



Parent University

Stress Management Strategies

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ACTIVITY

In the Chat Room

1. What causes you stress



2. How does stress affect you emotionally?



3. How does stress affect you physically?





TEDEd

Lessons Worth
Sharing



What is Stress?

Stress is a feeling that is created when we react to certain events.

It is the body's way of preparing itself to deal with a tough situation.

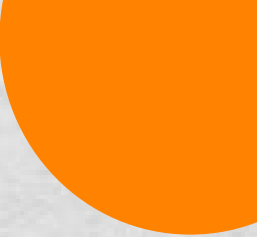
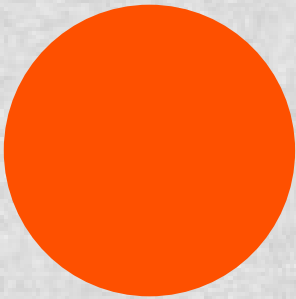
There are both good and bad types of stress: short term and long term.

Why do we get stressed?

Physical stress symptoms date back to our caveman ancestors who relied on stress to help their bodies react quickly to either fight, flight, or freeze from potential danger.

Stress activates our nervous system to release hormones such as adrenalin and cortisol into our bloodstream.

These hormones speed up our heart rate, breathing rate, blood pressure, energy and sweat production – so it is quickly prepared to fight, flight, or freeze.

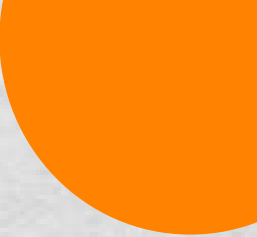
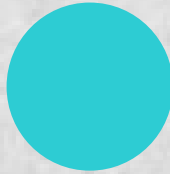
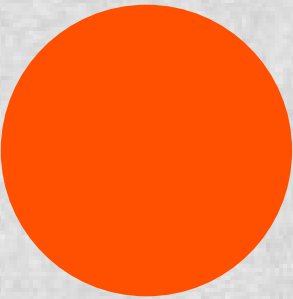


No Bad Stress?

The fight, flight and freeze response is considered the “good” stress response as it is designed to protect us from tough situations – fighting off a bear.

However, continued pressure or toxic stress produces extra stress hormones over a long period of time and wear out the body’s reserves that may leave one feeling weak, overwhelmed, or even sick with a weakened immune system.

Everyone is unique in their response to stress; internal and/or external.



Teen Stress

- # Today
- 50% of children have cell phones by age 11
 - iPad and phone access 24/7
 - 1/3 of teens spend 8+ hours a day on a screen
 - Music= all time high for drug references
 - Social media- inundated with addictive media messages and peer influences
 - YouTube videos= unlimited access to adult rated content
 - By 5th grade, kids are entering puberty with underdeveloped, overstressed, and stimulus seeking brains

What are teens stressed about?

- **Bullying**
- **Social media posts**
- **Relationships**
- **Recent breakup**
- **Arguments with friends**
- **Social rejection**
- **Grades**
- **Athletics**
- **Homelife**
- **Classwork**
- **Speaking up in class/participating**
- **Having enough money**
- **Getting sick**
- **Appearance**
- **Classroom distractions**

List in order what stresses you out most about school, with 5 being the least and 1 being the most stressful:

- ___ Taking Tests
- ___ Not Understanding The Material...Yet
- ___ Homework
- ___ Expected to Stay Sitting, Still, & Quiet
- ___ Presenting In Front of Class
- ___ Other _____

