

Self Handicapping – Role Of Fragile Self-Esteem

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ABSTRACT

Self-handicapping refers to the phenomenon when, under certain conditions, individuals characterized by certain personality factors hinder their success by self-imposed obstacles in important performance situations. People self-handicap is by coming up with excuses for their potential failures, so that if they do not successfully complete the task, they attribute their failures to different causes. In general people attribute external causes for their failure and internal causes for their success. The individuals who possess apprehensive self-esteem tend to involve in acts of self-solicitations strategies which are specifically intended to enhance self-image.

1. INTRODUCTION

Self-handicapping is the global problem which makes the person potentially weak or threatened from facing obstacles in the way to reach their target. Due to which person become disable and cannot come forward to perform the task. This is the major problem facing by every individual that hinders the progress of that individual. The people use to self-handicap is when they make a task harder for themselves in fear of not successfully completing that task, so that if they do in fact fail, they can simply place the blame on the obstacles rather than placing the blame on themselves. This is known to researchers as behavioural handicapping, in which the individual actually creates obstacles to performance. Self-handicapping includes making or asserting a deterrent preceding an exhibition. (Berglas & Jones, 1978; Jones & Berglas, 1978).

People self-handicap is by coming up with excuses for their potential failures, so that if they do not successfully complete the task, they attribute their failures to different causes. In general people attribute external causes for their failure and internal causes for their success. Self-handicapping is that method wherein an individual manage impressions in front of others and is used for self enhancement. Self-handicapping is the behaviour in which person want to feel successful internally but by blaming the others and situation pertaining at that time. An individual want to feel satisfied by blaming outer sources in his life. They usually give excuses on his performance for not doing the task but take credits for the achievements (Thompson and Richardson, 2001). For an example of self-handicapping that if an individual has an important presentation next day and he is not prepared on it and fear to be incapable of completing the task, he gives varied excuses like , “I am not well” or “yesterday, I was stuck in an accident that I could not have enough time for preparing” to cover up his poor performance and lack of ability for completing that task. Self-handicappers give number of false explanations for their poor performance. Self-handicapping indicates to the activities or proclamations one put forth that permits him/her to keep away from attempt or obligation regarding potential disappointments that could harm him/her performance. It is considerably

more humiliating and hurtful to our confidence to invest energy and come up short than it is to self-cripple and have pardons concerning why we fizzled. Self-handicapping can be exacerbated without anyone else presentational concerns yet additionally happens in circumstances where such concerns are at any rate. This is an attempt of an individual to save his self-worth in the eyes of himself as well as in the eyes of others so that he could save his projection in the society, (Berglas & Jones, 1978; Tice & Baumeister, 1990). There are two distinct forms of self-handicapping under which consist of behavioural and self-reported handicaps. There are mainly two types of self-handicapping; a) behavioural self-handicapping b) claimed self-handicapping. In behavioural self-handicapping, an individual blames himself for his poor performance or incapability of performing well in the assigned task. For an example, if a student did not do hard work in the week leading up to an important exam will attribute to "lack of preparation" as a probable cause for his failure. However, if an individual attributes his illness, luck, fatigue and injury etc. for his failure, hence all these external sources are merely claims. Previous researches have shown that males tend to attribute behaviourally than their female counterpart (Hirt et al., 1991, 2000; McCrea, Hirt, & Milner, 2008; Rhodewalt, 1990; Shepperd & Arkin, 1989b).

Self-handicapping behaviour provides a protective cover to the fragile self-esteem (Snyder & Smith, 1982), including uncertainty about one's ability (Berglas & Jones, 1978). Various moods or events have a handicapping function as well, these include "test anxiety" (Smith, Snyder, & Handelsman, 1982), "social anxiety" (Snyder, Smith, Augelli, & Ingram, 1985), "physical symptoms" (Smith, Snyder, & Perkins, 1983), "bad mood" (Baumgardner, Lake, & Arkin, 1985), and "traumatic life events" (DeGree & Snyder, 1985). Self-esteem is related with dignity, pride, despair, self-respect and self-regard. Self-esteem (Kernis, 2003). The construct of self-esteem was first described by William James (1890) as capturing the sense of positive self-regard that develops when individuals consistently meet or exceed the important goals in their lives. Self-esteem is often considered to be a fundamental human need. Ryff (1989) contended for a multifaceted conceptualization of mental prosperity that has six center segments: (1) self-acknowledgment, described by holding uplifting perspectives toward oneself; (2) good relations with others, portrayed by the limit with regards to adore, kinship, and recognizable proof with others; (3) self-rule, described by characteristics, for example, self-assurance, freedom, and guideline of conduct from the inside; (4) natural authority, described by the capacity to pick or establish conditions appropriate to one's clairvoyant conditions; (5) reason throughout everyday life, described by convictions that give one the inclination that there is reason and significance to life; and (6) self-awareness, described by proceeded with improvement of one's latent capacity and self-acknowledgment. Self-handicapping is intriguing for several reasons. First, those who engage in it are willing to call attention to, or place obstacles in the way of successful performance, in exchange for the opportunity to protect their ego from the esteem-threatening implications of failure. Second, self-handicapping has been shown to have a variety of behavioural and attitudinal consequences, self-handicapping may enhance or degrade task performance (e.g., Frankel & Snyder, 1978; Leary & Shepperd, 1986; Rhodewalt & Davison, 1986). Harris and Snyder (1986) found that the males who have indefinite self-esteem were found to self-handicap by practicing less before judging his/her ability to perform certain task. Self-handicapping keeps up self-assessments of capacity in a particular domain, just as confidence, notwithstanding disappointment (Feick & Rhodewalt, 1997; McCrea & Hirt, 2001). In the event of a failure, one can point to the self-handicap as the reason a better outcome was not obtained and thereby protect self-esteem and conceptions of ability (Feick & Rhodewalt, 1997; McCrea & Hirt, 2001; Rhodewalt, Morf, Hazlett, & Fairfield, 1991). The individuals who possess

unstable self-esteem were found high in defensiveness and self-deception (Berry, Kernis, & Cornell, 1994; Kernis, Cornell, Sun, Berry, & Harlow, 1993).

Previous researches have confirmed that self-handicapping is used as an efficacious tool for safeguarding their self-esteem and perceptions of failure to perform task and unable to face the guilt. Specifically, to conceal their poor performance, self-handicappers usually provide miscellaneous justifications of inability of their task (Feick & Rhodewalt, 1997; McCrea & Hirt, 2001; Rhodewalt et al., 1991). Self-handicapping system seems to improve the probability that upward contrary to fact will be produced. Self-handicaps are probably going to be the focal point of counterfactual clarifications for poor performance since they speak to an "unusual" condition (Kahneman and Miller, 1986). To get protective coverage from humiliation from others, self-handicappers use the impediments to obscure their abilities and performance, this is attempted by individual for fake dignity.

2. CONCLUSION

Self-handicapping is that state in which an individual provides a protective cover to his shaky self-esteem when a person is not able to present himself due to fear of failure. Hence in order to protect his self-worth he gives various excuses. To get better future, individual must be confident and grab the opportunity rather than wasting it due to preconception of failure and did not even prepare for it. Self-handicapping in the form of self-solicitation may lead to a never-ending cycle of regulating the self-esteem and self-discounting. According to Rhodewalt and Tragakis (2002) the individuals who possess apprehensive self-esteem tend to involve in acts of self-solicitation strategies which are specifically intended to enhance self-image.

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