

CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF HIGHER TIBETAN STUDIES (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)

Report on Lecture “Coping with Exam Stress from Psychological and Buddhist Philosophical Perspectives”

Date: 09/04/2024

Venue: A.P. Guest House, Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies

Speakers:

- **Prof. Wangchuk Dorjee Negi**, A Renowned Scholar of Buddhist Philosophy & Vice Chancellor, CIHTS, Sarnath, Varanasi.
- **Prof. Pradeep Chandra Shukla**, Founder Coordinator – Career Guidance and Counselling Cell, B.H.U. and Former Head & Dean, Faculty of Education, B.H.U.
- **Dr. Sunita Chandra**, Registrar, CIHTS, Sarnath, Varanasi.

Introduction

On 09/04/2024, a comprehensive lecture titled "Coping with Exam Stress from Psychological and Buddhist Philosophical Perspectives" was held at Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies. This event, organized by Centre for Teacher Education, CIHTS, featured three distinguished resource persons: Prof. P. C. Shukla for the psychological perspective, Prof. W. D. Negi for the Buddhist philosophical perspective, and Dr. Sunita Chandra for general motivation. Dr. Himanshu Pandey, Director of the Centre for Teacher Education (CTE), delivered the welcome note, Dr. Anil Kumar Gupta anchored the event, and Dr. Jampa Thupten provided the vote of thanks. The lecture was attended by students and faculty members aiming to provide attendees with practical strategies and philosophical insights to manage exam-related stress effectively.



Welcome Note

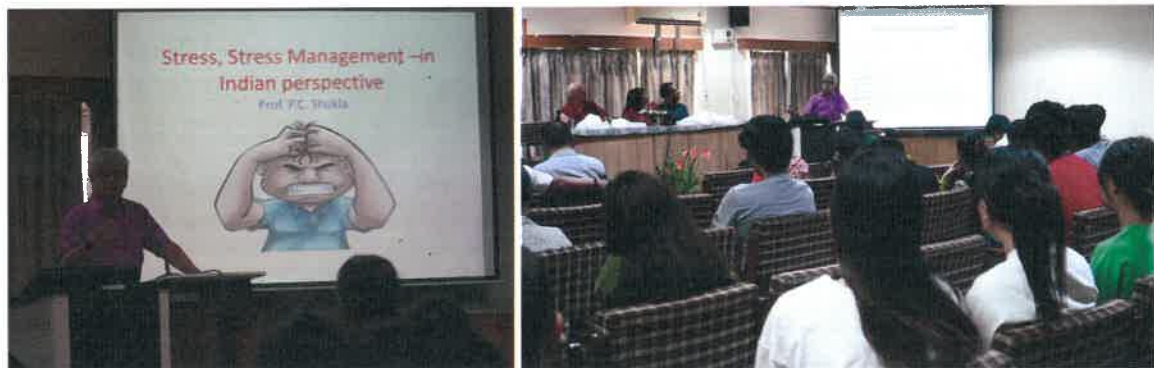
Dr. Himanshu Pandey commenced the event with a warm welcome to all attendees and speakers. He emphasized the importance of addressing exam stress in today's competitive academic environment and highlighted the relevance of integrating psychological strategies

and philosophical insights. Dr. Pandey expressed his gratitude to the distinguished speakers for sharing their expertise and contributing to the holistic development of students.



Psychological Perspective on Coping with Exam Stress

1. **Understanding Stress:** Prof. Shukla began by explaining the psychological understanding of stress, particularly exam stress. He defined stress as a response to challenging situations that disrupt an individual's equilibrium, emphasizing that exam stress is a common experience among students, characterized by anxiety, tension, and worry.
2. **Causes of Exam Stress:** Prof. Shukla highlighted various factors contributing to exam stress, such as high expectations, fear of failure, time constraints, and peer pressure. He discussed the impact of these stressors on students' mental and physical well-being, underscoring the importance of addressing them proactively.



3. **Psychological Strategies for Coping:** Prof. Shukla presented several evidence-based strategies to help students cope with exam stress:
 - i. **Time Management:** Effective planning and organization of study schedules to avoid last-minute cramming.
 - ii. **Relaxation Techniques:** Techniques such as deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, and mindfulness meditation to reduce physiological symptoms of stress.
 - iii. **Cognitive Restructuring:** Challenging and reframing negative thoughts about exams to foster a more positive and realistic mindset.
 - iv. **Seeking Support:** Encouraging students to talk about their stress with friends, family, or counselors to gain emotional support and practical advice.

Buddhist Philosophical Perspective on Coping with Exam Stress

1. **The Nature of Stress:** Prof. Negi provided insights from the Buddhist philosophical standpoint, viewing stress as a natural part of life arising from desires, attachments, and aversions. He explained that understanding the transient nature of stress and adopting a non-attached attitude can help mitigate its impact.
2. **Mindfulness and Meditation:** Prof. Negi highlighted Buddhist practices of mindfulness and meditation as powerful tools for managing stress. By cultivating present-moment awareness and developing a calm and focused mind, students can enhance their concentration and reduce anxiety.
 - i. **Mindfulness Meditation:** Regular practice of mindfulness meditation helps individuals become more aware of their thoughts and emotions, allowing them to respond to stress with greater equanimity.
 - ii. **Loving-Kindness Meditation:** This practice involves generating feelings of compassion and kindness towards oneself and others, alleviating the harsh self-criticism often associated with exam stress.