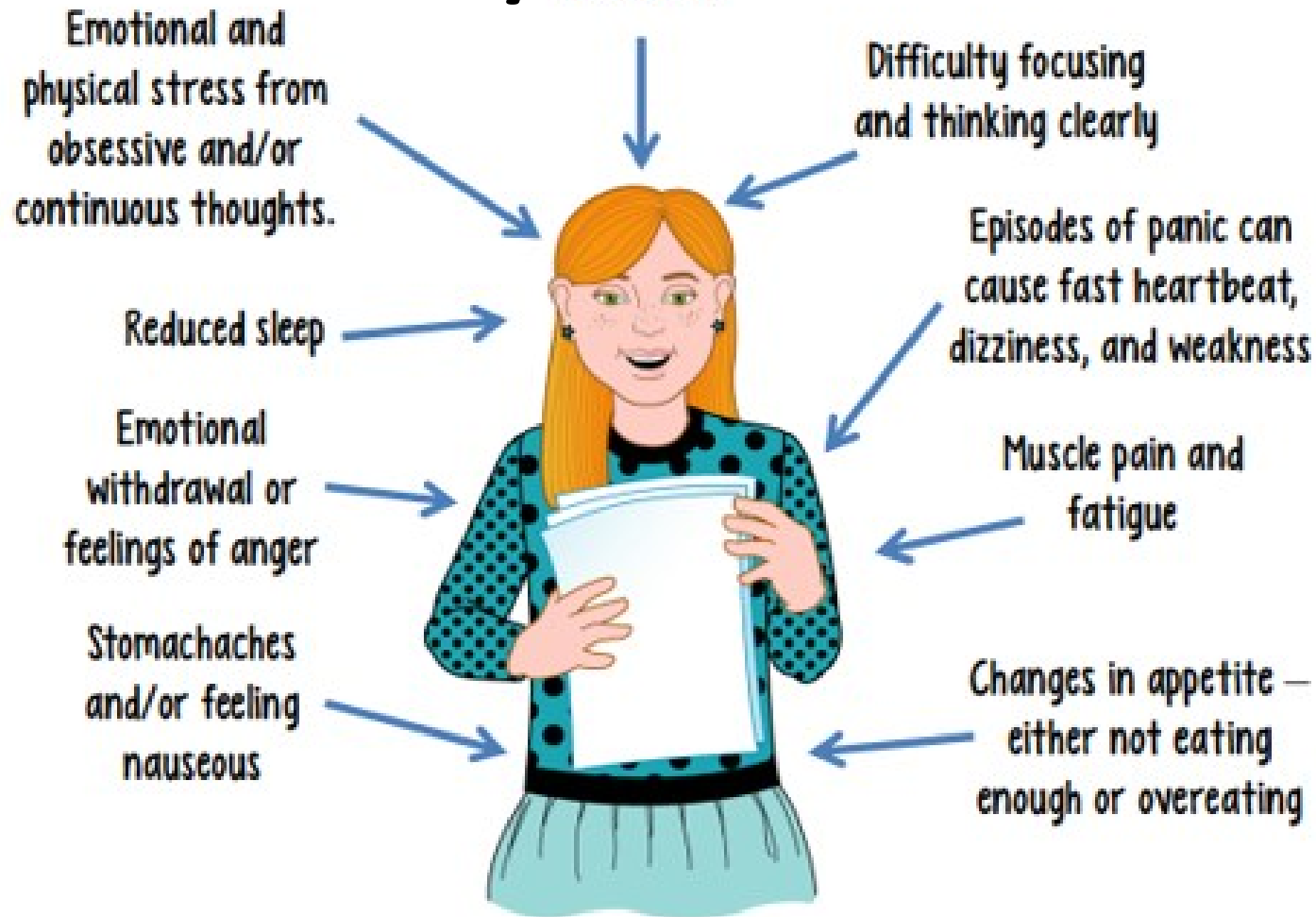
List in order what stresses you out most about peer relationships, with 5 being the least and 1 being the most stressful:

- ___ Making New Friends / Meeting New People
- ___ Being The Target Of Bullying
- ___ Fighting With Friends
- ___ Not Fitting In
- ___ Getting Pressured To Something You Are Not Comfortable With
- ___ Other _____

