

Course Name-Bachelor of Physical Education

Year – IInd (Part-1)

Paper Name - Psychology with Special Reference to Physical Education

Topic Name – Mental Health

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Lecture Name

Mental Health

INTRODUCTION

You know Physical Health is absence of physical ailment and proper functioning of all body systems. Mental Health is mental well-being. It is the absence of mental ailment and harmonious functioning of mind. We all know that individual has to make adjustments with one's social environment and with one's own aspirations, ideals and ideas. An individual, who can effectively make personal and social adjustments is said to be mentally healthy.

To know more about mental health, let's have a look at the definitions by different authors

According to **World Health Organization**, "Mental health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."

In words of **Hadfield**, "Mental health is the full and harmonious functioning of the whole personality."

Boehm opines, "Mental Health is a condition and level of social functioning which is socially acceptable and personally satisfying."

According to **The White House Conference**, "Mental Health may be defined as the adjustment of the individuals to themselves and the world at large with a maximum of effectiveness, satisfaction, cheerfulness and socially considerable behavior and the ability of facing and accepting the realities of life."

In **Lewkan's** view, "Mentally healthy person is one who is happy, lives peacefully with his neighbors, make his children healthy citizens and after fulfilling basic responsibilities is still empowered with sufficient strength to serve the cause of the society in any way."

CHARACTERISTICS OF MENTALLY HEALTHY INDIVIDUAL

Individual with balanced personality who have consistent behavior and comfortable with themselves, with others are said to be mentally healthy. In short, he is physically fit, mentally alert, emotionally stable and socially well adjusted.

To identify a mentally healthy individual, we will discuss certain characteristics of mentally healthy individual.

1. Good Physical Health: A mentally healthy individual has a sound physical health. He observes all the rules that govern Physical Health. He has healthy routine of life which helps him to maintain good physical health.



2. Psychologically Comfortable: He is free from psychological symptoms/ Diseases like tension, anxiety, conflicts, obsessions, compulsions, frustrations, etc.
3. Socially Well Adjusted: Mentally healthy individual easily makes social adjustment. He is able to make adjustment in changing situations. He can get along with other people, appreciate and understand differences and have potential to bridge them. He easily socializes himself, attends social gatherings, feels comfortable and others are comfortable in his company.
4. Emotional maturity: Emotional Maturity is an important feature of mentally healthy individuals. Emotions (love, anger, hate) find their expression in socially desirable manner and he can exercise control over them. They don't often manifest emotional outbursts.
5. Intellectual development: Individuals with good mental health have adequate intellectual development. They can make best use of their intellectual capacities like thinking, reasoning, memory, problem solving and creativity etc.

6. Self-evaluation: Appropriate self-evaluation is another characteristic of mentally healthy individual. He knows himself, his strengths and weaknesses. He can objectively evaluate his behavior and accept his weaknesses.
7. Self-Confidence: Mentally Healthy individual has faith in himself and his abilities and thereby confidence to accomplish whatever he wishes.
8. Self-Worth: He has adequate concept about himself and his worth. He realizes his importance in a social group.
9. Social Security: He feels secure in any social group. He possesses adequate sense of belongingness.
10. Not perfectionist or extremist: though he can accomplish his tasks efficiently and proficiently, but he never tries to be perfectionist or extremist.
11. Optimism: He has optimistic outlook towards life. He sees hope and success and not despair or hopelessness.

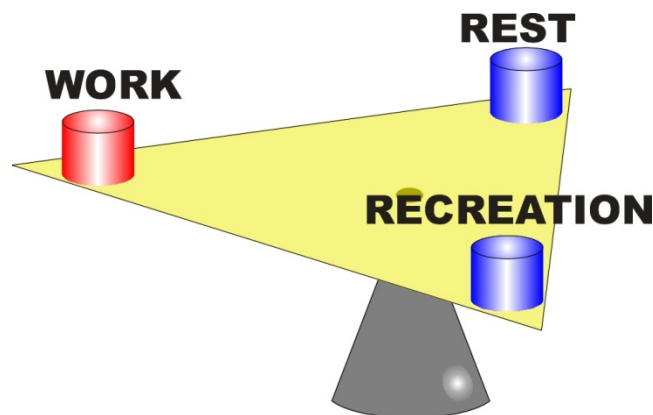


12. Healthy Philosophy of Life: He possesses healthy philosophy of life which is built upon certain propositions. Some of which are
- He feels one should live in the world in the sense of active social participation and commitment.

