

Interpersonal Skills
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Lecture-23
Reducing Stage Fright - I

Hello friends, today I am here with a very interesting piece of discussion that is reducing the stage fright. Most of us have this fear how to face a stage in other words we may call it performance anxiety. We want that we should go to this stage and we should become a very good orator or a speaker but what happens? We all want to be a successful speaker but what happens in self-obsessed situation when we think of our image.

And there are various reasons. So, my dear friend today let us start with the definition of a stage fright because it is very important to understand it. What is it? Why it happens? Even for an experienced person it is something very fearful for a moment maybe if you come up to this stage for some time you feel shaky. So, let us start with a stage fright. Stage fright is like being heckled mercilessly during your performance and getting into an argument with the heckler except that it is your own mind doing the heckling.

You get so involved in your internal struggle that you do not get involved with the actual performance. It seems impossible but high profile performers even like singer, Adela and Reiner suffer a stage fright. Just like the rest of us. See I mean these are famous singer sometimes such phobia may be part of a larger issue that can include symptoms.

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Performance Anxiety Symptoms?

- Racing pulse and rapid breathing.
- Dry mouth and tight throat.
- Trembling hands, lips, knees and voice.
- Sweaty and cold hands.
- Nausea and an uneasy feeling in stomach.
- Vision changes and agoraphobia.



Such as dry mouth, nausea, stuttering and so many things thermal shaking your hand an extreme fear of public speaking is a subtype of social anxiety disorder and some percent of the adult American population suffer from this condition I mean this is the study from an American psychological journal. And why in America only, in the rest of the world this phobia is very much in fashion very much there.

But simple adjustment in cognitive behaviours can help ease that fear. For example, like do not convince yourself that you will make eye contact to ease the tension. Never try to pretend like a shy person put your eyes into other look at other eye to eye and that will certainly reduce the tension or being failed. Well performance and inner strength these are very important aspects for stage performance. Take an active approach to the problem of performance anxiety.

Do not let it ruin your life because we all know in this globalized world how important it is. If we talk of leadership quality, if we talk of corporate sector, if we talk of organizational behaviour then to reduce a stage fright is equally very important. It is this fright is not commonly thought of as a phobia despite its ability to nearly crippled performers of all types. Officially however it can be categorized as a subset of glossophobia or fear of public speaking which is itself a type of

social phobia.

A stage fright may arise suddenly or gradually and may be mild or severe it depends on individual and you will find ample individual variation. What are the symptoms of this stage fear which is also called performance anxiety symptoms? Performance anxiety symptoms may include raising pulse and rapid breathing that is panting, dry mouth and tight throat trembling hands knees lips and voice, sweaty and cold hands, no shear and uneasy feeling in your stomach, vision changes.

Agoraphobia, now what is agoraphobia it is not unusual to worry sometime but when your fears keep you from getting out into the world and you avoid places because you think you will feel trapped and not be able to get help you may have agoraphobia. The first step in mastering stage fright and all kinds of performance anxiety is to get a good understanding of just what kind of problem you are dealing with.

As I said that this performance anxiety varies from person to person, so you need to understand what kind of problem you have what kind of fear. There is a trick to a straight right as there is with most phobias and you really need to understand the trick to find the solutions you need. There is no question that the single biggest barrier to professional rapport is plain old stage fright. This is a very common thing people will consistently name public speaking as their number one fear right up there ahead of spiders and death.

But communication apprehension is stronger for some people in the impromptu elevator chat or during the first line of a phone call because they fear the experience they procrastinate about preparation and then they become more fearful because they know they are not well prepared. Giving eloquent presentations then requires a bit of attention to the dynamics or and management of a stage fear.

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What is Stage Fear?

