



Maritime Health Trainings for Seafarers and Doctors

Training 17- Psychological and mental problems on seafarers

ERASMUS+ KA2 - Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices
KA202 - Strategic Partnerships for vocational education and training

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REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
MINISTRY OF HEALTH
GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF HEALTH
FOR BORDER AND COASTAL AREAS OF TURKEY



AP&A
GROUP

✓ ***Learning Objective;***

The aim of this section is to provide the knowledge necessary to give immediate response Psychologic and mental problems of seafarers for medical doctors. Upon completion of this section, trainers will be able to:

- Explain the specific psychological and mental problems that have arisen in seafarers
- Explain what it is stress and stress symptoms
- Explain what it is anxiety and symptoms
- Explain what it is Panic Attack and symptoms
- Explain what it is Post-traumatic stress and symptoms
- Explain what it is Depression and symptoms
- Explain what it is Exhaustion and symptoms
- How to treat psychologic and mentat problems.
- Define what it is Psychological Counseling

Psychosocial aspects and psychological problems appeared on board the ship

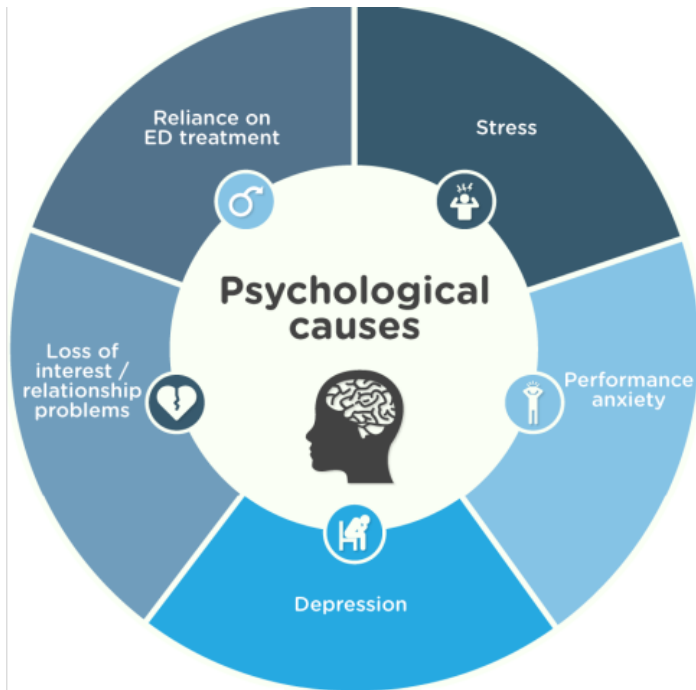
The *Seafarer Mental Health Study* for the first time also found a link between depression, anxiety and suicidal ideation (thoughts) and a greater likelihood of injury and illness on board.

The survey identified the following factors as being associated with the feelings of depression, anxiety and suicidal thoughts:

- Lack of adequate training
- An uncaring work environment
- Exposure to violence or threats of violence
- Co-existing medical conditions (including cardiac disease and sleep disorders)
- Low job satisfaction
- Ill health

<https://www.seafarerstrust.org/press-release-yale-study-reveals-worryingly-high-levels-of-depression-anxiety-and-suicidal-thoughts-among-seafarers/>

understand the specific psychological and mental problems that have arisen in seafarers