- Life is worth living. It has meaning which can be understood in terms of either religion or humanism.
- All men are capable of productive love. Each man is a vital part of every other person.

His healthy philosophy of life governs every aspect of his behavior positively which helps him in maintaining balance in life.

13. In touch with reality: Individual with good mental health lives in a world of reality and not in the world of fantasy. People with poor mental health lives in unrealistic world. They think and plan unrealistically.
14. Formulation of realistic goals: He always sets realistically attainable goals. A mentally healthy person is well aware of his strengths and weaknesses. They always set goals keeping in view their strengths and weaknesses.
15. Execution of Plans: A mentally healthy person executes what he plans. He works consistently towards the realization of his plans.
16. Tolerates failures: As we know, Life is not always the bed of roses. Every individual faces failure at one point or the other in one's life. A mentally healthy individual tolerates his failures and accepts it as a pillar to success.
17. Objective: A mentally healthy individual have objective outlook towards life. He evaluates objects, persons and situations objectively. His evaluation of others is not influenced by his personal thoughts, opinions or prejudices.
18. Balance in Life: He maintains a balance in the life of work, rest and recreation.



19. A mentally healthy individual is satisfied with profession, occupation and conditions he is living in. They always try to adjust to and get satisfaction out of whatever they do and whatever they get. They do not condemn things just for the sake of condemning.
20. He possesses sociably desirable manners and interests. Individuals with good mental health behave in a socially desirable manner and their interest never clash with others.



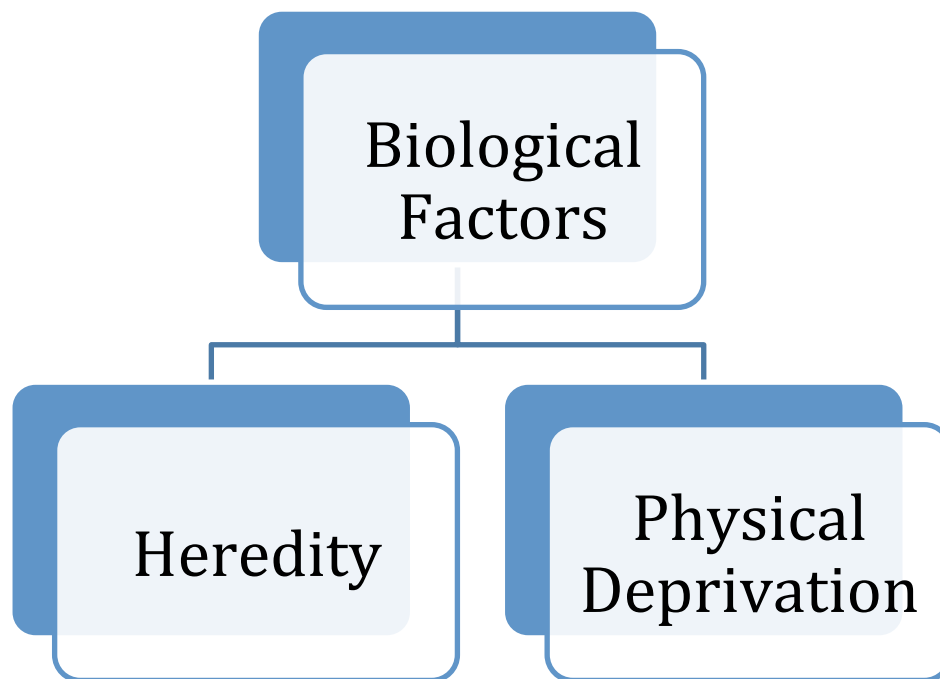
3. CAUSES OF POOR MENTAL HEALTH

Individuals with Mental Health is found in every strata of society due to rapid growth of civilizations, identity crisis, personal misfortunes, and lack of interpersonal relationship between peer group, parent-child, siblings, pupil-teacher, team mates and coaches-players. Mental illness is caused by numerous factors. Now we will discuss some of the important factors responsible for poor mental health