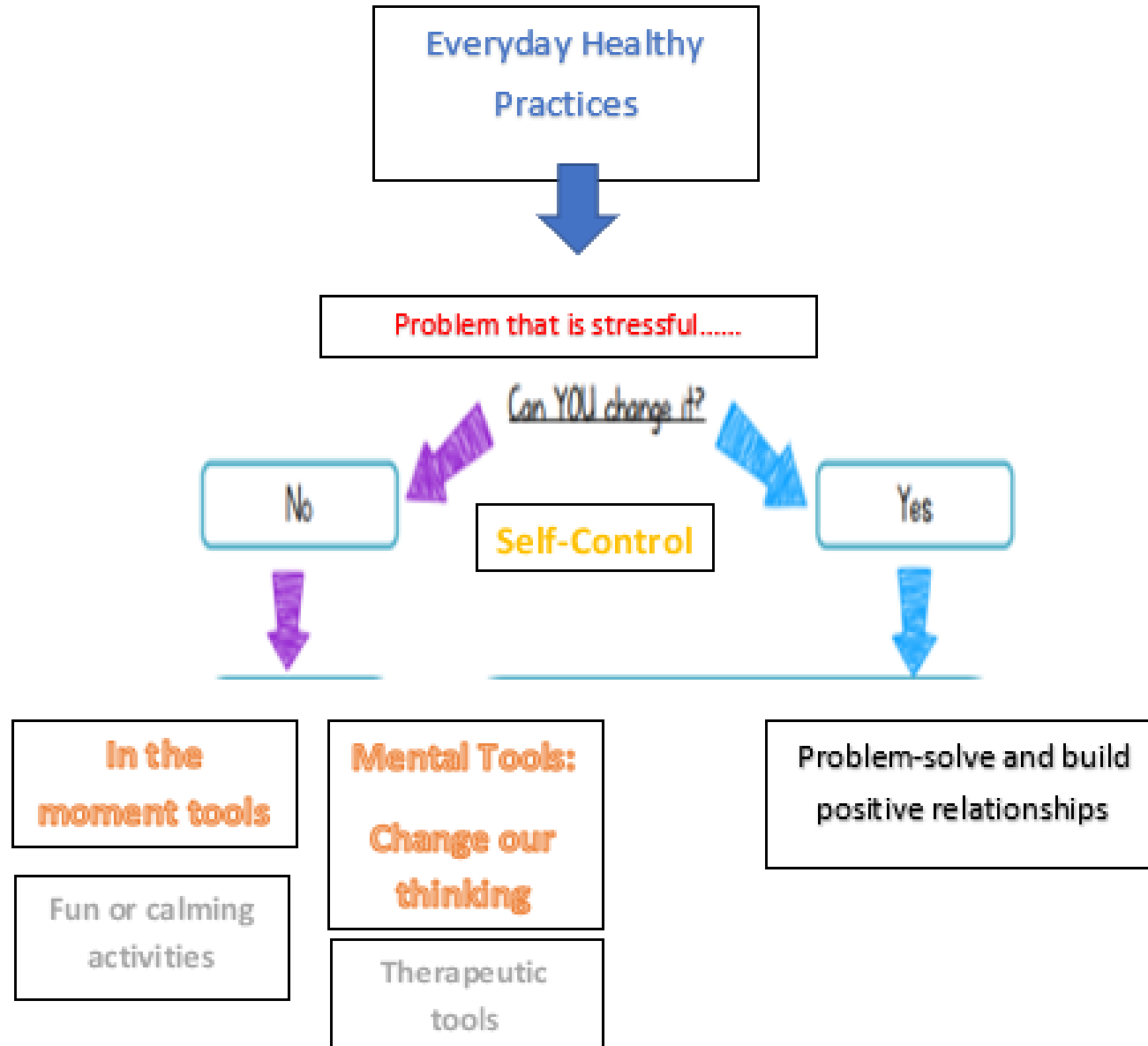
List in order what stresses you out most about family, with 5 being the least and 1 being the most stressful:

- ___ Not Having Enough Money
- ___ Conflict/Problems With Siblings
- ___ Parents Fighting
- ___ Death Of A Loved One (Pets Included)
- ___ Not Spending Enough Time Together
- ___ Other _____

WHAT DOES STRESS LOOK/FEEL LIKE?



MANAGING STRESS



MANAGE STRESS- Everyday

healthy practices

1

Get active: Stress hormones are getting your body “ready for action,” whether you are in danger or not. By exercising, you can decrease the stress hormones and allow yourself to destress at the same time.