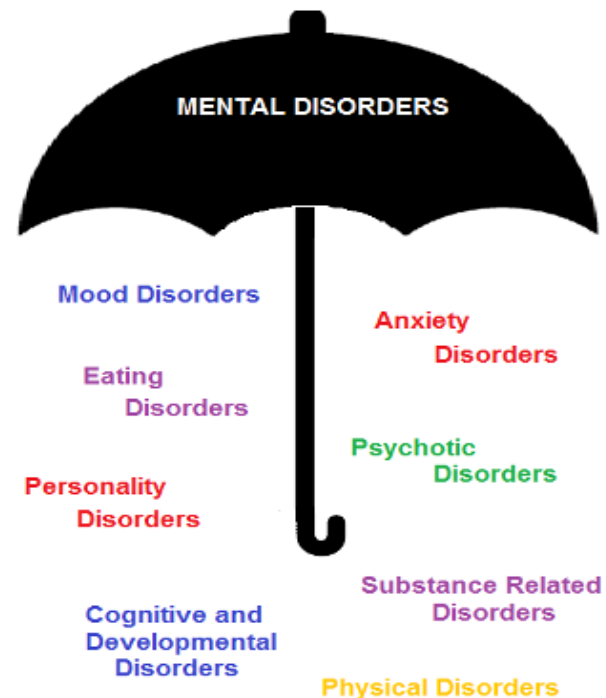


- We must identify the characteristic aspects of the institution and activities
- The operational environment is characterized by conditions and characteristics that test the limits of human physical endurance;
 - prolonged exertion,
 - sleep deprivation,
 - extreme environmental conditions (noise, heat, cold, etc.),
 - high accelerations and poor movement,
 - vibration,
 - toxic air components (smoke, radiation, biological or chemical agents).

Understand the specific psychological and mental problems that have arisen in seafarers

The psychosocial changes of navigators, often unexpected, require the human body to adapt to the requirements of life on the ship.

These demands are manifested by neurosis, maladaptation syndrome, constraint, nervous tension, manifestations known in the literature as stress-concept, anxiety, psychomotor agitation, insomnia, panic attacks, obsessive thoughts and suicidal desire.



Stress

at the organizational level is given by:

- authority,
- formal, rigid structure,
- deficient communication.



Stress on board the ship

- The professional performance of seafarers is subject to higher requirements compared to other categories of persons, even when the intrinsic complexity of the work is comparable to that of civil activities of the same nature.
- Increasing attention is being paid to the impact of deviant associated behaviors, such as: alcohol and drug abuse, smoking, unhealthy diet, insufficient sleep.



SPOTTING THE SIX WARNING SIGNS

- Z Making mistakes:**
Making errors in routine tasks
- Z Slow reactions:**
A lack of alertness
- Z Forgetfulness:**
Regularly forgetting things
- Z Cutting corners:**
Temptation to take short-cuts to get the job done
- Z Poor concentration:**
A lack of concentration (affecting decision-making)
- Z Weariness:**
A lack of motivation and a strong desire to rest

If you believe you or your colleagues may be suffering the effects of fatigue, contact your shore-based management immediately.

Anxiety

Anxiety is a state of psychopathological anxiety that is defined in three ways:

- a) feeling of imminent danger, of an unspecified danger that would occur, a feeling that is accompanied by the elaboration of fantasies that amplify everything, raises the situation to the proportions of a drama.
- b) an attitude of waiting in front of a danger, has the impression of an immediate catastrophe.
- c) the conviction of an absolute impossibility to act, which is associated with the feeling of one's own disorganization of the respective person in the face of danger.



Panic Attack

- During the panic attacks, symptoms such as shortness of breath, palpitations, pain or precordial discomfort, feelings of suffocation or strangulation, and fear of going insane or losing control are present.

Consequences of panic attacks

Some of the patients significantly change their behavior in response to them, do not deny the fear of not having another attack or concerns about their consequences.



