

Human Adjustment Process
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Module - 5
Lecture - 3
Facets of Human Adjustment

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Withdrawal as Abnormal Reaction

- The combination of immaturity and helplessness provides a shield against failure to achieve
- Exhibition of defense- regression as a defense withdrawal.
- Fantasy as a defense is normal but there could also be a possibility of partial or complete withdrawal where reality is substituted by an imaginary scenario
- Another example of abnormal withdrawal is adjustment by ailment
- Psychopathology is full of psychosomatic disorders where the cause is psychological but the symptom is visible on the body
- Withdrawal is also shown as neurotic reaction patterns as well as some psychotic symptoms

Last time we had the discussed to the major experiences that could induce a sense of avoidance withdrawal or compromise, in the adult life of a person. We ended with the fact, that if you have certain degree of predictable punishment in your life, then it still could be tolerable first as a recipient of those punishments, but more and more randomized is the presentation of the punishment, means the more and more unpredictable it is. It could be much more anxiety arousing for us.

We now come to the form of withdrawal that usually is designated as withdrawal symptoms in psychology, in clinical literature. We had already talked about certain forms of defenses being used. We talked about the fact that it can be an intelligent way of handling a situation, but we also sometime back, we did touch upon this issue, that they are could be a possibility, that there is a predominant uses of withdrawal as a defense mechanism.

Now, if the combination of immaturity and helplessness provides a shield, against failure to achieve somebody, then one starts exhibiting defense mechanism, such as say, regression is a defense mechanism. The reason being, that you want to revert back to a less demanding state, in the case of regression. You find the present condition to be extremely demanding something, which puts extraordinary pressure on you, and you find your limitations in terms of handling it, and therefore you decide to revert back to a stage of life, which according to you, was for more pleasing simply, because there were not those many demands put forth. Also you were capable of managing those demands, and therefore, one can show a regression as a technique. Now, fantasy as a defense is normal, but there could be a possibility of partial or complete withdrawal where reality is substituted by imaginary scenarios. Now, I think study on day 4, somebody came here, after the lecture asking, that if you over use fantasy, is it a good way of handling the situation.

So, now we are touching that issue that fantasy could be normal type of a defense mechanism, that people use, but there could be a possibility where you partially or you completely withdraw your engagement from the involvement, because you are able to create an imaginary scenario. Are you getting this point? So, it is not that you are present in the involvement, and a part of it, you fulfill through imaginary achievement. You might create an imaginary scenario itself, where you are involved and therefore, you either go for a partial withdrawal or you go for a complete withdrawal.

So, even if you go for a partial or a complete withdrawal, this could be a problem. Another form of such type of abnormal withdrawal is where you adjust by developing certain form of elements, what is now reported as psychosomatic disorders. Now, the psychopathology literature is full of psychosomatic disorders where primarily the origin of the problem lies in the psychology of the human being, and the symptom lies on the soma part; the body part. So, you have a bodily manifestation of the problem, whereas, the cause of the problem lies in your psychological process.

So, if you tend to develop withdrawal symptom, based on certain type elements that you develop, then once again, it is classified as a set of psychological disorder, classified as psychosomatic disorders. Withdrawal is also shown as neurotic reaction patterns, and in

certain cases you can have psychotic patterns also. Neurotic and psychotic patterns; we will discuss some of them at length, that would be our last module; that would be the last or last but one week of the semester.

But remember this, that there could be a possibility where you have fabricated scenario, you have an imaginary scenario, which makes you partially withdraw or completely withdraw. Then it is no more fantasy. Fantasy is now triggering you to move towards withdrawal symptom. There could be a case where you tend to withdraw and in order to defend yourself; you develop certain symptoms, which is again, indicator of a disorder called psychosomatic disorder. There could yet, be a possibility where you have a certain type of a neurotic or a psychotic symptom, which is combined with withdrawal tendency. All these types of withdrawal mechanisms are considered to be abnormal reactions. They are not going to help you in striking balance in your life, and therefore, they do not positively contribute your psychology of adjustment.

So, that was all that we had to discuss. Certain things, we can take up, if it interest you like, say issues like, compulsive type of engagement in a set of activity, that does not allow you to engage yourself in other activities, say, compulsive gambling, for example; Compulsion to watch pornographic material, for example; compulsive gaming, for example; you somewhere feel that you enjoyed the stuff, the virtual stuff, to the heighten extent and you engage yourself so much, so that your real life situations and real life demands, you compromise with. There are good deal of research on this; on compulsive gambling; on compulsion to watch pornographic material; compulsive engagement in gaming behavior. Why it is that people get engaged in such type of things, and why is it that they have a tough time getting rid out of it? If you are interested, later on I will pass on some reading stuff to you where you can have a look at it. So, this is all for today. It is now open for discussion, if you have anything to discuss, anything to ask; most welcome.