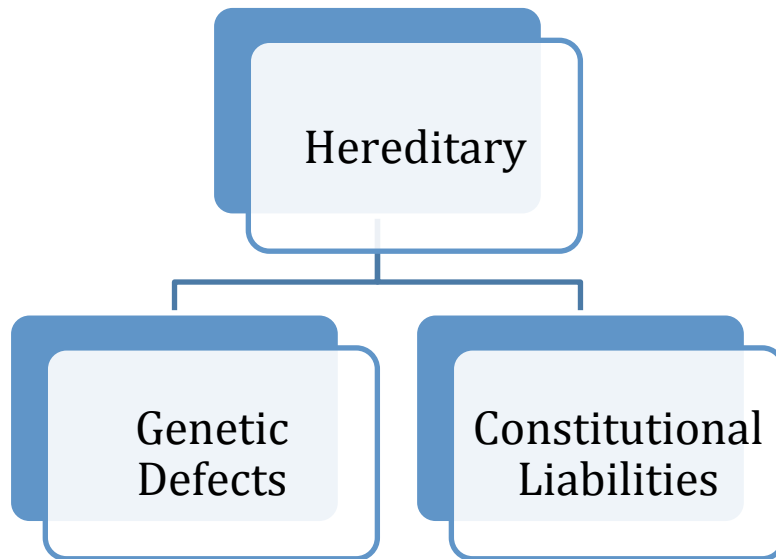
All the causes of poor mental health can be broadly categorized as: biological, Psychosocial and Environmental. We will take up these factors one by one.

First of all we will discuss certain Biological factors that are responsible for poor mental health.

1. **Biological Factors:** Mental Health is affected by number of biological factors which may be innate or due to the interaction of biological makeup with environment. A wide range of biological conditions such as faulty genes, diseases, endocrine imbalances, injuries, malnutrition and many other conditions interfere with the functioning of organisms and these become potential causes of poor mental health. Some of the biological Factors are hereditary while others are in the physical deprivations.

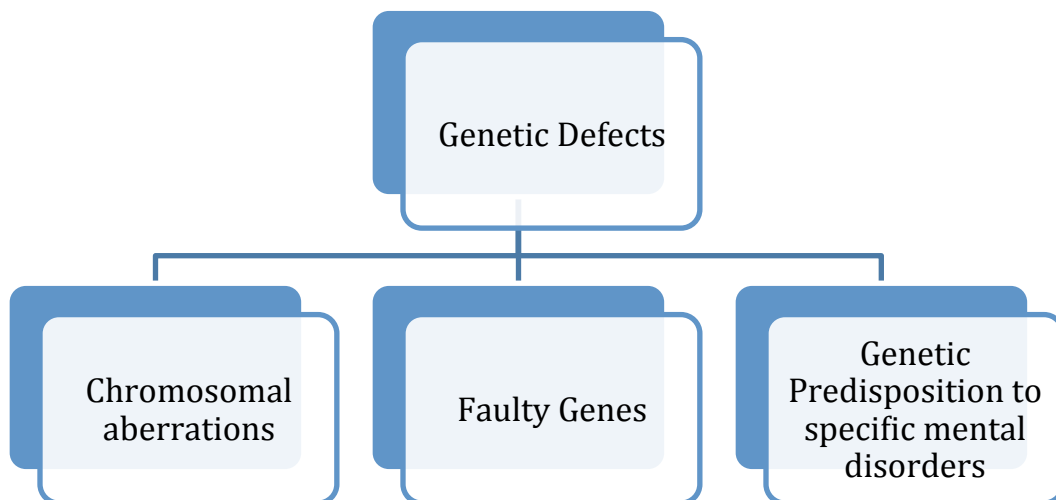


- A) **Heredity:** Heredity is the foundation of human personality. It affects all the aspects of human behavior i.e. intellectual capacities, basic temperament, stress tolerance, anxiety, primary reaction tendency and adaptive resources, etc.



