5. Other cognitive factors are the focus of other health-belief models. For example, people generally do not try to quit smoking unless they believe they can succeed.

6. Self-efficacy, the belief that you are able to perform some behavior, is an additional consideration in making decisions about health behaviors. A related factor is the intention to engage in a healthy behavior.

B. Changing Health Behaviors: Stages of Readiness
1. Changing health-related behaviors depends not only on a person’s health beliefs but also on that person’s readiness to change.
2. Successful change occurs in five stages:
   a) Precontemplation: The person does not perceive a health-related problem and has no intention of changing anytime soon.
   b) Contemplation: A problem behavior has been identified and the person is seriously thinking about changing it.
   c) Preparation: The person has a strong intention to change and has made specific plans to do so.
   d) Action: The person is engaging successfully in behavior change.
   e) Maintenance: The healthy behavior has continued for at least six months and the person is using newly learned skills to prevent relapse or “backsliding.”
3. These stages may actually overlap somewhat; for example, some “precontemplators” might actually be starting to contemplate change.
4. The road from precontemplation through maintenance can be a bumpy one. Usually, people relapse and go through the stages repeatedly until they finally achieve stability in the healthy behavior they desire.

C. Programs for Coping with Stress and Promoting Health
1. Improving people’s stress-coping skills is an important part of health care psychologists’ health promotion work.
2. Strategies for coping with stress can be cognitive, emotional, behavioral, or physical.
3. Cognitive coping strategies involve changing the way we think. These changes include thinking more calmly, rationally, and constructively in the face of stressors and may lead to a more hopeful outlook.
4. Cognitive coping strategies replace catastrophic thinking with thoughts that cast stressors as challenges, not threats. This substitution process is called cognitive restructuring.
5. Finding social support is an effective emotional coping strategy.
6. Behavioral coping strategies involve changing behavior in order to minimize the negative impact of stressors.
7. Physical coping strategies can be used to alter the undesirable physical responses that occur before, during, or after the appearance of
stressors. The most common physical coping strategy is some form of drug use.

Summary-

According to the arousal theory of motivation, people are motivated to behave in ways that maintain a level of physiological arousal that is optimal for their functioning. Both the sympathetic nervous system and the parasympathetic nervous system, which are divisions of the autonomic nervous system, are involved in physiological changes that accompany emotional activation.

Recognition of the link between stress and illness and of the role of behaviors such as smoking in increasing the risk of illness prompted the development of health care psychology. Stressors are physical or psychological events or situations to which people must adjust. Stress reactions are physical and psychological responses to stressors. Severe or long-lasting stressors can lead to burnout or to psychological disorders such as posttraumatic stress disorder.

Question-

How do psychological stressors affect physical health?

Answer-

Stress is an ongoing, interactive process that takes place as people adjust and cope with their environment. Stressors are physical or psychological events or situations to which people must adjust. Psychological stressors include catastrophic events, life changes and strains, chronic stressors, and daily hassles. Stressors can be measured by tests such as the Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS) and the Life Experiences Survey (LES), but scores on such tests provide only a partial picture of the stress in a person’s life. Stress reactions are physical and psychological responses to stressors.