2

Get enough sleep: Adolescent bodies are growing at a very fast rate with sleep being one of the most important parts of development. Lack of sleep can leave one feeling emotional and you may find it difficult to concentrate, all making the effects of stress worse.

3

Manage your time: Too much of anything can be bad for you, so work out a plan to manage your time so that you can get your work done and still have time for yourself and activities that you enjoy.

MANAGE STRESS- Everyday healthy

practices

4

Have fun: It is important to take a break from your problems every now and then and allow your self time to do things you enjoy. This gives your body and mind a chance to relax and de-stress.

5

Keep healthy: Choose vitamin rich foods to keep your body and mind balanced. Try to avoid excessive caffeine which can increase feelings of anxiety and agitation.

6

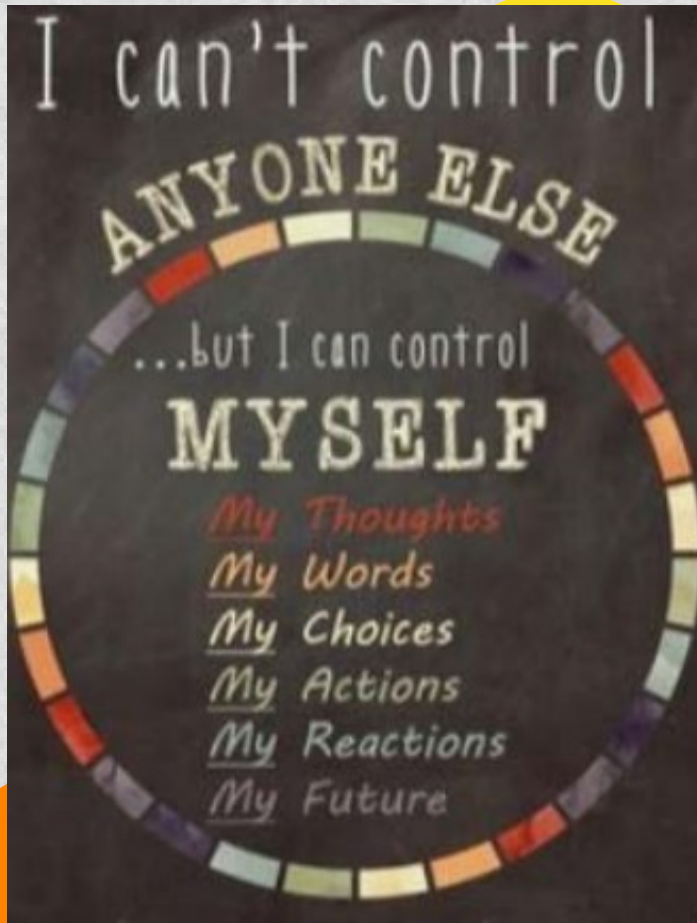
Talk about it: It has been said that “a problem shared is a problem halved.” It can really help to talk to someone you trust. Chances are, someone has experienced something similar and can offer an empathetic, friendly ear.

