

Stressmodell von Lazarus

Das **Transaktionale Stressmodell von Lazarus** ist nach dem Psychologen Richard Lazarus benannt und wurde 1974 veröffentlicht. Dieses Modell sieht Stresssituationen als komplexe Wechselwirkungsprozesse zwischen den Anforderungen der Situation und der handelnden Person. Im Gegensatz zu früheren Stresstheorien ging Lazarus davon aus, dass nicht die (objektive) Beschaffenheit der Reize oder Situationen für die Stressreaktion von Bedeutung sind, sondern deren (subjektive) Bewertung durch den Betroffenen als Überforderung. Menschen können für einen bestimmten Stressor höchst unterschiedlich anfällig sein, d.h. was für den einen Betroffenen Stress bedeutet, wird von einem anderen noch nicht als Stress empfunden. Das Modell ist transaktional, da ein Bewertungsprozess zwischen Stressor und Stressreaktion zwischengeschaltet ist.

Vorgeschichte

In mehreren Experimenten hatte Lazarus bereits in den 1960er Jahren den (meist dämpfenden) Einfluss von Kognitionen auf die Intensität von Emotionen nachgewiesen. So zeigte er Versuchspersonen einen Film über Genitalverstümmelungen bei Aborigines, der selbst ohne Ton Stress verursachte (gemessen als Veränderungen der Hautleitfähigkeit). Wurde dem Film jedoch ein intellektualisierender, verharmlosender Kommentar hinzugefügt, fiel die Stressreaktion schwächer aus. Noch weniger ausgeprägt war sie, wenn der Kommentar *vor* dem Film dargeboten wurde, sodass die Erwartungen der Versuchspersonen ihre Stressreaktion dämpften. Lazarus nennt dies „Kurzschließen der Bedrohung durch kognitive Bewertung“^{[1] [2]}

Drei Stufen der Bewertung

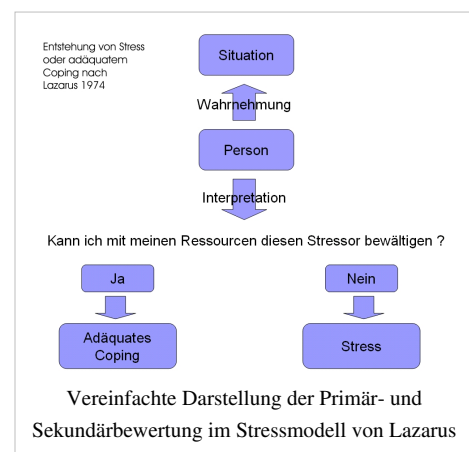
Jeder Mensch bewertet Situationen und deren Belastung unterschiedlich, und damit auch deren Bedrohlichkeit. Lazarus unterscheidet dabei drei Stufen.

Primary Appraisal (Primäre Bewertung)

Situationen können nach Lazarus als positiv, irrelevant oder potenziell gefährlich (stressend) bewertet werden. Wenn eine Situation als stressend erlebt wird, kann diese Bewertung in drei verschiedenen Abstufungen erfolgen: als Herausforderung (*challenge*), als Bedrohung (*threat*) oder als Schädigung/Verlust (*harm/loss*).

Secondary Appraisal (Sekundäre Bewertung)

In der Sekundärbewertung wird überprüft, ob die Situation mit den verfügbaren Ressourcen bewältigt werden kann. Nur wenn die Ressourcen als nicht ausreichend bewertet werden, wird eine Stressreaktion ausgelöst. Es wird eine Bewältigungsstrategie entworfen, die abhängig von der Situation und von Persönlichkeitseigenschaften und kognitiven Strukturen der Person ist. Dieser Umgang mit einer Bedrohung wird *Coping* genannt. Mögliche Verhaltensweisen sind z. B. Aggression oder Flucht, Verhaltensalternativen, Änderung der Bedingung oder Verleugnung der Situation. Über Erfolgs- oder Misserfolgsmeldungen lernt die Person mit der Zeit, Bewältigungsstrategien selektiv einzusetzen.



Reappraisal (Neubewertung)

Im dritten Schritt wird der Erfolg der Bewältigungsstrategie bewertet, um eine dynamische Anpassung an die neue Situation zu gewährleisten. Lernt ein Stresspatient, wie er mit einer Bedrohung (primäre Bewertung der Situation) umgehen kann, stellt sie nun eventuell nur noch eine Herausforderung dar. Ebenso kann eine Herausforderung zur Bedrohung werden, wenn keine angemessene Bewältigung durchführbar ist. Diese Möglichkeit der Veränderung der Erstbewertung bezeichnet Lazarus als „Reappraisal“ (deutsch Neubewertung).

Drei Arten des Copings (Stressbewältigung)

Lazarus unterscheidet drei Arten der Stressbewältigung: das problemorientierte, das emotionsregulierende und das bewertungsorientierte Coping.

Problemorientiertes Coping

Darunter versteht man, dass das Individuum versucht, durch Informationssuche, direkte Handlungen oder auch durch Unterlassen von Handlungen Problemsituationen zu überwinden oder sich den Gegebenheiten anzupassen. Diese Bewältigungsstrategie bezieht sich auf die Ebene der Situation bzw. des Reizes.

Emotionsorientiertes Coping

Das emotionsorientierte Coping wird auch „intrapsychisches Coping“ genannt. Hierbei wird in erster Linie versucht, die durch die Situation entstandene emotionale Erregung abzubauen.

Bewertungsorientiertes Coping

Lazarus verwendet den Begriff reappraisal (Neubewertung) in zwei Zusammenhängen. Zum einen bezüglich des Bewertungsprozesses, wie oben erwähnt. Zum anderen ist die Neubewertung einer Stresssituation gleichzeitig eine Copingstrategie, wie an folgendem Zitat deutlich wird: "I also used the term *cognitive coping* to express this idea that coping can influence stress and emotion merely by a *reappraisal* of the person-environment relationship" (Lazarus, Stress and Emotion, 1999, S. 77)

Die betroffene, "gestresste" Person kann ihr Verhältnis zur Umwelt kognitiv neu bewerten, um so adäquat damit umzugehen. Das Hauptziel beim bewertungsorientierten Coping liegt darin, eine Belastung eher als Herausforderung zu sehen, weil so ein Lebensumstand positiv bewertet wird und dadurch Ressourcen frei werden, um angemessen zu reagieren. Dies kann nur gelingen, wenn konkrete Problemlösungsansätze gefunden werden (siehe problemorientiertes Coping). Es müssen also verschiedene Bewältigungsstrategien kombiniert werden.

Literatur

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Einzelnachweise

- [1] Lazarus & Alfert (1964). *The short-circuiting of threat by experimentally altering cognitive appraisal*. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 69, S. 195-205
- [2] Lazarus et al. (1965). *The principle of short-circuiting of threat: Further evidence*. Journal of Personality, 33, S. 622-635

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