- Definitions most frequently used are those of Solmon (1990) and Brodsky (1996).
- Definitions show that **the stage fright is a state of being , especially directed towards the future (Kenny et al. 2006) .**
- **At the core is a felling of a lack f control about future events which are important to the person. (Barlow, 2000)**



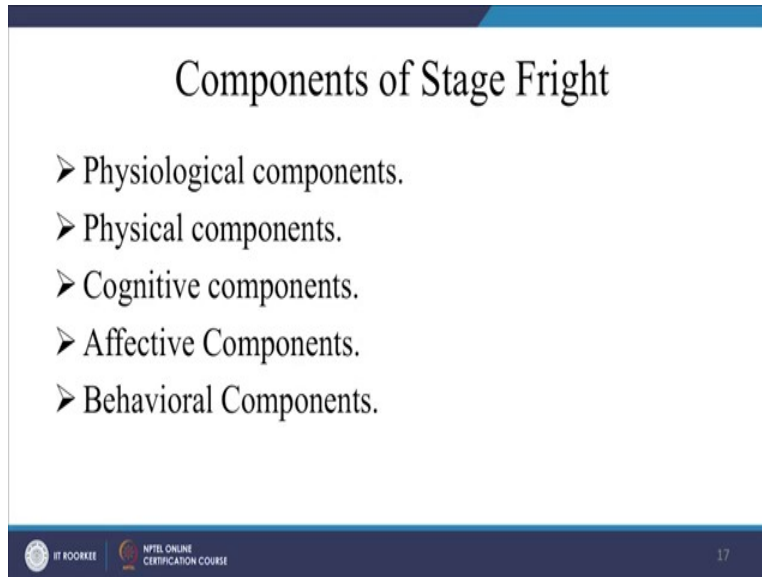
What is a stage fright? again this question comes. the term stage fright has been defined in various ways definitions that are used frequently are those of Salman and Brodsky. The definition show that a stage fright is a state of being especially directed towards the future. At the code according to Barlow definition of the problem is a feeling of a lack of control about future events which are important to the person.

The thought of failing is very threatening to the self-image of the individual between the threats of possible dangers and the experience fear there is the following interchange according to Kenny those perceiving most threats are likely to experience the greatest anxiety and those who are most anxious are more likely to perceive performance conditions as more threatening. In situations like this people respond with the so called fight-or-flight response.

The physiological system makes us ready to fight or run away although a performance on stage does not present an immediate physical threat the chance of failure can be so intimidating for the self-image of the performer that it brings about similar reactions as a life-threatening situation. Therefore, a stage fright is especially an imagined fear, fear of being failed. A stage fright consists of certain components that we should know. Because again you keep in mind that it

varies from person to person.

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So, what are the components the physiological component changes in our nervous system and hormonal system which amongst other things might lead to an increased heart rate or pulse, dry mouth sweaty or trembling hands nausea shortness of breath and blurry eyesight? So, this is called physiological component. The physical excitement is a natural response to the situation and is related to the flight-or-fight response with people who have reacted to frightening situation as of old.

The next is a cognitive component having trouble concentrating, experiencing a blackout, a heightened awareness being too focused on oneself and not enough on the task. Being too focused on how others perceive him or her negative thought, about one's own abilities and the performance.

Experiencing fear panic insecurity and feeling of inferiority these are affective component out of this. A behavioural component more trouble with moving naturally more mistakes less expressive playing or too exaggerated more irregularities means lack of consistency. More

general behaviour changes such as avoidance irritation use of medication. These components influence each other mutually negative thoughts that is cognitive about the performance lead to heightened physical symptoms.

Which increase the chance of making more plain mistakes that is behavioural with as a result and impaired self-image that is emotional which causes so many things which increase the chance of making more plain mistake that is behaviour with as a result an impaired self-image which causes negative thoughts and physical reactions to be a stronger during a next performance. The cognitive component as is shown by research is the most important factor in maintaining and increasing his stage fright.

According to the catastrophe theory, cognitive fear accompanied by physical tension leads to intensification, according to the catastrophe theory cognitive fear accompanied by physical tension lead to intensification of the stress reaction with as a consequence a drastic drop in performance level. People who suffered from performance anxiety suffered especially from the fear of being observed and criticized.