Student: how (()) how do we interlink approval value and meaning hope to each other?

We are reverting back to the previous module, is it so where we had the maintenance needs.

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Maintenance Needs

- Curiosity
- Understanding
- Order
- Predictability
- Adequacy
- Competence
- Security
- Love & belongingness
- Approval
- Values & meaning
- Hope

This was the whole list of maintenance needs and she is saying that how do we interlink approval value and meaning hope to each other. Because we are living in a social structure, we are supposed to comply to certain social needs. The society will demand a certain things from us and in turn, we are supposed to fulfill them. Now, the way we interact with others in the society, and overall, the way we influence are society, require certain degree of approval. So, say for example, take the example of the performance of an instructor during a course in a semester. There could be a possibility that you do not approve of the content; you do not approve of the methodology adopted; you do not approve of the manner in which it was deliberated; you do not approve of the way the class of interaction took place; and your entire approval, disapproval, gets reflected when you get a chance to fill your student reaction survey. Now, that is an approval mechanism that has been designated, that has been designed by a system, which tells you that whether, certain form of behavior of an instructor, may be, overall performance including behavior; does it have an overall approval or not?

In personal context also, when you respond to an individual or when you respond to a given situation, you do seek approval. The more and more positive feedback you get, the more and more you are sure, that your response is approved. So, it is basically a feedback mechanism that makes you realize, that this form of behavior in this quantum, in this

situation, in this format, is perfectly acceptable. The more and more acceptable you are to others in your involvement, the more and more adjusted you feel. The more and happier you are, because the demands do not mismatch what you are delivering. If there is a lack of approval, this would mean that what the society expects from you, and what you are delivering; there is not a perfect match between the two. Had is the mismatch; more and more is the load on you to give the desired outcome.

Similarly, the more and more you are able to deliver things that are demanded by others; the more and more value you find in the engagement that you are involved in. The more and more you find that you are engaged in value oriented activities; you are able to identify some meaning in whatever, you are doing. Take certain examples like, somebody, who has designated value to certain form of engagement, which others do not take pride in. I would not name the shrine, but there is a very popular shrine in our country where the son of the leader of that shrine, went abroad, studied abroad; studied management there; and could have joined job, like any other management graduate. But after certain time, after graduating, he came back and joined his father, as a leader of the shrine. So, he was second in command and after his father, he is now the leader of that shrine; the major stakeholder of that shrine. If I share this story with you, for certain reasons, I am not naming the shrine, but that is a very popular shrine in our country.

Now, if you interpret this type of activity performed by an individual, one way of looking at it; I do not know the exact reason why he decided to do, so but just as an example we are discussing; as an intellectual enterprise, we are looking for causes. One logic, you can give that what would have been the salary, if he would have joined the best job, and how much does he earn now? Of course, there is no comparison, because what he earns through shrine is far more, compared to what he would have earned as a salary, because the donation to shines are very high. What would have been his social status? As manager as leader of the shrine; again, there is no comparison.

He may enjoy far better social status as the leader of the shrine. Now, these are our ways of looking at things; the external viewpoints. There could be the person's specific view point, and the person says that you know, I was always interested in engaging myself in activities, which are directed towards others. Now, visiting a shrine, worshipping there, at

that location and getting engaged in some type of a spiritual religious activities there; give them a deep sense of solace. For those, who have been suffering in life, and I am instrumental in running this mechanism; I find it more value oriented. This gives my engagement in such type of shrine based activity, also gives me meaning to my life. It is perfectly, ok. The way the person looks at his engagement, and is able to know find value in whatever, he or she is doing and finds meaningful engagement for himself or herself; that helps you retain your level of engagement in the task concerned, and it also makes you a very happy, satisfied; you derive a sense of achievement, finally, contributes to your sense of wellbeing; it contributes your mental health.

Student: (()) getting approval from the society, but every (().

Prof: That is true. That is true. Let me give you some weird examples. This is an example from a text book in Morgan King's (()) book on introduction to psychology, you find this example. A guard, who was put at the railway crossing in one of the small towns in England, did his job meticulously throughout his life. His entire job was, what you find near at the main gate of IIT Kanpur, where somebody is only designated the task that if a train has to cross you or manned crossing, then you have to close the gate and then once the train crosses, you have to open it. All you have to ensure is that there is no accident at your site, where you are posted.

