequences. So, it is how we think about the events that results in emotional consequences. Outside events never causes emotional consequences.

So activating event or events (A) activates certain belief system (B) which are mostly unconscious and automatic. So something negative happens and you say my life is doomed or I will not be able to do anything. So, a negative event may stimulate these kinds of thoughts and these belief systems ultimately causes C, which is consequences, emotional consequences. It could be anxiety, depression, whatever it is.

So that is the model that we tried to understand and in that context, we have tried to understand that, most of the psychological disturbances or emotional disturbances are actually associated with irrational thoughts or catastrophic thoughts. And we try to

understand irrational thoughts are basically illogical thoughts which distorts reality, which are not actually factual, they are kind of a distortion of reality and they causes many negative emotional consequences, they hinder us to reach our goals and they kind of stimulate self defeating behavior.

So that is the model we attempted to comprehend, and in that framework, we have attempted to comprehend that the majority of psychological or emotional problems are actually related with irrational or catastrophic thoughts. And we try to grasp that irrational thoughts are fundamentally illogical beliefs that distort reality, that aren't actually true, that produce a lot of negative emotional consequences, that they make it difficult to achieve our goals, and that they encourage self-defeating behavior.

As a result, we have a lot of negative, irrational thoughts that impact and exaggerate our emotions. As a result, we attempted to examine several aspects of irrational thinking. We tried to comprehend in the last class by giving so many examples. Finally, we tried to talk about ways to lessen these irrational beliefs because while it is impossible to totally eliminate them, we can limit their frequency and numbers.

So, in the context of what we've talked, there are two critical steps. One is, identification of these thoughts is highly crucial. First, we must recognize that such thoughts exist and that they are causing disruptions, particularly emotional disturbances. So, if you feel emotionally disturbed, ask yourself, "Why am I disturbed?" So you trace back your thoughts from your emotions, and you detect your thoughts from your self-talk, the talking to yourself. And then, the second step is to dispute. The second stage is to have a dispute. We may refute negative thoughts and replace them with more healthy ones by using the various questions we explored in class.

So these are some of the key topics that we covered in the previous class, especially mental coping or dealing by altering our cognitive processes.

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LECTURE 15: COPING WITH SOCIAL SUPPORT

Key concepts

Different forms of social support
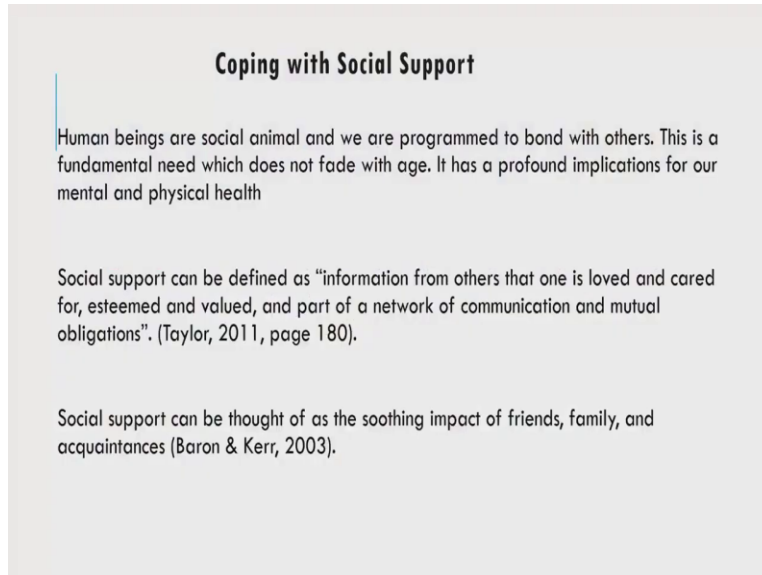
Effects of social support

Stress moderation by social support

Social network analysis using convoy model

As a result, today's topic will be dealing with social support. As a result, this is also important. How to deal with difficult situations by relying on social support or asking for help from others.

So, in this lecture, we will explain or explore a variety of issues, such as different types of social support and the consequences of social support on our health and well-being. We'll speak about how social support can help you cope with stress. What are the mechanisms behind this? Finally, we'll talk about social network analysis using a model called the social   convoy   model.

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Coping with Social Support

Human beings are social animal and we are programmed to bond with others. This is a fundamental need which does not fade with age. It has a profound implications for our mental and physical health

Social support can be defined as "information from others that one is loved and cared for, esteemed and valued, and part of a network of communication and mutual obligations". (Taylor, 2011, page 180).

Social support can be thought of as the soothing impact of friends, family, and acquaintances (Baron & Kerr, 2003).

So let's get started. As a result, we are commonly said to as sociable creatures, implying that we cannot, and do not, live alone or isolated. We are always in a social context where we are continuously forming bonds with others around us. That is the concept of the social animal. As a result, we're all wired to form bonds with other people.

We have a sense of or a need to belong to a social system, which is a basic need and motivation. The desire to be a part of a family, a community, a society, and a nation, among other things. We are programmed to bond with other individuals, thus this is a basic desire.

This is critical for our mental well-being as well as our survival, as it is an evolutionary function. Without the support of other members of the group, we would find it impossible to exist on our own. So social bonding has a survival value as well as an emotional benefit since people help us during times of stress. As a result, they provide us with emotional and other types of support.

As a result, this is something that lasts from childhood to old age. This one need, to continually bond with other individuals, is a constant desire. So that's what the concept of social support means: it's a representation of that fundamental need.

So social support can be defined as information from others that one is loved and cared for, esteemed and valued and part of a network of communication and mutual

obligations. This is one of the technical ways of defining social support. The notion is that we sense social support when we feel appreciated, loved, and cared for in a network of individuals and when we are a member of a network of communication and mutual duty. As a result, other people support you, and you, in turn, support them.

So, when we have a social support network, this is the type of perception and feeling we have: we are loved, cared for, and appreciated in a network of communication with other people. And, of course, there is a shared responsibility.

Another way to think of social support is as a calming influence of friends, family, and acquaintances. As a result, the concept of social assistance is always utilized in a positive light. Someone is assisting you in the same way that someone is assisting me. So you have a calming impact, in terms of positive effects from friends, acquaintances, and family members, all of whom are supportive in some way. So that's how social support works.

