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Article

Unusual High-Impact Frustration Experience UNHIFE

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Abstract: Existential experiences significantly influence human emotions in various ways. The dichotomy between pleasure and discomfort necessitates particular attention to adverse experiences within a psychopathological framework. Displeasure has been an intrinsic element of human existence from birth. Pain serves as a catalyst for growth, and intellectual development is inherently linked to the acquisition of problem-solving skills. However, the processing of displeasure is not always straightforward. Among the multitude of challenging existential circumstances, frustrations are particularly salient. These frustrations frequently arise throughout the human experience, with many being resolved swiftly and without considerable discomfort. Conversely, certain disappointments may necessitate years of psychological processing. Some of these frustrations exert a profound emotional impact, potentially precipitating mental disorders such as anxiety and depression. High-impact frustrations, often related to commonplace situations such as unemployment and divorce, can have even greater consequences when they engender profound disappointments. Such extraordinary high-impact frustrations demand extensive deconstruction of expectations and can severely affect mental health. A thorough understanding of this phenomenon, termed UNHIFE (high-impact frustration experience), may elucidate the phenomenology associated with numerous neuropsychiatric disorders.

Keywords: Stress; frustration; existential experience

I. Introduction

The intricate tapestry of human experiences weaves together to shape the essence of every individual, culminating in a distinctive identity crafted from a vast array of moments, emotions, and interactions that mark their existence. The nature of these experiences is almost limitless, encompassing the joys, challenges, and connections that define our lives. To better understand these experiences, various strategies have been developed to create detailed profiles of the diverse ways individuals encounter the world. What stands out most clearly is the discernible patterns of experiences that emerge within the rich fabric of different human relationships, reflecting the interplay between individuals and the profound impact they have on one another.[1]

The series of distinct and intricate experiences that each person encounters throughout their life plays a crucial role in shaping their perception of themselves and their surroundings. These experiences create a unique tapestry that reflects the surrounding culture, influencing how individuals view the world. Everyone exists within an environment rich in social nuances, traditions, and values that shape their experiences and responses. This social context not only determines how individuals interpret their experiences but also influences their understanding of what is considered right or wrong. As a result, the environment of experiences becomes a powerful force in guiding the development of personal identity and worldview. This is a social representation, which includes a system of values, ideas, and practices serving two key purposes: first, to establish an order that helps individuals navigate their material and social world, and second, to facilitate communication among

community members by providing a code for social exchange and a framework for naming and categorizing the various aspects of their world and shared history.[2]

II. Unusual Human Experiences

Many human experiences are relatable and can be articulated in numerous simple and diverse ways. Yet, there are certain experiences that are challenging to convey, often due to the identity or circumstances of the person sharing them. These deeper, more complex feelings may be shaped by factors such as culture, trauma, or personal struggles, making it hard for individuals to express what they truly feel or have gone through.

These unique and extraordinary phenomena, often referred to as exceptional human experiences (EHEs), have been the focus of in-depth studies conducted by researcher Rhea White. Through her meticulous investigations, she has identified five primary categories of these exceptional experiences, which she classifies as mystical/unitive experiences, psychic experiences, encounter experiences, unusual death-related experiences, and what she terms exceptional normal experiences. Within these overarching categories, Rhea White has painstakingly cataloged approximately 100 distinct types of EHEs, highlighting the wide variety and complexity of these phenomena. In the research detailed here, we delve into using these foundational classifications of EHEs and their corresponding subtypes. It is important to note that experiences resembling EHEs have been documented in various forms throughout history, often under a myriad of different names. Among the most employed terms to describe such phenomena are “supernatural” and “paranormal,” both of which attempt to capture the essence of these otherworldly experiences. By exploring these classifications and their nuances, we can gain deeper insights into the extraordinary nature of human experiences that lie beyond the ordinary realm.[3]

III. Frustrations

Human experiences oscillate between the realms of well-being and discomfort, each defined by its own unique qualities. Discomfort often arises from negative experiences, which can stem from a variety of challenging circumstances. These include the agonies of illness, the heart-wrenching impacts of loss, the profound sadness of tragedy, and the weighty burden of disappointment. Among these, disappointment stands out as a particularly significant source of human suffering, manifesting as frustration when expectations fall short of reality. This complex tapestry of experiences highlights the intricate nature of our emotional landscape, where joy and pain intertwine.

