

5.1 Introduction to Health Psychology

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 12 marks

KEY WORDS general adaptation syndrome 一般适应综合征 • stress 压力 • stressor 应激源 • stress response 应激反应
• alarm 警觉期

Objective

Build the skills to answer exam questions on **stress** 压力 and health.

You must be able to:

- distinguish a **stressor** 应激源 from the **stress response** 应激反应
- describe the phases of the **general adaptation syndrome** 一般适应综合征
- contrast **problem-focused** 问题聚焦 and **emotion-focused** 情绪聚焦 coping
- state how **social support** 社会支持 and **perceived control** 控制感 affect health

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

■ Stressor and response

A **stressor** is the event; the **stress response** is the body's reaction to it. The same event is not equally stressful to everyone, because appraisal intervenes between the two.

■ General adaptation syndrome

Alarm: arousal mobilises resources. **Resistance:** arousal is sustained. **Exhaustion:** resources deplete and vulnerability to illness rises. The health cost comes from prolonged resistance, not from brief alarm.

■ Two coping strategies

Problem-focused coping changes the stressor, and works best where the situation is controllable. **Emotion-focused** coping manages the reaction, and is more appropriate where it is not.

■ Support and control

Strong social support and a sense of control over events are both associated with better health outcomes. Both reduce the appraisal of threat, which is where the physiological response begins.

2 Practice

2.1 State the difference between a stressor and the stress response. [2]

2.2 Name the three phases of the general adaptation syndrome. [3]

2.3 A person cannot change a situation but reframes how they think about it.

(a) Name the coping strategy. [1]

(b) State when it is the better choice. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 The health damage from chronic stress arises mainly in [1]

- **A** the alarm phase
- **B** prolonged resistance and exhaustion
- **C** a single stressful event
- **D** emotion-focused coping

3.2 Problem-focused coping is most effective when the stressor is [1]

- **A** uncontrollable
- **B** controllable
- **C** imaginary
- **D** brief

3.3 Two employees face the same workload; one reports far more stress.

(a) State what explains the difference. [1]

(b) Explain one workplace change that could reduce it.

[2]

Solutions

2.1 the stressor is the event; the stress response is the body's reaction to it, mediated by appraisal.

2.2 alarm; resistance; exhaustion.

2.3 (a) emotion-focused coping. (b) when the situation cannot be changed.

3.1 B. prolonged arousal and resource depletion produce the health cost.

3.2 B. changing the stressor requires that it be changeable.

3.3 (a) differences in appraisal, social support or perceived control. (b) give employees more control over how and when work is done, since perceived control lowers threat appraisal and therefore the physiological response.