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The need for stable and strong social relationships with others is a very powerful, pervasive and fundamental motivation (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). It helps us to establish a network of close, caring individuals who can provide social support in times of distress, sorrow, and fear.

Social support is a particularly important personal resource because it helps provide access to further resources beyond those already possessed by the individual (Hobfoll et al., 1990).

There can be several sources of social support such as parents, friends, relatives, loved ones.

Pets can also be a source of support for many (Allen, 2003).

So the need for stable and strong social relationships with others is a very powerful, pervasive and fundamental motivation. It is a very powerful motivation. We all want to connect with people. This sense of connection is very important. And our quality of life, our sense of health and well-being, largely depends on this quality of this connection with other people. What is your quality of social relationship with other people? It plays a very

important role in our psychological health, in physical health. We will see some of these research findings. So it largely determines the quality of our life.

It assists us in forming a network of close, caring persons who can provide social support in times of sadness, grief, and fear. And clearly, it is really important in general, but it is especially significant in times of difficulty, crisis in life, when we truly grasp the importance of other people because they kind of stand by you and support you through a crisis.

Social support is an especially valuable personal resource because it allows you to access additional resources beyond those you've previously possessed.

Let's pretend I need money to pay for specific expenses in my life. So I have a set amount of money that I can spend. For example, supposing you are facing a financial crisis and require a large amount of financial assistance, but your own financial resources, whatever they may be, are insufficient. As a result, someone in your social network lends you money or offers you assistance at that time. As a result, your resources are enhanced. As a result, whatever you have is augmented by the resources of others. As a result, it is critical in that context. As a result, it improves our resources. It could be a monetary resource, an intellectual resource, or something else.

 As a result, as we receive help from others, our resources and abilities grow. As a result, we use their resources, which then become ours in times of distress. So, there may be multiple sources of social support. For example, we receive support from our parents, family members, friends, relatives, and other loved ones in our lives. As a result, they are all social support systems. Some people may have a larger network, with a greater number of people in it, while others may have a smaller network. As a result, it is dependent on the individual's lifestyle and social circle, among other factors.

As a result, all of these people can provide you with various types of social assistance. Pets, for example, can sometimes be an essential source of social support because we all adore them. It could be a dog, a cat, or something else entirely. Because of the dwindling social support network and the lifestyle, people are not always as connected to those around them as they once were. As a result, many people find that having a pet in their house provides vital emotional support.

So people play with their pets, they adore them, and they return the love and devotion in a variety of ways. Having a pet at home can be a valuable source of emotional support in many situations. As a result, pets can be a source of support. Relationships between persons or individuals, in particular, can be difficult. Relationships with pets become much easier in this context, and they can be highly beneficial in a variety of situations.

So this whole concept of social support, coping with social support, is so crucial that social isolation, according to a lot of study, is something that individuals do for various reasons, such as when they are depressed or something. Isolation from others can have a variety of negative consequences. It can lead to sadness, suicidal ideation, anxiety, and other mental health issues. So from that, we can understand how important it is that you have a good support network because isolation can have many negative consequences.

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Different Forms of Social Support

Social support can take different forms such as tangible support, informational support, emotional support, invisible support (Taylor, 2011).

Tangible support: Material support such as services, financial or goods

Informational support: Information, advice, or suggestions during difficult or stressful times.

Now, social support can come in a variety of shapes and sizes. So, let's take a look at some of the various types of social support. As a result, social support can take many different forms, including tangible, informational, emotional, and occasionally invisible support.

So, let's have a look at what these social supports are. Tangible support, as the term implies, is when someone assists you with tangible resources such as material resources, financial support, or support in the form of services or goods. Someone should provide you with some financial assistance. It may be money, or it might be any kind of commodity, or it could be some sort of service. Somebody give you some material support.

It may be money, or it might be any type of item, or it could be any type of service that you require. All of this is referred to as tangible social assistance. Support in the form of material assistance, tangible, more concrete assistance.

Informational support is the second sort of social support. As a result, we occasionally receive informational support. So, you're looking for information on something. Let's pretend you're in a situation where you don't know what to do. So someone tells you to do this or that. As a result, this is a source of information. It could be in the form of

imparting knowledge. It could take the shape of giving guidance or making suggestions during challenging situations.

So many people, so many times, we don't know what to do in a sudden circumstance, so we ask someone who is more, who has more experience in those areas, and they may be able to provide us, aid us, or provide knowledge about what to do in those instances. As a result, these are referred to as informational support.
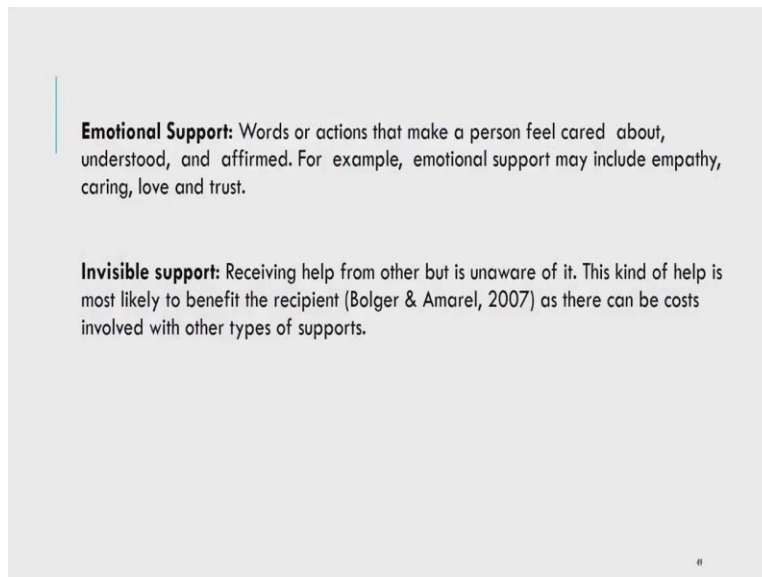
Then there's emotional support, which is more evident and something we're usually aware of: someone supports you through a crisis by talking to you or taking activities to make you feel cared for, understood, and confirmed in that circumstances. Empathy, caring, affection, and trust are all examples of emotional support. So, amid a crisis, someone calms you down by listening to you, your issues, and offering you words of love and affection. These are all forms of emotional support, and they can be extremely helpful during a crisis.