This man was engaged in this activity for quite long, and he performed his job meticulously. Never ever an error took place at the place, where he was deputed. Much later, at the last face of his career, in the railways, he was given a promotion. He was supposed to become a supervisor, because he has rendered a glorious service for certain number of years. This man denied the promotion. When he was asked, why you do not want to be promoted? Because usually people will always look for promotion, he said that if I become supervisor of the manned railway crossings, my nature of job will be different. I would primarily, be looking at others, who would actually, be performing the task. So, I am not performing the task myself. Others would be performing the task, and I would be evaluating them. So, instead of saving a forth coming accident, instead of saving property and human life, I would primarily, be responsible for all those, who commit errors, and because of their error, some damages caused to life and property. He

said that I find the previous engagement more meaningful, and I do not find the latter offer that I have with me, meaningful at all.

You have different ways of how people look at what they do. There is a very popular temple in western India where you find people who would come there and offer food to rats. I do not know if you have visited that temple. It is a very popular temple there, and you find only rats and rats there, and in the form of the [fl]; it is usually offered in Hindu temples. You find eating stuffs for the rats, being sold out of the temple. All you do is you buy it, you worship God and you offer the [fl] to the rats, because it is full of rats. So, you find that the rats will start pouring in and eating, and you would also find interestingly, something that might sound not acceptable, and worth practicing to us; you will find human beings also taking those [fl], as if this is a blessed returned from God. If I offer you something that mouse has eaten, I do not know how many of you would accept it.

If your mess manager tells you that all the biscuits, all the [fl], all the fruits that will be served in this canteen, will be partly consumed by the rats. Why because this is blessings of Lord [fl]. How many of you would accept it? I doubt, even I myself would not accept it. But there, you have people in the temple, who very religiously involved into such things, and you take pride in doing whatever, you are you are doing. There are beautiful documentaries where you would find people, who take collecting food for the monkeys in the urban area. They will come; they will distribute food; they are very friendly with the monkeys; everyday they do it without gap. I have myself seen somebody, who every day, would take flower in his hand; those big bundles of it and will make small pieces out of it; go to the Ganges; offer it to the fishes, and he finds it very meaningful.

So, these are basically, more of the things that satisfy you with it. If you try to link approval and value and meaning, see approval is we have, I approve of a format of a behavior and I also seek a positive feedback from others. This is how my behavior is approved. When I find something very meaningful, then the external world still, might not approve of it, but because of I find it very convincing, and therefore I go ahead with it. Because, others are not able to see it the way I see it right now, today but tomorrow who knows; others would start looking at the ways, things I am looking at it, major

philanthropic engagements of individual. Say for example, Mother Teresa's involvement in philanthropic activities, for example. She along with another sister, both of them they started the work, and it was only two, who would find a meaningful engagement in whatever, they were doing. Gradually, people started pouring in and finally, you have the whole big organization, spread throughout the world. There could be many such things where you find that you are able to find it valuable; you are able to sign a meaning to that engagement; whereas, others are not able to or vice versa. We have people endorse you that this is worth doing; why do not you do it; you are capable of doing it; and you realize it and then you start moving ahead. The third possibility, that you find something meaningful, valuable, you will start doing it; others do not value it.

Then comes a time, when your activities are recognized by others, and they also joined you. It becomes much bigger group. All such possibilities could be there, but then finally, it adds you maintain the fact, that I am a human being, who is involved in value oriented activities and you find your engagement, extremely meaningful, and therefore you carry forward the thing, that you are engaged in. This is how value and meaning will help you. Finally, if you realize that I am involved in something, which has certain degree of value attached with it, when I realize that I am fine, I am able to assign a meaning to whatever, I am doing; this also has certain degree of approval, self approval and approval of others; I am pretty optimistic in my life. So, targets that I am not able to achieve, or targets which might appear far fetching and probably, unachievable at this point of time, still I am hopeful that a day would come on when these targets would be achieved.

If not me, somebody else will achieve it, but then the movement must go ahead. Imagine the situation, the first person to decide that he will be the freedom fighter, and would fight for the cause of the country; which country? You can choose different countries. That person would certainly not have been very sure, if his attempt would be finally, liberating his country from the occupancy of the foreigners. Take our Indian context. The first revolt, 1857 revolt, I am not sure if the leaders at that time, were very convinced that their effort will make the Britishers to move out of the country. But that does not stop you from still doing something, which you find value oriented, which you find very meaningful, and your hopes run very high. Even though, the price that you pay for it

could be very high, say for example, 1857, those who took the lead in the revolt, all them were, either killed during the war, or they were later on hanged by the British forces. But did it not the whole engagement; did it not induce high hopes in them? The hopes were high, the price was also high, but it is not that they would not have calculated the price, if this entire enterprise fails. But still, you are very hopefully, your optimistic, and you are doubly sure, that if not me, if not today, then somebody else and definitely, tomorrow. This is how you engage yourself in that activity.

