

Hello class. So certain situations around a person, things within their environment, can lead to psychological harm within a person causing things like stress and anxiety as well as emotional damage. So one of these situations, the one we're going to talk about today, is conflict. And now, generally you think of conflict as something physical like having a fight with another person. That isn't exactly what we're talking about with a psychological definition of it. Although it can involve other people.

Now, the psychological definition of conflict is when a person has to choose between two opposing or incompatible actions or motives or ideas. It's sort of like trying to pick items on a menu when you're out at dinner. So having to choose between those things can create a conflict within a person. Now, conflict can be important or it can be helpful. For example, psychologist Erik Erikson claimed that conflict was an important motivation for each stage of development within a person.

So you can see that it isn't all bad for a person as well. But conflict can lead to stress, which can harm a person both psychologically and physically. So understanding exactly how it works is important for understanding exactly how to prevent these kinds of negative things within a person. A psychologist named Kurt Lewin identified three different types of conflict. This is something we still use today.

The first type is what we call approach approach conflict. And this is when a person has to choose between two things that he or she wants or two things that are very desirable to that person. For example, when you're out at an ice cream shop should you get either the mint chip ice cream or the butterscotch ice cream? In other words, you're choosing between two things that you want. And generally, these kinds of conflicts within a person are less stressful than other kinds. And they're resolved relatively quickly, because they're both things that you want. So eventually you choose something, and you're still happy about that decision.

A second type of conflict that a person has is called avoidance avoidance. And this is when a person has to choose between two things that he or she doesn't want. In other words, there are two things that are not desirable to a person or negative in some way. For example, should you choose to sweep the floors or to wash the dishes? So which chore should you do? Neither of which is very appealing. So many of the sayings that we have especially within the English language apply to these kinds of situations. So when somebody says like they're between a rock and a hard place, that's an avoidance avoidance type of conflict or out of the frying pan and into the fire, these are the kinds of things that relate to these situations.

And people generally have a hard time deciding in these situations. In other words, they're very stressful on a person, which may lead to indecision in a person or in other words freezing up where they don't want to decide. So they actually don't decide or they take a very long time in deciding. Or a person may withdraw entirely from the

decision, instead of choosing between say two desirable men or women a person might have if they want to go out with either one. The person might just decide to leave town instead, to take off and avoid the decision making process entirely.

Now, obviously this can be very harmful. Because the person doesn't get either of the things they choose. Or sometimes there are situations where the person has to choose between the two things that they have regardless if they're positive or negative.

The final type of conflicts that Lewin identified was the approach avoidance type, where a person both wants and doesn't want a certain kind of thing. So, for example, if you want to be in a play, in a production on stage, but you have stage fright and you don't like getting in front of other people, you feel very stressed out about that. That would be what we call an approach avoidance thing. It's something you want, but there's something about it that you don't like in some way. So a person often reacts in these kinds of situations with ambivalence. Ambivalence is a mixed feeling that a person has about a situation. They have both positive and negative feelings about one thing.

And this can lead to a certain partial approach. For example, if you decide to be in the play, you might just decide to have a small inconsequential or background part, like you're playing a tree in the background, instead of wanting to be the lead person. So that way you kind of get to choose both at once in some way. Now, these situations can be more stressful due to these kinds of mixed feelings that a person has. Now, going along those lines, a person can also have a double approach avoidance situation where they have two alternatives that are both neither good nor bad.

So they have both of those aspects. In other words, if your offered two different jobs you have to decide between these things. One of them pays pretty well, but it's very boring work. And the other one doesn't pay well, but it's something that you really enjoy. So you see they have mixed aspects of both of those. And a person has to decide. So again, these are situations that are much more difficult for a person to decide upon, which can increase the amount of conflict that the person feels, which as a result of that can also increase the stress and the psychological or emotional problems that a person has as a result of conflict.