So there's another form of assistance that may have elements of the other three, but it's more distinct in terms of approach. It's referred to as "invisible support."

So the notion is that someone may provide you with hidden support. It's possible that the recipient isn't aware of it. As a result, this is referred to as "invisible support," or getting assistance from others while the recipient is unaware of it. As a result, you are indirectly

supporting someone. As a result, the person may be unaware that you have backed them up. So it might be in a basic situation or in a very, very complex circumstance.

Let's assume you clean the house or do something else when your spouse isn't at home. Your spouse may not realize it, but it is assisting in some ways. So, because that individual was not present at the time, you did something to help the other person. So this kind of help is most likely to benefit the recipient.

According to research, this form of assistance is also very advantageous, especially when other types of assistance may incur costs. In some cases, especially when someone provides you with various types of assistance, there may be a cost associated with it. Because someone is assisting you, you may be required to do something in return, which may incur a cost. Alternatively, when someone is receiving assistance, the recipient may feel powerless, requiring additional assistance. As a result, with an invisible support system, those complications will not exist. It can also be quite beneficial in many cases.

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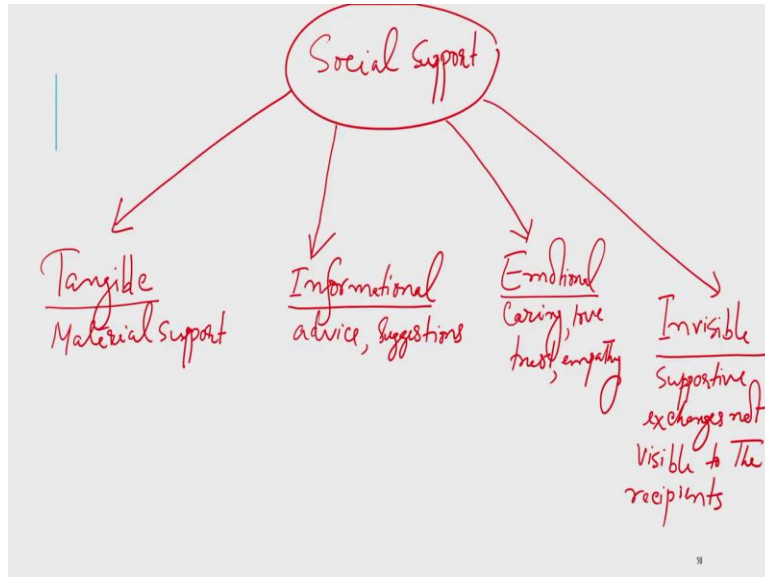
So, in a nutshell, let's sketch and try to grasp these four forms of support. I'll just try to write it down here. So social support can be one of three categories, but it may also be, and we can use, a fourth one. So it can be tangible, material support, informational support in the form of guidance and suggestions, emotional and caring support, love, trust, empathy, and it can also be invisible at times. As a result, there could be four different sorts of social support.

Material support is quite tangible. Giving money, donating materials, and so on. Advice and suggestions are examples of informational content. Emotional means caring, trusting, and actively listening to others. Invisible support is when the recipient is not really aware of support. So indirectly, you are supporting somebody. So this could be four types of social support.

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Just as we sometimes need different types of support, some people are better at providing one kind of support than another (although some people are good at more than one type).

Social support is beneficial when there is a match between what one needs and what one receives from the support network is called as matching hypothesis (Cohen & McKay, 1984). For example, when a person needs tangible support, providing emotional support may not be helpful and vice versa.

As a result, we may require various forms of assistance at times. Some people are more adept at delivering certain types of support than others. So, depending on the circumstances and the life crises, we may require one type of help in one situation and not require another type of help in another. And in our social network, some people are better at providing one type of support while others are better at providing another. As a result, you may find that some people excel at providing material assistance.

So, in a material sense, some people are extremely resourceful. So, if you need money or anything else, you know someone in your network who can help me with money.
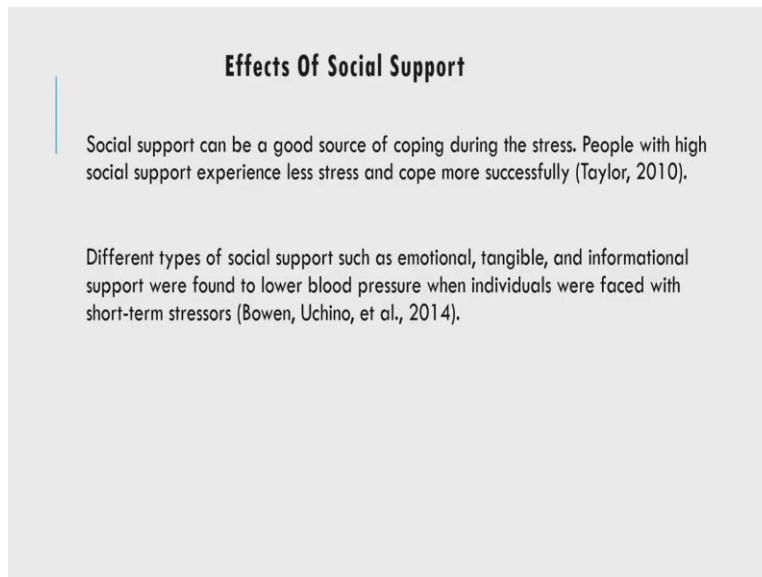
So there may be other individuals who are very empathic, and you can turn to them whenever you need emotional support since they have the abilities to listen to you and provide empathy, trust, and a loving and caring connection. Some people are particularly adept at it.

Some people may be good at providing informational support because they have a lot of networks and connections, they know what to do, where to go, and you can just ask them whenever you need it. So, depending on the scenario, we may require different types of assistance, and we must seek out those individuals who can provide that specific type of assistance. Some people may be adept at providing two or three types of assistance. So all kinds of people are there.

As a result, social support is effective when there is a match between what you require and what the network can provide. As a result, that match is crucial. So, if you require concrete assistance while another person provides emotional assistance, it may not be possible at that time. It's OK; it may ease some stress; however, when you require actual assistance, such as financial assistance, you approach that individual, and he provides you with emotional assistance. As a result, it may not be very beneficial.