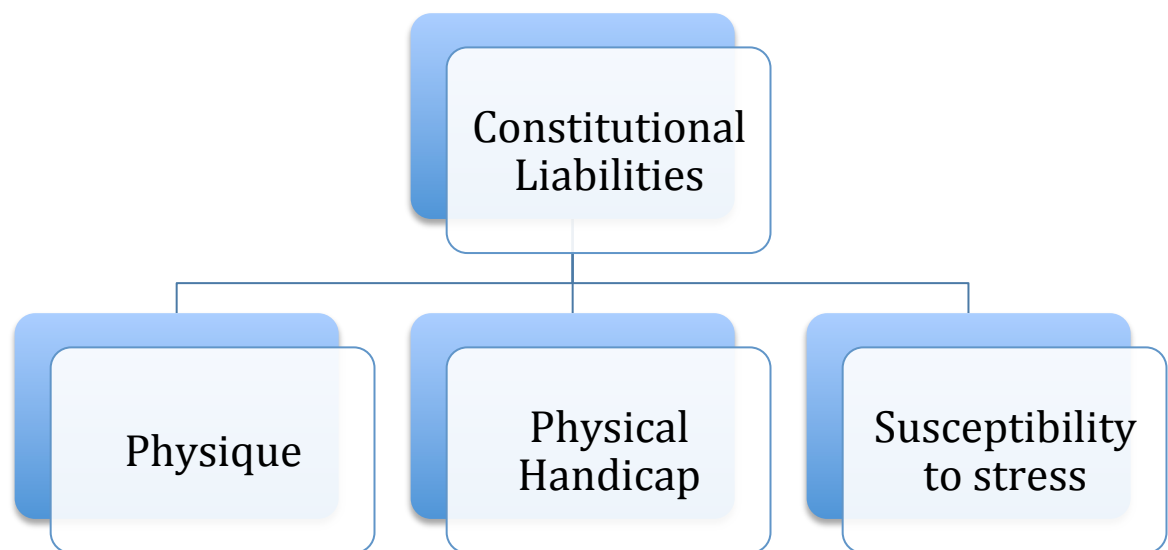
Now we will discuss two important hereditary conditions one by one

- a) Genetic Defects: Our behavior is inevitably influenced by our biological inheritance. Genetic defects are clearly a potential cause of maladaptation and poor mental health. Genetic defects of major concern are: Chromosomal aberrations, faulty genes and genetic predisposition to certain mental disorders.



- i) Chromosomal Aberrations: Researches in the developmental genetics have shown that the abnormalities in the structure or the number of chromosomes are associated with the wide range of hereditary disorders which may further cause mental illness.
- ii) Faulty genes: Genes are the carriers of the hereditary material. The breaking of the genetic code enabled us to study loss, gains or changes in the material in the genes

- itself. Thus introducing a more precise approach relating genetic factors to physical and mental illness.
- iii) Genetic Predisposition to specific mental disorders: Certain gene combinations predispose the individual to certain mental disorders.
 - b) Constitutional Liabilities: By constitution, we mean bodily makeup of the individual resultant of genetic and environmental influences. Poor health, constitutional weaknesses delimits one's stamina for effectively discharging duties which may result in poor mental health. Important of these to mental health are- Physique, Physical Handicaps and susceptibility to stress.