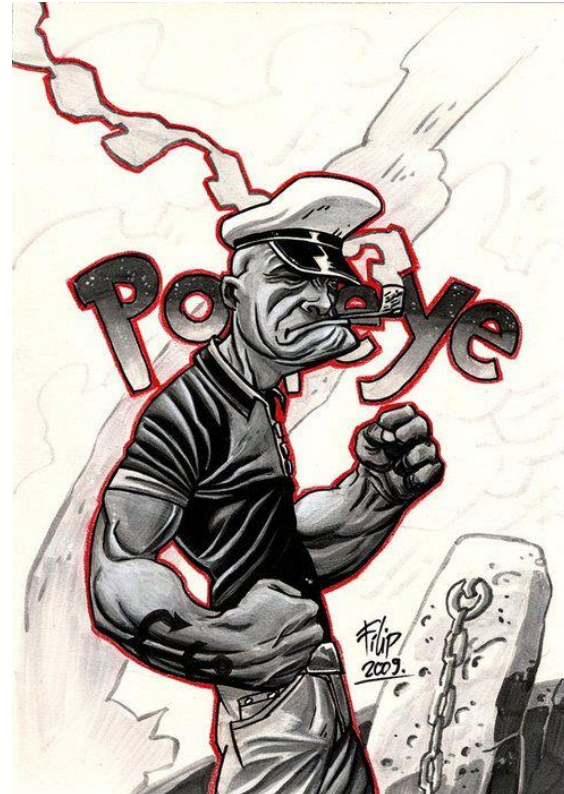
Post-traumatic stress

The diagnosis is positive if the person has experienced, witnessed or been confronted with an event / events that involved actual death, death threat or serious injury or endangerment of one's own or others' bodily integrity, and the person's response involved an intense fear, helplessness or horror.



Depression

The patient loss of interest in activities, loss of appetite, problems concentrating or making decisions, insomnia, fatigue, thoughts or suicide attempts



The causes of depression

- The current unanimous vision of research and clinics imposes a bio-psycho-social model in which, at the onset of depression, contribute both biochemical disorders in the brain and psychological causes (fragile personalities).
- Social (daily stress, negative life events, environmental hostility etc.). In almost a quarter of cases, the first depressive episode occurs as a reaction to a negative life event.



Exhaustion

Exhaustion can be physical, emotional and mental

Exhaustion is mainly the result of the following psychosocial factors: high workload or unmanageable (quantitative and emotional demands), role ambiguity, organizational changes, low level of job satisfaction and personal achievement, work-life imbalance, few interpersonal relationships and poor support at work, and violence in the workplace.

Exhaustion

Exhaustion manifested especially in the ability to adapt to a restrictive, constraining psychosocial environment, in which the sailor is subjected to a process of behavioral uniformity and "standardization".



PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING

The purpose of psychological counseling for sailors:

- self-knowledge and self-discovery of one's own potential
- personal growth and development
- assuming responsibilities for the decisions taken
- self-acceptance and acceptance of others
- positive relationships with others
- increasing the degree of tolerance to frustration
- improving physical and mental health
- discovering the joy of living.



PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING

Difficult situations can have a profound impact on sailors' emotional health

Although most sailors go through critical moments, there are practices that can help re-balance emotions and subsequently improve ability to interpret negatively charged events.

Steps in emotional rebalancing:

- 1 - Recognizing and accepting the usual emotions.
- 2 - Understanding emotional messages.
- 3 - The decision to take action.

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF SOMEONE IS SUFFERING FROM DEPRESSION?

Someone who has the following symptoms for more than two weeks may be suffering from depression:

- Feeling sad, down or stressed most of the time,
- Losing interest and satisfaction in most of their daily activities,
- Stop doing their job at work,
- Avoiding close family and friends

PHYSICALLY OBSERVED CHANGES

- Always tired, down, weak and unwilling,
- Headache and muscle aches,
- Change in appetite, gaining weight or emaciation,
- Troubles while maintaining of daily life as a result of sleep disorders.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- Spending time by talking about their experiences,
- Emphasizing that you notice some changes in the person's behavior,
- Making them know that you are there to listen them without being judgemental,
- Advising them to see a doctor or healthcare professional,
- Helping them to make an appointment with a doctor or healthcare professional,

IT WILL NOT HELP YOU DO THE FOLLOWINGS:

- Putting pressure by saying «pull yourself together». «tidy yourself up», «improve your morale» or «calm down»,
- Staying away from them, not coming together,
- Saying that all they need is to be busy or go out more,
- Putting pressure on them about participating in events more or cutting off from their feelings with drugs or alcohol,

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