It occurs in people who want to impress others in certain situations but who lack the belief in their own capacities that allow them to meet these expectations. The evolutionary advantage of performance anxiety in a mile form, lies in the fact that in order to impress others fear stimulate the individual to prepare well which increases the chance of good result and therefore appreciation by others.

In the first case the pressure is greater because the individual is completely responsible for the achievement.

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What Causes Stage Fright?

- Hypersensitivity.
- A perfectionist attitude.
- Anxiety.
- Social phobia.
- Pessimistic attitude to life
- Inadequate coping strategies.



What causes stage fright? because this is very important to know there are certain vital reasons to create a stage fright or performance? Anxiety people suffers from this syndrome so what are these personal traits related to stage fright our hypersensitivity what is this? Which can be traced back to a nervous system that reacts more strongly to external stimuli this is hypersensitivity, a perfectionist attitude people who are often not easily satisfied about themselves they may be caused also by the pressure the person feels from her or his environment.

Well I cannot let them down that is perfectionist attitude Kenny Davis & Oates found that experienced performer perfectionism is strongly correlated with trait of anxiety. A perfectionist attitude or people who are often not easily satisfied about themselves they want to do more or extraordinarily good. This is also a kind of anxiety and this may also lead to disaster.

This may be caused also by the pressure the person feels from her or his environment. Kenny Davis, they found experienced performer perfectionism is strongly correlated. Now an anxious person introverted and neurotic people in general are more anxious, neurotic people, psychologically obsessed. They get such kind of threat very easily social phobia people who are preoccupied with thoughts about how other things about them means they are less concerned

with themselves more concerned with other.

Pessimistic attitude of life people who are more pessimistic and therefore more susceptible to fear and depression no optimistic thinking that 'I will do bad for sure I will do bad' this is a very negative kind of approach to the performance and this is called pessimistic attitude to life and such kind of people they get this kind of negative attitude not only in the stage performance most of the things.

People with fewer effective coping strategies knowing how to deal with fear experience more feelings of powerlessness which makes them anxious. Insufficient technique states the root of most problems concerning stage fright lies in forced and faulty physical action this is also an established fact. The problems of the mental attitudes often arise merely as a result of physical distortions. Well these are the things that really you know disturbed those who are very much obsessed.

How to give a stage performance or public speech the problems of the mental attitude often arise merely as a result of physical distortion always think that. Everything happens here your cognitive mental and that is why I always refer to know about neuro linguistic programming. Neuro linguistic programming is a kind of program that controls a human behaviour in terms of speech, in terms of behaviour.

So, whenever we talk of this stage performance we should know of neuro linguistic programming because mental attitude governs the physical distortion. Now what can be done about a stage fright there are different strategies method therapies for dealing with a stage fright a number of things. But what is important that first you locate yourself first you introspect yourself that where you are feeling difficulties.

As I said and I repeat that individual variations are there it is not necessary that the same problem

you know hit most of the people, it may be but people differ from each other. So, knowing the real you know nature and the cause of their distortion or fear or fright or anxiety only then one can come up with a proper solution. So, my dearest student I just want to request you that before giving a public speech or the stage performance before night you sit and you try to locate yourself that what kind of nervousness what kind of fearfulness you have.

And if you get the clue suppose I was discussing pessimistic why pessimistic? You learn hard you work hard before coming to the stage. You think that you do not know anything you have to learn a lot. But once you are on the stage you think that you are the master of the subject because on the stage there is no scope to learn again and again whatever you have learnt now the time has come when you have to deliver your learning.

So, this is very important that what kind of trauma you have and when do you get this kind of trauma and from where if you know this I am sure that you would be able to minimize neutralize the effect. As I said that a stage fright performance anxiety is not something abnormal not at all but if it goes up and up to the abnormal level then it needs to be checked and for checking it what is required to know the real cause of anxiety that is hampering your performance.

And once you located I am sure that you would be able to curtail it neutralize it and fix it. So, think over it practice it and always saying that you can give a very good kind of performance. Well friends I think that I have given you some important aspect of performance anxiety or the stage fright. Let us discuss some more important aspect in the second part. till then, thank you very much.