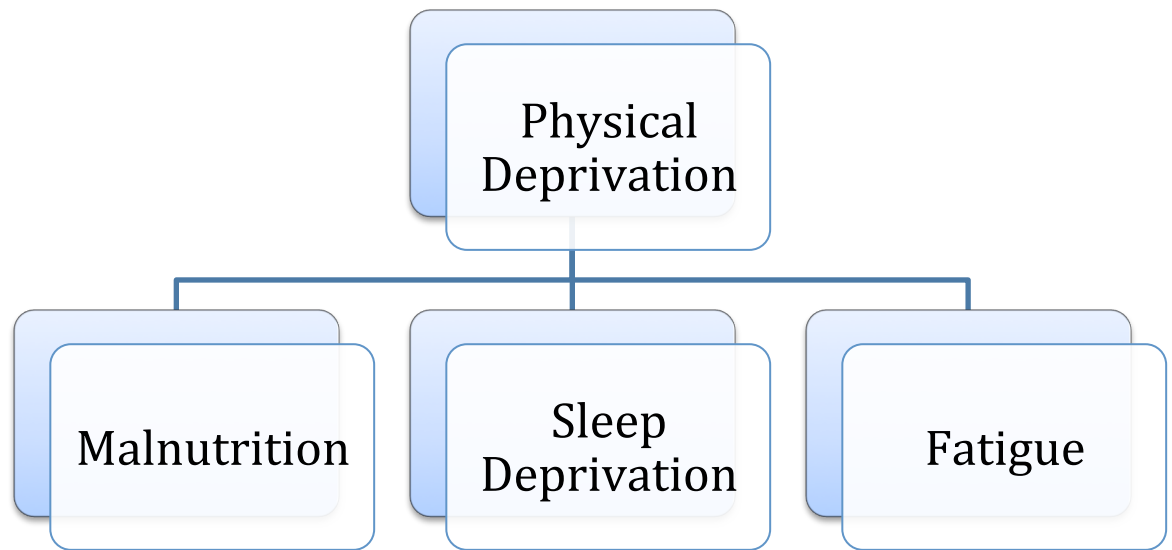
- i) Physique: Physique is bodily built. Though physique is not directly related to psychological disorders but it does influence the type of disorder, the individual is likely to develop. Most significant is the view we take of our own physical appearances. Sometimes, one's conception of own body as being different from standards valued by one's group can be self-devaluating and can make the person anxious or depressed about it. For example, too thin or too fat individual may feel others are staring and may develop feeling of inferiority and inadequacy.
- ii) Physical Handicap: Physical handicaps, inherited or due to accidental effects, deformities and imperfections of the body are likely to affect the mental health of an individual. Deformities like deafness, blindness, lameness, etc. have different effects on different individuals. Some try to overcome these obstacles by using the mechanism of *Substitute Compensation and Direct compensation* and they become heroes. For example, visually impaired may become outstanding magician or perform outstandingly in the field of music, arts, etc. (Substitute Compensation) or by

overcoming the weakness by unusual efforts (Direct Compensation) as in the case of Oscar Pistorius (blade runner), a south African Sprint runner with amputated legs below knee have successfully competed in men's 400 meters and became an outstanding sprint runner despite of the severe handicap.



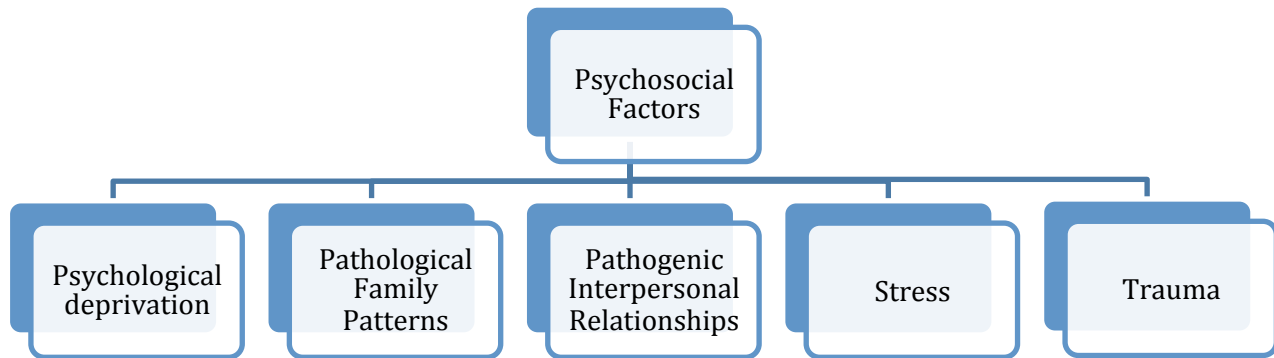
While others may develop feelings of inferiority, helplessness (psychological handicaps) and they may become negativistic, aggressive or rebellious which is responsible for deteriorating mental health.