So, whenever you require a specific type of assistance, you must be matched with someone who can provide you with those resources. As a result, in terms of effective support, this is also critical.

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Effects Of Social Support

Social support can be a good source of coping during the stress. People with high social support experience less stress and cope more successfully (Taylor, 2010).

Different types of social support such as emotional, tangible, and informational support were found to lower blood pressure when individuals were faced with short-term stressors (Bowen, Uchino, et al., 2014).
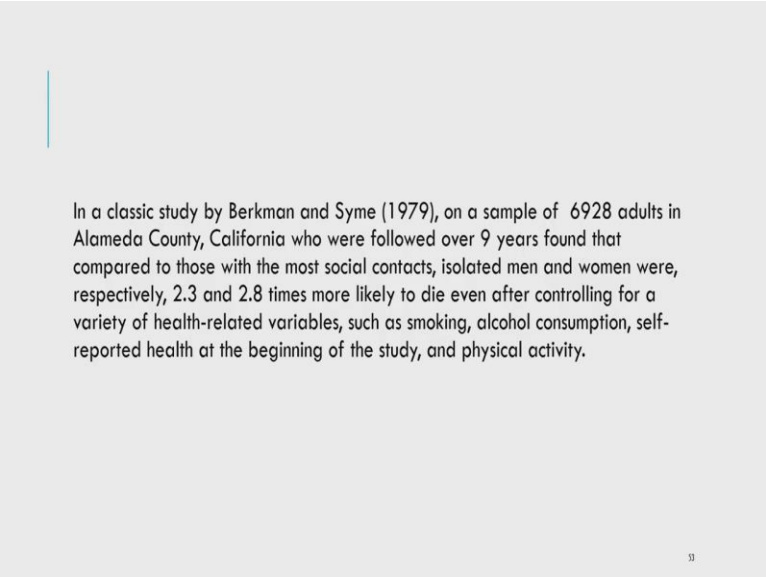
So, let's take a look at some of the research findings in terms of social support. What discoveries have been linked to the benefits of social support, according to research?

As a result, social support can be an excellent way to cope with stress. So, as we've discussed, social support is critical, particularly during times of stress. For example, if there is a crisis, I have a friend who can assist me. So your entire load of worry will be lifted naturally and instantly since you know my friend will be able to assist me. As a result, support has an impact. Let's imagine you're in a problem and can't seem to find someone who can assist you. As a result, your stress will last longer because you are

unsure how to handle the situation and no one is around to assist you. As a result, you will feel persistent stress, which will have detrimental consequences.

As a result, those who have a lot of social support are less stressed and can handle it better. When people are faced with short-term stressors, multiple types of social support, such as emotional, material, and informational assistance, have been demonstrated to lower blood pressure. So, according to studies, it has an impact on the physiological level as well, as evidenced by previous findings, because it lowers stress and does so automatically. So research also shows the physiological level, we see some other findings also, it has an impact at the physiological level also because it relieves your stress and automatically. It has a facilitative or positive impact on your physiological level in terms of whatever the negative impacts that stress has. It relieves those negative impacts, including if your blood pressure increases, it will lower it down.

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In a classic study by Berkman and Syme (1979), on a sample of 6928 adults in Alameda County, California who were followed over 9 years found that compared to those with the most social contacts, isolated men and women were, respectively, 2.3 and 2.8 times more likely to die even after controlling for a variety of health-related variables, such as smoking, alcohol consumption, self-reported health at the beginning of the study, and physical activity.

So, for example, Berkman and Syme conducted a classic study in 1979 on a sample of roughly 7,000 adults, 6,928 adults, in California, where they tracked this group for nine years. As a result, these are referred to as longitudinal studies. A longitudinal study is one in which a group of people is followed over time to see the effects of a certain intervention and what is happening to them over a specific amount of time in order to determine whether or not a particular thing has an influence. As a result, these are referred to as longitudinal studies.

As a result, investigations like this are critical in determining whether or not there are any significant consequences. So this group of patients was followed for nine years, and they discovered that several parameters were recorded from these samples. Throughout this 9-year period, multiple measurements of their social networks, size of social networks, quality of social networks, and various health-related outcomes were assessed at different intervals of time.

So, at the end of the study, it was discovered that socially isolated men and women were 2.3 to 2.8 times more likely to die than those with the most social contacts. So those who had less social support network, so mostly they were kind of experiencing social isolation, so socially isolated men and women were kind of respectively 2.3 to 2.8 times more likely to die even after controlling for a variety of other health related variables such as smoking, alcohol consumption, self reported health.

As a result, their effects were separated and just the impact of social support was examined. Even after controlling for all of the other health-related variables, it was discovered that socially isolated men and women are more likely to experience, more likely to die, or the likelihood of mortality increases.

That does not imply that people will die. Only that they are more likely to experience health-related problems or die earlier than other people who have more supportive networks, and their stress experiences and health-related issues will be significantly lower than other people. As a result, their rate of mortality may be influenced indirectly.

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In a meta-analysis of 148 studies conducted between 1982 and 2007 involving over 300,000 participants found that individuals with stronger social relationships have a 50% greater likelihood of survival compared to those with weak or insufficient social relationships (Holt-Lunstad, Smith, & Layton, 2010).

Studies have also shown that higher social support is linked to better survival rates following cardio-vascular disorders (Brummett et al., 2001), breast cancer (Falagas et al., 2007), and HIV infection (Lee & Rotheram-Borus, 2001).

So, in another meta-analysis of 148 papers, a meta-analysis is when several studies are undertaken in a particular area of research, and we don't know where the findings are heading. As a result, people conduct meta-analysis based on the concept, and they conduct analysis of the analysis. So, because there are so many studies, they combine the findings of all of them and look for patterns in those areas.