Many people who have achieved certain targets in life. There are 100s and 1000s of such examples where you would realize that people take a pledge, which they I am sure they are very convinced, that it cannot be achieved. But still, you take the pledge and throughout your life, you are engaged in that. Doctor Christian Barnard, for example, his own younger brother had a hole in his heart. Both of them, both the siblings were very young, when his younger brother died. The death of the younger brother was a big shock to the family, and his father preserved the half eaten biscuit, that was the last of his son had taken, before his death.

Little later, when Christian Barnard grew up, his father still was preserving that half eaten biscuit, and he would show it to his son, elder son Christian Barnard and said that your brother had a hole in his heart, and there was no mechanism in medical sciences available, to plug in those holes. It was a terrible death that your brother had, and this is the last know memory that we have, related to you brother; half eaten biscuit; last food that he ate and he died. This was some type of an emotional engagement for the parents that you preserve the memory of your son, who died because of certain medical ailment. This became a great source of motivation for Doctor Christian Barnard, who evaluator on got this biscuit preserved for himself. He would keep it on his work table, and would derived inspiration out of it.

He developed the whole mechanism of plugging in the holes in the heart, and he took a pledge that he will plug all holes in all hearts of the world wherever, the patients are. This is an unachievable target practically, if you look at it. But think of the hope of a man, who tearlessly works for years and years all together, just trying to evolve a much better technique, trying to heal the wounds of the small children, who were born with

holes in their heart, and conducted a number of surgeries that was possible for him. That way, what I am trying to prove is that you could take a pledge, you could get involved in something, which you find very value oriented, very meaningful, and your hopes run very high, and you devote years and years, perhaps, your entire life for that cause. Christian Barnard is one example for it.

I am told that when Lenin became the head of his nation, when the then uses are came into being; he took a pledge that he will never take milk, till he is able to feed all Russian children with a glass of milk. Now, if you take a pledge like that, perhaps, you know that you would never ever be in a position to have milk in your life, now. Because practically, it is an unachievable task to ensure that all kids in your country, gets minimum one glass of milk every day. But you take the pledge and you fight for the cause. I do not remember the name, but I had watched a film. It was basically, of a Doctor who wanted to take care of the people, who had been the victims of the Nagasaki and Hiroshima bomb blast; they are atomic explosions there.

As a doctor, he must have been very sure, that he is now exposing himself to radiation. He is going to die in the process; I am extremely convinced about that; very convinced, simply because you are a person, who knows about all these things. You are well informed, but still, that man decided to go back to those affected areas in Japan, and he died in that process. He himself became a victim of it, lost his eyesight, later on, and died. But then till he was alive and till he did not lose his eye sight, he kept on continuously engaging himself with the victim of the atomic bomb blast. Now, you find something else meaningful.

Somebody takes pride in running away, securing life for himself and his family. Somebody takes pride in get getting engaged for the cause, and your hopes run very high and all it does is, that finally, your engagement makes you realize that life is worth living. This act is worth doing; go ahead. Finally, this is the punch word that you recollect from these experiences, and therefore, you are able to maintain your status as a productive human being, who interacts with his environment, is in a very (()) state of mind, and is engaged in productive activities. Any other questions?

Student: (())

What purpose maintenance needs so? See basically, I am an individual, who is performing certain type of activities. I am in a particular state of mind; I am of a given personality type; I am of a given temperament; I have my own feelings; I have my own motivation; this how I would define an individual. What maintenance they need do is that it provides you the basic skeleton that would not allow you collapse. If I can draw a parallel, it is like, say, you design a human body and take out the skeleton out of it. Now, if you remove the bony structures of the human body then you cannot stand direct. Your entire rest of all your systems could be very intact, but still your body would collapse on the ground, simply, because you do not have the basic framework, to help you stand direct. This only comes when you have a proper skeletal system, which supports you.