Feeling Better with Simple Steps

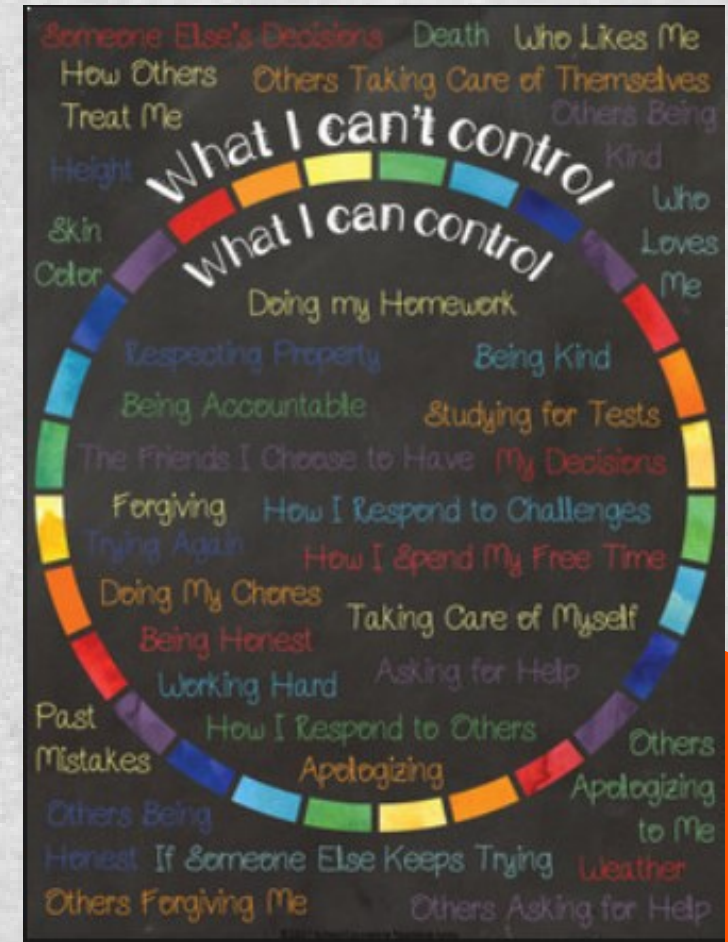
While it won't cure your worries, there are simple steps you can take to start to feel better. Some of them will be easy to implement, and others might require more work. It might be best to choose just one positive change to stick with. When you make progress towards accomplishing that one change, then you can add another.

- 1** Exercise — It's a great stress reducer and you'll feel good about yourself after exercising.
- 2** Eat Well — Eating a healthy diet will help ensure you have the vitamins and minerals your body needs.
- 3** Dump the Drama — If you have people or activities in your life that encourage drama and negativity, it is time to let them go.
- 4** Get Enough Sleep — Research shows that we need 7 to 9 hours of sleep per night to feel well rested. Sleep greatly impacts our moods and how we feel.
- 5** Get Involved — Find activities to get involved in that make you happy. It can be anything from sports to practicing piano.
- 6** Hang Out with Friends — Research tells us that people who have friends and are socially connected can react much better to stress.
- 7** Write in a Journal — Writing out your thoughts on paper can help you think them through and rationalize them.
- 8** Give Yourself Downtime — Allow yourself some time that's not planned. Use it to just lay down, relax, read, or sit in quiet to calm your mind.

WHAT IS IN MY CONTROL?



You cannot change or control other people. You can ask them to change their behaviour, but you can only control your own behaviour.



MENTAL TOOLS

- Positive thinking
- Positive self-talk
- Gratitude
- Match reactions to size of problems

Sometimes I make mistakes, but that's okay.

My weaknesses and strengths combined make me great.

I am an important person.

I am perfect the way that I am.

All my difficulties have made me who I am today.

I am thankful for so many things in my life.

Everyone makes mistakes, including me. That's how we learn.

I can't change everything in the world, and that's okay.

I am a beautiful person.

I'm extremely unique and I love who I am.

I deserve love and respect.



Be your own Best Friend!



- Make a list of top 10 things you like doing – achieve 1 each week/month
- Make a list of positive qualities about yourself
- Make a list of great things in your life
- Write positive notes to self on mirror and read daily
- Come up with a mantra



WHO IS MY SUPPORT SYSTEM ?

I feel lonely...

I need someone to talk to about relationships...

I need some company...

I need someone to help me feel positive...

I don't feel safe...

I'm struggling in school...

IN THE MOMENT-COPING SKILLS

What is a Good Coping Tool?

Physically Calm

You Down:

- a. Lower heartbeat
- b. Slow breathing

De-Stresses and is good for your health when practiced daily

Distracts You...