- iii) Susceptibility to Stress: The primary reaction tendencies of an individual like sensitivity, temperament and activity level affect interactions with the environment. Researches have established that primary tendencies have relation with mental adaptation and susceptibility to stress, thereby affecting mental health.
- B) Physical Deprivation: Physical Deprivation in one form or the other is likely to affect mind and body. Common physical deprivations causing poor mental health are- malnutrition, sleep deprivation, fatigue



- i) **Malnutrition:** Malnutrition impairs physical development and lowers resistance to disruptive forces and control of psychological mechanism which adversely affects mental health.
- ii) **Prolonged Sleep Disturbances:** Prolonged Sleep Disturbances affects mental and physical equilibrium, thereby causing poor mental health.
- iii) **Fatigue:** Fatigue is the decrement in the efficiency due to continuous work without any rest-pause. Fatigue may be physical, psychological and mental. If not checked at right time, it may cause mental health problems.

2) Psychosocial factors: Mental Health is affected by number of psychosocial factors in the form of psychological deprivations, traumas, losses, etc. we will briefly discuss some of the major psychosocial factors that have detrimental effect on mental health.



a) Psychological Deprivation: It has been observed that infants are deprived of mental stimulation as a consequence of

- separation from the mother
- inadequate care at home
- Autocratic atmosphere at home

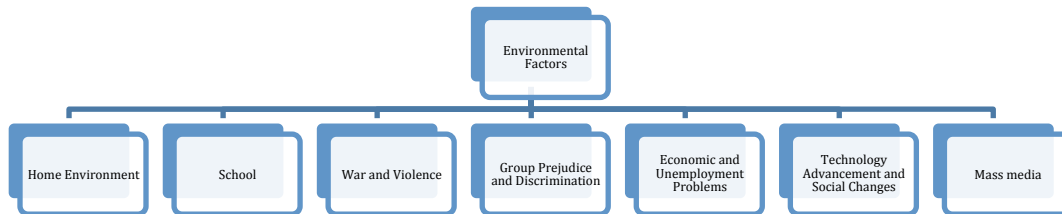
b) Pathological family Patterns: Family plays a very crucial role in the life of an individual and his personality development. Certain patterns of family relations affect the mental health of the children. Now we will talk about the major ones briefly.

- i) Faulty Parent-Child Relationship: There are many faulty parent-child relationships that are detrimental to the mental health of children like
 - Rejection: Rejecting Parents are responsible for developing a feeling of inferiority and insecurity among children resulting in poor mental health.
 - Over-protection and restrictiveness: It may develop in the children feeling of inferiority and aggressiveness.
 - Over-permissiveness and indulgence: Over indulged children and children with over permissive parents are characterized as spoiled, selfish, inconsiderate and demanding which results in antisocial aggressive behavior.
 - Unrealistic demands: Unrealistically demanding parents may cause anxiety in the minds of children.

- Faulty discipline: Faulty discipline may cause fear, hatred towards the punishing parent and less friendly feelings towards others.
 - Communication failure: Many Parents fail to communicate properly to their children. They fail to foster the information exchange essential for healthy development.
 - Unhealthy Comparison: Parents usually compare children within the family or with other children which develops a feeling of jealousy, bickering causing poor mental health.
 - Undesirable Parental Models: Emotionally disturbed, addicted or otherwise maladjusted parents provide undesirable models for the children adversely affecting their mental health.
- ii) Maladaptive family Structures: Maladaptive behaviors may be fostered in children by general family environment as well as by the child's relationship with one or both parents. Now we will discuss different patterns of family structures detrimental to mental health of children.
- Inadequate Family: it is family characterized by inability to cope with ordinary problems of family living. It lacks physical and psychological resources for meeting demands.
 - Disturbed Families: By disturbed families, we mean families with parents who have grossly eccentric and abnormal abilities which keep the home in constant emotional turmoil.
 - Anti-Social family: Such a family inculcates values which are not accepted by wider community. Children in such families are exposed to dishonesty, deceit and many antisocial behaviors.
 - Disrupted Families: By disrupted families, we mean incomplete families whether as a result of death, divorce or separation. Disrupted families fail to inculcate feeling of security and adequacy in children, thereby causing poor mental health.
- iii) Pathogenic Interpersonal Relationships: Faulty interpersonal relationships may result into poor mental health.
- iv) Stress: Modern competitive society is liable to put individual under stress. When individual is unable to achieve the goals, he becomes frustrated and experiences stress. The common causes of stress and frustrations are failures, losses, personal limitations, guilt feelings, loneliness, value conflicts, etc.
- v) Trauma: Trauma is the result of extraordinarily stressful events that shatter your sense of security, making you feel helpless and vulnerable in the world. An event will most likely lead to emotional or psychological trauma if it happens unexpectedly. For example, a sudden loss of loved one, emotional breakup, physical or sexual abuse, etc. Trauma adversely affects mental health of an individual and produces the feeling of inadequacy and helplessness.