So, a meta-analysis was conducted on 148 studies that were completed between 1982 and 2007, comprising over 3 lakhs of people, and they discovered that stronger social relationships have a 50% higher chance of surviving than weaker social relationships. So, according to meta-analysis, social support and network can influence mortality rates or survival rates, increasing the chances of survival. Higher social support has also been associated to increased survival rates following cardiac muscular disorders, suggesting that having a strong social support network can help you survive chronic illness as well. There is a comfort and calming relationship since you are less likely to encounter stress and other things. People are there to assist you so that you can be mentally helped and supported. So in various contexts of chronic stress, the benefits of social support have been reported, such as cardio-muscular disorder, breast cancer, HIV infection and so on.

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Biological Pathways of Social Support

Social support has been found to have beneficial effects on cardiovascular, endocrine, and immune system (Taylor, 2010). It slows down or reduces the physiological and neuroendocrine response to stress (Taylor, 2011).

Social support has been linked to boosting the immune system, especially among people who are experiencing stress (Uchino, Vaughn, Carlisle, & Birmingham, 2012).

It is also linked to reduce blood pressure for people performing stressful tasks (Lepore, 1998).

So, let's take a look at some of the biochemical pathways that lead to benefits of social support. In fact, social support can influence our biological systems simply because it changes our stress experience, and stress is inextricably linked to our biological influence, as we explored in length in a previous lecture on the biology of stress. As a result, social support has been shown to benefit the cardiovascular, endocrine, and immunological systems. So, at the very least, all of this social support suggests that it has a positive impact on the cardiovascular system, which is linked to blood pressure and other factors. The endocrine system is responsible for the production of hormones. The immune system is the body's defense mechanism.

It helps in the slowing or reduction of the physiological and neuroendocrine stress response. So, whatever harmful influence stress has on the endocrine and physiological systems, social support slows it down and counteracts it.

Social support has also been related to improving the immune system, particularly in persons who are stressed. So, stress weakens the immune system in general, as we've shown in one entire lesson on stress and the immune system. So there, we have tried to see that stress, particularly chronic stress, negatively influences our immune system. So social support kinds of reduces the influence the stress and enhances the immune system. So when stress is removed, that also has a facilitative or beneficial impact on our immune system also. It is also linked to reducing blood pressure for people performing stressful tasks. So it also reduces blood pressure, especially for people with hypertension.

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Social support facilitates coping and health outcomes by having beneficial physiological effects in stressful situations.

It is also possible that social support may lead to better health behaviors, such as a healthy diet, exercising, smoking cessation, and cooperation with medical regimens (Uchino, 2009).

Social support also facilitates coping and health outcomes by having beneficial physiological effects. So we have seen so many physiological effects that can be responsible for their beneficial impacts on our health. Furthermore, social support may lead to better health outcomes, not only through physiological impacts but also by influencing our behavior. So people, if there are close people around us, they also help us to engage in healthy behaviors such as taking healthy diets, doing regular exercises, stop smoking and maybe following medical prescriptions and so many things. So people around us, actually, the kind of motivate us to engage in healthy behaviors, especially your near and dear ones. Most individuals wouldn't engage in as much healthy behavior on their own. However, if you have individuals who care about you, they will continually tell you to behave in a healthy manner. As a result, social support can influence our health outcomes indirectly by affecting our health behaviors.

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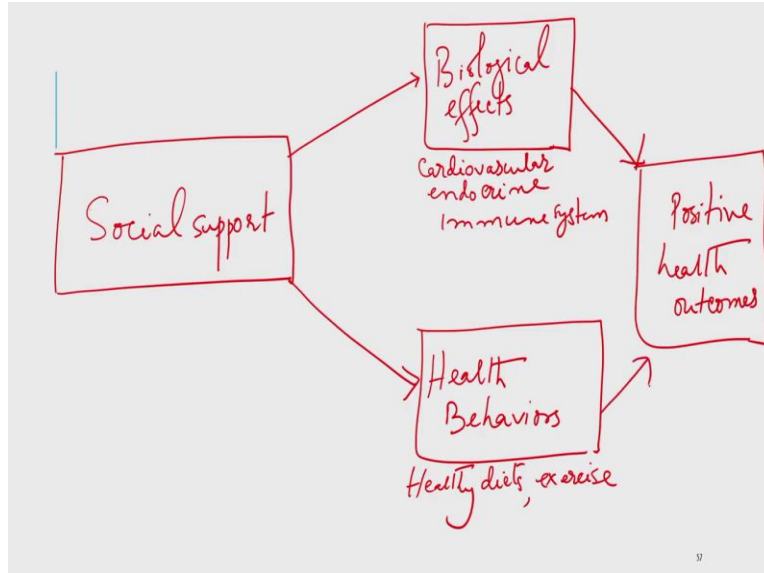
We can illustrate it like this. As a result, it's possible that two paths exist. One is obviously biological effects, such as cardiovascular, so social support has a facilitative or positive impact on all of these biological systems, including the cardiovascular, endocrine, and immune systems, and it may also influence our health behaviors, such as healthy diets, exercise, and so on.

As a result, social support may encourage this type of healthy behavior, which leads to better health results. As a result, this could be the mechanism by which social support affects our health. It could be accomplished by affecting our biological systems or our health behaviors.

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So, how does social support help people cope with stressful situations? What are the mechanisms that cause it, or what are the study findings that support it? So, in general, there are two hypotheses that have been studied in the literature of social support to understand the role of social support in mitigating the consequences of stress. So, what are the effects of social support, how does it affect stress, how does it lower stress, what are the, what are the means of, how does it influence that? As a result, it involves two hypotheses.

One is known as the direct effect hypothesis, which predicts that social support is generally beneficial at all times. So, whether it's a stressful or non-stressful situation, social support is always beneficial. As a result, it is beneficial to one's overall health. As a result, this is known as the direct effect theory.

Another hypothesis, known as the buffering hypothesis, proposes that social support is most effective at times of extreme stress. So it is especially vital, if not more so, at times of great stress and crisis in life. According to this hypothesis, social support functions as a buffer, protective layer, or resource that reduces the detrimental effects of stress during times of high stress. So, especially during times of high stress, social support is considerably more vital or plays a much more vital function in buffering the impact of stress. So a buffer basically implies that it acts as a buffer between you and the stress.

As a result, stress has no direct effect on you. As a result, there is a layer in between. Buffer springs are used in all automobiles. So, when there are holes in the road or issues

in the road, you do not receive all the jerks from the roads. As a result, there is a buffer spring that absorbs a significant amount of road strain. Similarly, social support functions as a buffer, acting as a protective layer to prevent all of the effects of stress from immediately affecting you. It is somewhat absorbed by it. So that's what the buffering hypothesis means.