- a. Calm your self down
- b. Stop negative thoughts- obsessing
- c. Problem solve- make a better choice

IN THE MOMENT-COPING SKILLS

(DISTRACT YOU, PHYSICALLY CALM YOU, GET YOU AWAY FROM THE SITUATION)

EXAMPLES OF COPING STRATEGIES:

1. Take deep breaths
2. Do a positive activity
3. Play sports
4. Think of something funny
5. Take a quick walk
6. Practice yoga
7. Stand up and stretch
8. Listen to music
9. Take a time out
10. Slowly count to ten
11. Use positive self-talk
12. Say something kind to yourself
13. Talk to a friend
14. Talk to an adult
15. Close your eyes and relax
16. Say, "I can do this"
17. Visualize your favorite place
18. Think of something happy
19. Think of a pet you love
20. Think about someone you love
21. Get enough sleep
22. Eat a healthy snack
23. Read a good book
24. Set a goal
25. Jog in place
26. Write in a journal
27. Hum your favorite song
28. Doodle on paper
29. Draw a picture
30. Color a coloring page
31. Clean something
32. Meditate
33. Use a stress ball
34. Dance
35. Write a letter
36. Look at pictures you've taken
37. Make a gratitude list
38. List your positive qualities
39. Do something kind
40. Give someone a hug
41. Put a puzzle together
42. Do something you love
43. Build something
44. Play with clay
45. Hug a stuffed animal
46. Rip paper into pieces
47. Play an instrument
48. Watch a good movie
49. Take pictures
50. Garden
51. Write a list
52. Keep a positive attitude
53. Schedule time for yourself
54. Blow bubbles
55. Write a positive note
56. Chew gum
57. Paint your nails
58. Write a story
59. Blog
60. Read a joke book
61. Write a poem
62. Drink cold water

EXAMPLES OF COPING STRATEGIES:

63. Draw cartoons
64. Read a magazine
65. Write a thank you note
66. Count to 100
67. Make a list for the future
68. Read inspirational quotes
69. Compliment yourself
70. Visualize a stop sign
71. Laugh
72. Smile in the mirror
73. Smile at others
74. Do schoolwork
75. Look at animal pictures
76. Hyperfocus on an object
77. Notice 5 things you can see
78. Paint with water colors
79. Use a relaxation app
80. Watch a funny video
81. Drink some tea
82. Cook or bake
83. Plan a fun trip
84. Use an I-statement
85. Identify your emotions
86. Express your feelings to someone
87. Write down your thoughts
88. Identify a positive thought
89. Make your day's schedule
90. List 10 positives about you
91. Ask yourself, "What do I need right now?"
92. Tell someone you are thankful for them
93. Pet an animal
94. Make a list of choices
95. Ask an adult for help
96. Organize something
97. Play a card game
98. Listen to nature sounds
99. Sit and relax all your muscles
100. Ask for a break

Positive Activities

Using your senses

Taking time out

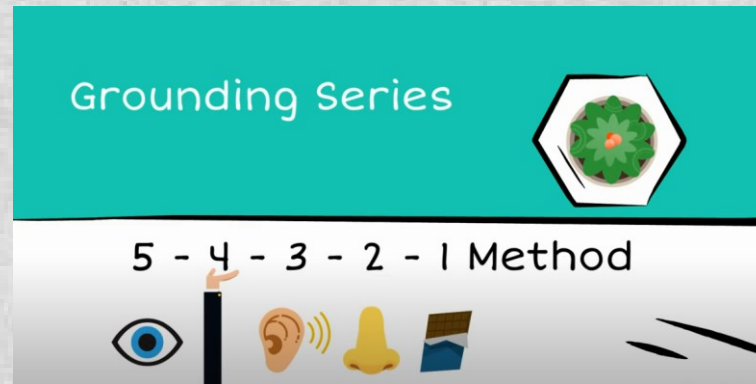
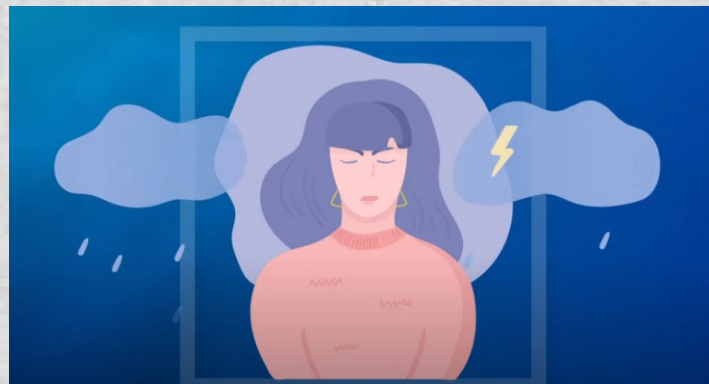
Distracting your brain