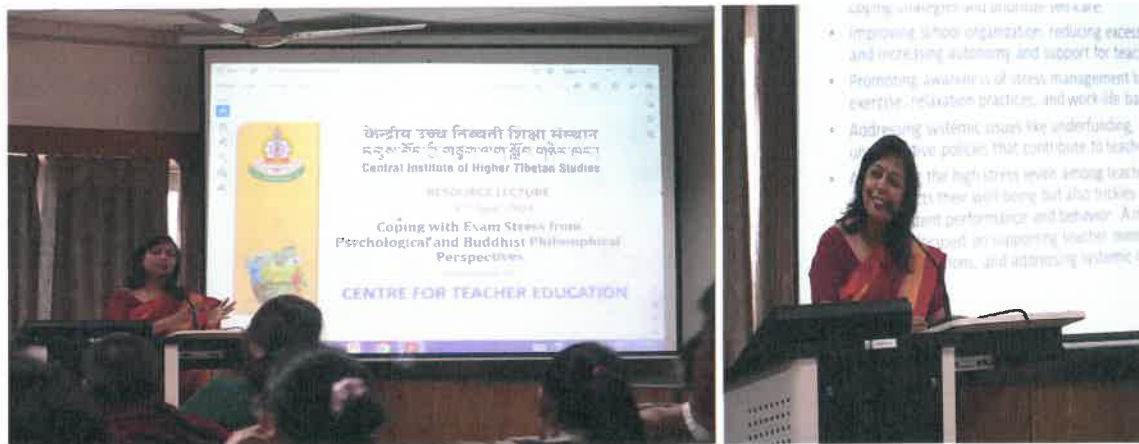
3. **The Four Noble Truths and Stress:** Prof. Negi related the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism to coping with exam stress:
 - i. *The Truth of Suffering:* Acknowledging that stress and discomfort are inherent parts of life.
 - ii. *The Cause of Suffering:* Recognizing that attachment to specific outcomes and fear of failure contribute to exam stress.
 - iii. *The End of Suffering:* Understanding that it is possible to reduce and manage stress through inner transformation.
 - iv. *The Path to End Suffering:* Following the Noble Eightfold Path, particularly right mindfulness and right effort, to cultivate a balanced and peaceful mind.

General Motivation

Speaker: Dr. Sunita Chandra

1. **Embracing Positivity:** Dr. Chandra emphasized the importance of maintaining a positive outlook during exam periods. She encouraged students to focus on their strengths and achievements rather than dwelling on potential failures.
2. **Goal Setting:** Dr. Chandra highlighted the significance of setting realistic and achievable goals. She explained that clear, attainable goals can provide direction and motivation, reducing the overwhelming nature of exam preparation.

- 3. Self-Care Practices:** Dr. Chandra underscored the importance of self-care, advising students to maintain a healthy balance between study and relaxation. She recommended regular exercise, a balanced diet, and sufficient sleep as essential components of effective stress management.



- 4. Inspirational Stories:** Dr. Chandra shared inspiring stories of individuals who overcame significant challenges to succeed academically. These stories served as a reminder that perseverance and resilience are key to overcoming exam stress and achieving one's goals.

Anchoring

Dr. Anil Kumar Gupta skilfully anchored the event, ensuring a smooth transition between sessions and maintaining an engaging and interactive atmosphere throughout the lecture. His efforts were instrumental in facilitating a seamless and enriching experience for all attendees.



Vote of Thanks

Dr. Jampa Thupten concluded the event with a heartfelt vote of thanks. He expressed gratitude to the esteemed speakers for their insightful presentations, the attendees for their active participation, and the organizers for their diligent efforts in making the event a success. Dr. Thupten highlighted the importance of applying the strategies and insights shared during the lecture to manage exam stress effectively.

Conclusion

The lecture concluded with an interactive Q&A session, where attendees had the opportunity to ask questions and share their experiences. The speakers emphasized the importance of integrating both psychological strategies and Buddhist philosophical practices to develop a holistic approach to coping with exam stress. Dr. Chandra's motivational insights provided additional encouragement and practical advice.



Overall, the lecture was well-received, offering valuable insights and practical tools to help students navigate the challenges of exam stress. The integration of psychological perspectives, Buddhist philosophy, and motivational guidance offered a comprehensive approach to stress management, highlighting the benefits of combining modern science with ancient wisdom.



Centre for Teacher Education, CIHTS is grateful to Prof. P. C. Shukla, Prof. W. D. Negi, and Dr. Sunita Chandra for their invaluable contributions to this enlightening and beneficial event.

(This report is prepared by Dr. Anil Kumar Gupta, Assistant Professor, Education, CTE, CIHTS)

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Organised by:
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