So both the hypotheses were generally supported by the research. So, in general, it is also beneficial for your well-being and particularly during the high of high stress also, social support also plays a very important role.

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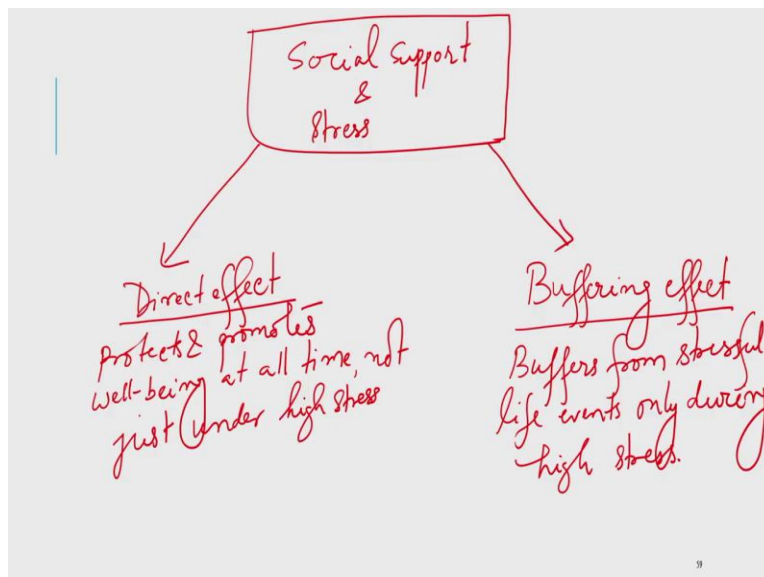
So, in the context of stress, we can write it as follows. As a result, one is referred to as a direct effect that states that social support protects and promotes well-being at all times, not only during severe stress. The second is the buffer effect hypothesis which states that social support is especially beneficial during stress and crisis. So there are two hypotheses, and research indicates that both are valid depending on the context and many other things. So both can be true, and both have empirical evidence.

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Social Support Network Analysis: A Convoy Model

A social convoy model: Social convoy model was developed by Toni Antonucci and Robert Kahn of the University of Michigan in 1980.

A convoy represents a group of people moving together through life.

So, let us now conduct a social support network analysis using a model known as a convoy model. So a convoy is really a group of people. So this is a social convoy model established in 1980 at the University of Michigan by Toni Antonucci and Robert Kahn. So they basically symbolize a group of people who move together, as the term convoy implies. So any group of individuals who move together is referred to as a convoy of individuals. Similarly, we are all surrounded by a large number of people throughout our lives. And there are numerous additional people who follow us around our entire lives. As a result, they symbolize a convoy, a social convoy in our lives. So we are not alone in our lives, and there are many others who accompany us on our journey. In our lives, they represent a convoy.

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According to the convoy model, individuals are surrounded by supportive others who move with them throughout the life course.

These relationships vary in their closeness, their quality, their function (e.g., aid, affect, affirmation exchanges), and their structure (e.g., size, composition, contact frequency, geographic proximity) (Antonucci, Ajrouch, & Birditt, 2014).

The convoy measure involves placing close and important individuals into three concentric circles representing three levels of closeness: close, closer, closest. It is a simple way to represent complex human relationships.

So according to convoy model, individuals are surrounded by supportive others who move with them throughout their life course. So we have many supportive people around us, who moves with us in our lives, journey of our life. So they are our convoys.

According to the convoy model, individuals are surrounded by supporting others who accompany them throughout their life journey. As a result, we have many supportive people in our lives who accompany us on our journey. As a result, they are our convoys. And the proximity, quality, and functions of these relationships differ. So there are certainly a lot of people in our network. Some people are closer to us, while others are not so close. Some people, the quality of their relationships with some people is far superior to that of others. People also differ in their roles. As a result, we may be linked to someone because of our positions at a specific organization. Some people are connected with us biologically.

Some people are biologically related to us. As a result, they differ in their functions and what they do in our lives. So the convoy who, people who are represented in the convoy or network, vary in their functions, qualities, and proximity.

As a result, convoy measurement entails arranging close and significant individuals in three concentric circles. So, basically, it aids us in representing the complicated social interactions in our network by utilizing concentric circles to symbolize persons who are