Maintenance need actually, provides that skeleton to you where there are certain things, which you take as denominators to analyze your engagement in the world. You try to analyze yourself, how good you are in terms of delivering, what the environment is demanding from you. You are able to evaluate, whether your engagement satisfies you or not. So, finally, all these needs put together; 10 to 12 needs, that you see here, they primarily, help you to retain yourself as a human being, who is engaged in worldly engagement, and finds his engagement to be fruitful, is capable. Because of such engagement, he or she is capable of maintaining their level of adjustment that he or she is supposed to, and he is able; because adjustment, by nature is supposed to be dynamic in nature. So, every moment you have to adjust according to one thing or the other. These maintenance needs are those pillars, which supports you maintain that level of your adjustment. It does not allow you to sink, and even, if you sink in certain situations, it is a momentary type of a process, and you regain your strength. So, that type of a stability that you attain as a human being; maintenance needs provide skeleton to this. Yes, any other questions?

Student: Nature and characteristics of healthy development (())

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Characteristics of Healthy Development

- Adequate frame of reference
- Essential competencies
- Self-direction
- Personal growth & self-actualization

See, adequate frame of reference basically, means that when you have to analyze yourself, and when you have to analyze others in the world. You would search for some denominators, say achievement, say, if I have to compute what was the percentage of your score in your first quiz; all I would do is that what was the denominator; how much did you achieve; and I use the mathematical formula to say that you have secured, say, 68 percent marks. If I have to evaluate, how did I perform in my life, or how am I performing in my life, or how are others performing in their life? How am I performing with respect to others? I need to have a denominator for that.

How would I derive the denominator? So, frame of reference would basically, provide you that denominator, that will help you understand that you are able to finally, evaluate a person, an action, a group, the dynamics, a process, whatsoever it is, with respect to the boundaries that you have sketched. So, it is equivalent to, if you remember the earlier example that we have taken was, that it is more like picture that you take, and you try to fit it into the frame that you are holding. So, you have photo frame; you have a picture; and all you do is that you try to put that picture in that photo frame. Frame of a reference, what it would do? It gives you certain assumptions in a situation, which is driven by all types of combinations; you will have certain reality assumptions.

For example, the example that we are taken earlier was, that say, the first day, when you come to the lecture hall, and you see the instructor for a designated course; before that you have never seen the instructor. You have put your request to **RS**. There was a computer based program, is finally, allocated you which you have selected, but then you have certain reality assumptions. Your assumption would be that my instructor will certainly, be above this age. You cannot think of a 13 year old instructor of 7 year old instructor. Why, because there are certain realities based or reality driven assumptions, which you know, that these many years are needed; this much of certain degree of achievement is needed in the area of academics; then only, you qualify to enter into the profession. So, therefore, your reality assumptions allow you to cut certain things, which will not be considered by you, in terms of evaluating the individual.

There could be some possibility assumption. The instructor could be fat, the instructor could be thin; the instructor could be tall; could be shorter in height; could have gray hairs; could have black hairs; could have a specks; could have, could not have a specks; these are all possibility assumptions. There could be possibility of this, and if not this, may be, this or may be, this also; that is the possibility assumptions. Then, you have certain value based assumptions. I think he should certainly, be able to teach psychology; he should certainly, be able to talk in English; he should certainly, be able to deliver content on the given topic, that is taken for a particular day; these are your value assumptions. If you fall short of this, you cannot be a good instructor, or you do not qualify to be an instructor at all.

Now, such type of assumptions that you have for yourself or you have for others; those are the defining frames; those are your denominators; and when you evaluate yourself, when you evaluate others in your environment, you take those denominators into account. This is how you define the frame of reference. How adequate it is, in terms of defining you; is something very important. If I have a flexible frame where something that I did not assume of comes in front of me. Do I still accept it? You remember in the initial face, we had taken in an example of kids with multiple limbs, say for example, you have booked the ticket during your mid sem results, you have booked your ticket from Kanpur to your home town, and when you board the train, you realize that there is a child with a parent, next to your berth, with multiple limbs. Do you accept it? What is

your acceptance level to that?

You find a student in your class, who has certain degree of handicapped, is physically, he has certain type of a handicap; do you still accept him, are all? So, your frame of a reference, how flexible it is in terms of accommodating real life experiences, which you did not assume. Real life experience is that you had not thought of and hence, you find that it is hard for you to fix it into your frame of reference; how flexible you are, in terms of doing that; is going to influence your overall healthy development as a human being. The more harder, the more brutal, the frame of reference you carry; the more difficult it is for you to accept others.

The more difficulty you have in terms of accepting others; the more difficult situation you are inviting for yourself. You will have to pay of price for, in terms of your adjustment, because you have much lower degree of tolerance in a situation where things do not fit into your way. Life is never where; you can always have things, your way. So, how flexible you are in terms of accepting them? That is an indicator of your frame of reference, and that is the importance of frame of reference, when it comes to psychology of adjustment.