To sum up we can say that pathological family patterns adversely affect mental health of the individuals by developing in them the feelings of inferiority, inadequacy and insecurity.

3) Environmental Factors: Environmental factors like family, school, society, and mass media are important determinants of poor mental health. We will briefly discuss these



factors one by one.

- a) Home environment: Uncongenial environment of home, inconsistent behavior of parents, mental health of parents, faulty models enacted by parents are responsible for bringing mental illness among individuals.
- b) School: School is also an important factor which determines mental health of the individual. Personality and behavior of the teacher, Teacher's attitude towards children, and teacher's relationship with his colleagues have strong effect on mental health of children. When teachers have unhealthy relationships with their colleagues, students become victim of their politics which results in poor mental health. Sometimes teacher favors particular children, others may develop inferiority complex or become rebellious. Many a times teachers give homework which is beyond their capacities which causes anxiety and deteriorates their mental health.
- c) War and violence have been the unavoidable evils of human civilization from time immemorial. The conditions of war and violence sometimes places great stress on a large number of people and deteriorate their mental health.
- d) Group Prejudice and Discrimination: Group prejudice of communal feelings and discrimination on the basic of caste, creed and region seems to be among our most ingrained cultural habits. The whole of our society suffers as a result of this prejudice and many victims experience poor mental health.
- e) Economic and Unemployment Problems: Inflation, unemployment and job dissatisfaction are also sources of poor mental health.

- f) Technology Advancement and Social Changes: Accelerating Technology and Social Changes place new responsibilities on individuals thereby resulting in maladjustments and poor mental health.
- g) Mass Media: Sometimes over exaggeration of certain facts flaring up some small problems may adversely affect tender hearts.

In the light of factors deteriorating mental health of an individual discussed so far, we may conclude that all the factors, in one way or the other are responsible for developing inferiority complex, feeling of inadequacy and insecurity, negative image about self, lack of interest in the social surroundings, inadequacy to deal with the problems thereby resulting in poor mental health.

Now let's discuss certain ways to improve and preserve mental health

STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH

- Foster Healthy Family Environment
- Foster Healthy Educational Environment
- Increase Help Seeking behavior
- Provide Mental Security
- Identify individual in need of care
- Provide mental and medical health services
- Meditation and Relaxation Techniques
- Stress upon physical activities like playing and adopting fitness regimes
- Inculcating Healthy reading habits
- Proper Sleep
- Proper Nutrition
- Connect with others
- Indulge in Community services
- Sublimation of emotions.
- Develop healthy habits.
- Follow effective models
- Learn to be at peace with yourself
- Try to accept failures
- Develop confidence
- Promote life skills and resilience
- Deliver coordinated crisis management

Once we know the causes, we should try to prevent mental illness and if we encounter the individual's with poor mental health, we should try to cure effectively by providing befitting environment followed by focusing on preserving the same.

CONCLUSION

To conclude we can say that, mental health is full and harmonious functioning of mind and body. Mental health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. A mentally healthy individual can be identified on the basis of certain characteristics like physically healthy, socially well adjusted, emotionally mature and intellectually developed. Poor mental health is caused by the interplay of many biological, psychosocial and environmental factors. Parents, Teachers and coaches should first aim at preventing mental illness. If they are confronted with the individuals with poor mental health, they should try to cure by adopting appropriate measures. Once they succeed in curing the mental health, they should aim at preserving it.