extremely near, closer, and closest. As a result, it is a straightforward method of portraying complicated human relationships.
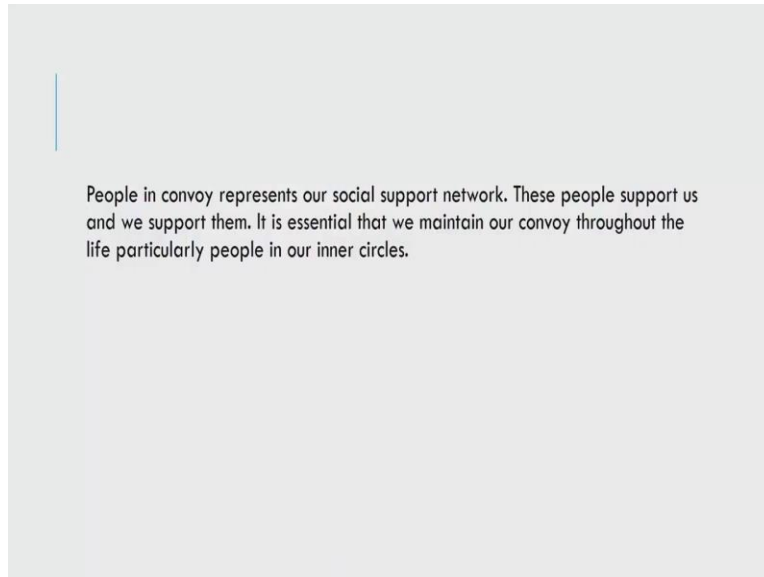
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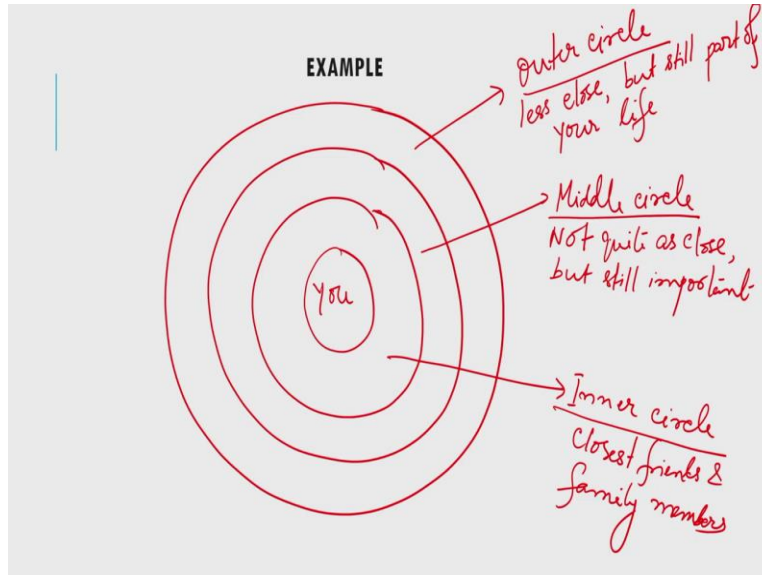
For example, it may be displayed like follows. So, let us say, you've here. So the initial circle around you is called an inner circle, followed by a middle circle, and finally by an outer circle. So you've here. As a result, your inner circle is made up of people, including close friends and family members. The inner circle. People who are the most important to you. The middle circle is next. So the middle circle depicts people that are not as close to you as those in your inner circle, but are still very significant in your life. As a result, we can distinguish between closest friends and friends. So the people in the middle circle may be friends. Inner circle refers to the people who are closest to you such as best friends.

Then there's the outer circle, people who aren't as close, but are still a part of your life. Perhaps some people in your organization where you are placed in a job, so there are people who may not be particularly close to you but are still important, they play a significant role in your life, in terms of colleagues and other things.
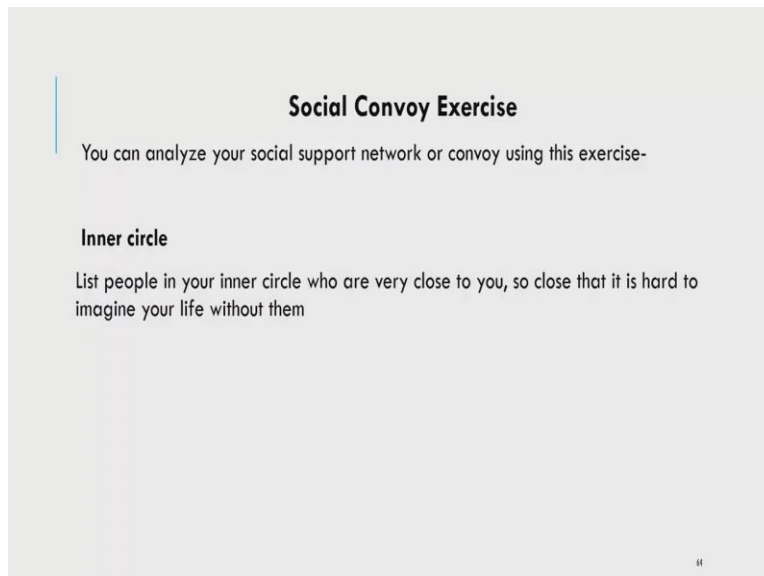
So we may represent everyone in our network using this exercise or these concentric circles, with some people in your inner circle, some in your middle circle, and some in your outer circle, depending on their proximity to you.

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People in convoy represents our social support network. These people support us and we support them. It is essential that we maintain our convoy throughout the life particularly people in our inner circles.
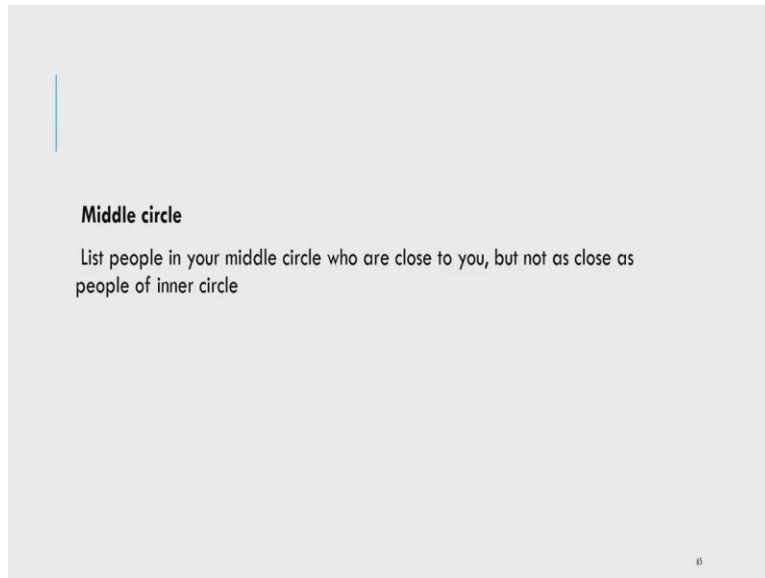
As a result, the folks in convoy reflect our social support network. These people support us, and we support them. It is critical that we maintain our relationships throughout our lives, especially those in our inner circle. As a result, it is critical that we retain that bond. People in our inner circle, in particular, play a vital role in our lives by providing assistance at times of crisis and in general.

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Social Convoy Exercise

You can analyze your social support network or convoy using this exercise-

Inner circle

List people in your inner circle who are very close to you, so close that it is hard to imagine your life without them

So, utilizing these concentric circles or this convoy model, we can all undertake a simple exercise in which, for example, for the inner circle, you may identify people who are very close to you, so close that it is difficult to imagine your life without them. So there you have it, the definition of the inner circle. So you may make a list of who is in that circle. You can discover how many people are in the inner circle.

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Middle circle

List people in your middle circle who are close to you, but not as close as people of inner circle

For the middle circle, you can list people in your middle circle, who are close to you but not as close to people of the inner circle. So there may be some people in that such as friends. So you can list how many people in the middle circle.