Creating a opposite emotion

Creating a different feeling

Relaxation Exercises

Controlled breathing can promote feelings of calm, lower blood pressure and help you de-stress by balancing your nervous system.



Relaxation Exercises

Deep Breathing

Find a quiet place. Sit upright with a straight back. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Continue for several breaths.

Meditation

Find a quiet place and sit or lay in a comfortable position. You can have your eyes open or closed. Try not to think of anything specifically. Just let your mind rest in quiet. If you notice your mind wandering, you can hum quietly.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Lay down in a comfortable place. Allow your body to relax. Starting with your right foot, tense up the muscle for about 5 seconds and then completely release. Let the muscle rest for 10 seconds. Then, move on to the next muscle until the entire sequence is finished (See below). Once you have finished the sequence, let your body rest for several minutes.

Sequence: right foot, right lower leg, entire right leg, left foot, left lower leg, entire left leg, right hand, right arm, left hand, left arm, abdomen, chest, shoulders, forehead, eyes and cheeks, mouth and jaw, whole face.

Grounding

5- things you can see

4- things you can touch

3- things you can hear

2- things you can smell

1- can taste

- Name 1 reason you love yourself and
- Repeat your Mantra

MY COPING TOOLBOX



- A grounding object
- A list of people they can call and talk to
- A journal to write in/color/doodle
- Positive photographs/sayings
- Water
- Inspirational readings
- Funny videos
- Chewing gum
- Relaxing audio

PROBLEM-SOLVING & RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Problem Solution Planning Sheet Flowchart

What is the problem? _____

Can YOU change it?

No

Yes

Use Coping Strategies:

- Walk away
- Ignore it
- Use self-talk
- Exercise
- More positive activities

What are possible solutions & consequences for the problem?

Which solution will you choose? What is your specific plan of action?

PROBLEM-SOLVING & RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

- Focus on your child's strengths
- Follow up with consequences for misbehavior
- Ask them how they are feeling
- Find ways to model calmness and coping skills when angry
- Avoid humiliating or mocking them
- Be willing to apologize
- Give them choices and value their wishes
- Ask questions that help them solve the problem on their own
- Talk about your child's day together
- Educate them about making responsible and healthy choices

PROBLEM-SOLVING & RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

- Talk about what peer pressure looks and feels like at their age and help them learn how to resist but still feel like they belong
- Teach them how to set boundaries
- Teach them how to communicate their feelings assertively
- Teach them how to report concerns about other peers to an adult
- Teach them what unhealthy relationships look like
- Help them understand how manipulative social media can be and to choose what they watch/who they follow wisely
- Help them identify their goals and values
- Find a healthy alternative for them if they are addicted (social media, gaming, etc.)

Stress Scenario

Sophie

Sophie's parents have high expectations for her and in turn, Sophie strives to make good grades and be the best at volleyball. Recently, Sophie injured her knee and is off the roster for the remainder of the season. Her teammates are angry with her as she was their key to winning the championships and they have been making derogatory complaints on social media for everyone to see. She has withdrawn from her friends and her grades are deteriorating.

ADDITIONAL HELP

National Institute of Mental Health. Anxiety Disorders.
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/anxiety-disorders/index.shtml>

Anxiety and Depression Association of America.
<http://www.adaa.org/>

American Psychological Association. Anxiety.
<http://www.apa.org/topics/anxiety/>

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). Anxiety Disorders.
<https://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-Conditions/Anxiety-Disorders>

Brain & Behavior Research Foundation. Anxiety.
<https://bbrfoundation.org/anxiety>