Dollar et al. examine the phenomenology of disappointment. In 1939, they described the concept of frustration as “an interference with the occurrence of an instigated goal-response at its proper time in the behavior sequence.” The loss of an expectation—a significant belief or hope regarding the outcome of a situation—can trigger a wide array of emotional reactions. Among these responses, aggression stands out as the one that has garnered the most attention in psychological studies. When individuals face a setback, the instinctive reaction of aggression often serves as a defense mechanism, an immediate response aimed at protecting oneself from the pain associated with that loss. This aggressive reaction may manifest in various ways, from verbal outbursts to destructive behavior, as individuals seek to regain a sense of control. However, the emotional fallout from experiencing frustration extends far beyond aggression alone. A rich spectrum of emotions, including anxiety and depression, can also emerge in the wake of unmet expectations. Anxiety may surface as a nagging sense of unease and worry about future circumstances, driven by the fear of further disappointments. On the other hand, depression can take hold when an individual struggles to cope with the cumulative weight of ongoing setbacks, leading to feelings of hopelessness and despair. In sum, the interplay of these emotional reactions highlights the complex nature of our responses to disappointment, underscoring the need for a deeper understanding of how we navigate the challenges of unfulfilled expectations.[4]

IV. Unusual High-Impact Frustration Experience

Certain experiences of frustration bear a striking resemblance to EHEs. These forms of frustration are not only rare but also take those who encounter them by surprise. Their distinctiveness sets them apart from more common frustrations, creating a profound sense of bewilderment. This bewilderment is encapsulated in the idea of perplexity—a state where an individual's typical understanding and reactions fall short in addressing a confounding situation. When faced with such perplexing circumstances, a person finds herself ensnared in a web of confusion, grappling to make sense of what is unfolding. She is at a crossroads: she can either cling to her existing beliefs and assumptions, or she can begin to scrutinize and challenge them. However, to truly navigate and resolve this disconcerting situation—beyond mere subjective interpretations—she must embark on a difficult journey of re-evaluating her foundational beliefs and values. This process is often painful, involving deep self-reflection and an arduous reassessment of what she has always held to be true.[5]

Certain kinds of bewildering frustrations leave a profound mark on human lives, often perceived as overwhelming obstacles that seem to “ruin my life.” These high-impact frustrations possess an intensity that renders a clear articulation of their causes nearly impossible. Imagine someone minding their own business when, without warning, they are struck by an unseen force, like a sudden and brutal punch that sends them reeling into unconsciousness. When they eventually regain their senses, they find themselves disoriented and bewildered, grappling with a feeling of loss as they struggle to comprehend what just transpired or why they were so abruptly incapacitated. This disorientation mirrors the perplexity that accompanies such intense frustrations, leaving one in a state of confusion, unable to pinpoint the source of their turmoil.

The experience of an unusually high level of frustration can lead to a profound sense of emotional depletion, akin to a person stripped of their vitality and vigor. This drained state of existence can be aptly described as “*unhife*,” which serves as an acronym for Unusual High-Impact Frustration Experience (UNHIFE). In this condition, one feels lifeless and devoid of energy, as if the spark of enthusiasm has been extinguished, leaving behind a shell of a person struggling to navigate their surroundings.

Unhife is a state that describes this perplexity experience and maintains at the same time the triggering factor and the triggered factor. It is an experience of fixation, which does not disappear, just like a death event, which comes and kills. This type of striking experience can be associated with a series of neuropsychiatric illnesses. Describing the possible *unhife* experiences of each mental disorder could be a promising path to curing and preventing various diseases.

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