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Outer circle

List people in your outer circle who are less close but still important in your life.
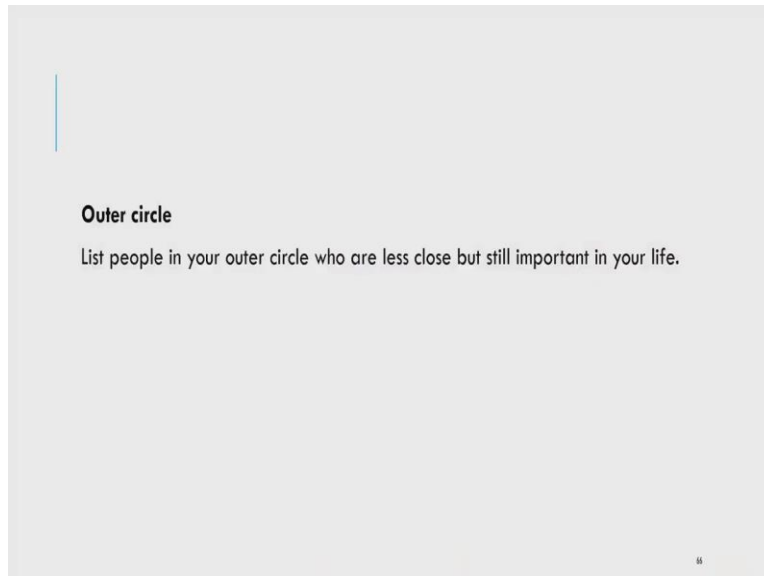
Outer circle, you might list persons that are less close to you but nonetheless essential in your life. It could include coworkers and other people who aren't particularly close to you but are nonetheless a part of your life. So you can keep track of how many people are present. So you can use this exercise to learn about people in your social support network.

It is also critical that you have certain individuals in your inner circle. As a result, because they are the initial layer of your support network, this is critical. So it doesn't have to be a large circle or a lot of people, but it does have to have some quality relationships and people in it.

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Building Social Support Network

Building social support is an active process which needs active participation. Few suggestions include-

- Identify and improve the problems in existing social network

- Build new connections by joining and participating in groups and communities that you like

- Altruistic and volunteer work

- Alternative sources of support: Pets etc.

So, in the end, I'll only discuss how to build a social support network. Now that we've seen how vital it is, we can see how it affects our lives. So, how can we build or maintain it for the benefit of our lives, to improve the quality of our lives?

Building social support is thus a dynamic process that requires active engagement. So, for example, one idea could be to identify and improve the shortcomings in the existing social network. As a result, this is critical. We already have a large number of people in our social network. We don't always need additional people. We need to improve our relationships with those people. As a result, if there are flaws in the existing relationships, it is imperative that they be addressed. So if there are deficiencies in the existing relationships, it is important that you rectify them and improve those relationships.

So many times in our interactions, there is a rift developed between the relationship with others. Many times, we create distance with people who are very essential in our lives because of some dumb, egoistic motive. It could be due to some egoistic and ridiculous motive. So, especially if such reasons exist, it is critical that you mend those relationships and repair those current flaws in the connection by considering how significant they are in your life. These are the people who will come to you and support you during the crisis. So we should overlook these petty issues, egoistic complications, and petty, trivial things. It is critical to have less judgmental and egoistic ways of dealing with relationships. So, if you grasp its significance, you may solve a lot of flaws, issues, and disputes in relationships. Conflicts occur for a variety of reasons, including genuine ones.

We're not going to get into it. However, many times, the soreness in a relationship occurs solely as a result of some tiny egoistic thing that may be avoided. As a result, it is critical that we repair all of these flaws in the present relationship. As a result, this is critical. Identifying them and improving on them is critical.

The second point to mention is that you may always make new connections if necessary. If you notice, you don't have a lot of people in your network, so before we speak about making new connections, in terms of discovering and improving current relationships, one thing is proactively connecting with individuals.

Many times, we do not connect with those who are extremely close to us simply because of various lifestyle reasons and other factors. As a result, it is critical to make efforts to connect with others. So, it is important to make efforts to connect to the people, be proactive, keep in touch with them as much as possible, listen to them, encourage them, support them wherever it is required. This is how relationships are kind of flourishes in Many times, we may not have time for that, but thanks to the wonders of technology, we can now connect with anyone, anywhere in the world. So it's a lot easier now. However, face-to-face communication is always preferable. However, if this is not possible, we can use technology to connect with others. So these are some of the options available.

One thing you can do to make new connections is to follow your interests and passions in life and join, engage in groups and organizations that interest you. As a result, this is yet another vital method of making new connections. So, for example, if you enjoy mountaineering or trekking, you can join a variety of clubs and collaborate. So you will find so many like minded people there. And you can connect with them. So this is one of the best ways to kind of build new connections.

If you are enthusiastic about anything, you can also be involved in other altruistic and volunteering activities. So you can devote yourself to a cause, perhaps by joining an NGO or doing some volunteer work, assisting organizations, orphanages. So, when you provide love and support to others, when you help them, you also receive and connect with others.

So look for more chances to meet new individuals. Especially if you are in a specific crisis, such as a chronic condition, cancer, or something else. Nowadays, there are

numerous, even online support groups where you may find and help others who are in similar crisis situations and learn from them. So you can connect with newer people in a variety of methods.

So those are a few examples. Pets, of course, are an alternate form of support. If there aren't many humans around, you can always bond with pets. Have pets in your home if you like them, connect with them, and play with them. They also provide a great deal of emotional support. So these are some things that you can consider. And many people find it difficult to connect with others due to a lack of social skills, so you may improve your social skills and sometimes seek professional assistance. So all of these things are feasible.

So the notion is that you don't need a great number of people in your support network. That is not the intention, but it is more vital that you have a few people in your inner circle who can help you, encourage you, and have some great, meaningful relationships with. That is sufficient. It could be at your workplace, in your family, or among your friends. Only a few people. So that is sufficient for establishing a support network. It is not necessary to have a massive and extensive support network. If it's there, it's fine; if it's not, even a small group of people will suffice. So those are some of the ideas. So, with that, I'll conclude today's presentation. Thank you very much.