



## Stress Reducing Skills

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## Physical Strategies

- “ Relaxation techniques
- “ Mini relaxation techniques
- “ Appropriate nutrition
- “ Moderate exercise



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## Emotional Strategies

- “ Cognitive restructuring
- “ Social support
- “ Self nurturance
- “ Anti-perfectionism



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## Relaxation Techniques

### “ Commonalities

- . Passive attitude
- . Focus on a word or breathe or body part or image
- . Comfortable position



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## Meditation

“ Think of a word or phrase which has positive or neutral meaning for you.

Examples include:

- . Peace and calm
- . The Lord is my Shepard
- . One
- . Ham sah



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- “ You should focus on the word or phrase in rhythm with your breathe.
  - . So say the word or phrase to yourself as you breathe in and as you breathe out
- “ Or
  - . Half the word or phrase as you inhale and the other half as you exhale



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## Body Scan

- “ Focus on sequential body parts, head down to toes, in rhythm with your breathe.
- “ Focus on that body part as you breath in, and relax that body part as you breath out.



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## Progressive Muscle Relaxation

- “ Tighten each muscle group for five seconds, relax, repeat three times.
- “ Start with your forehead, ending with your toes.



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## Imagery

- “ Imagine yourself in a favorite place.
- “ While there, focus on your sensations. What can you see, feel, smell, and hear?



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## Mini Relaxations

1. Count down from 10 down to 0, one number for each breathe.
2. Count slowly from 1 to 4 as you inhale, and then from 4 to 1 as you exhale. Repeat three times.
3. Inhale, hold it for a count of 4, exhale, hold it for a count of 4. Repeat three times.



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## Appropriate Nutrition

- “ 80/20 Plan
- “ No bad foods
- “ Rethinking the whole fat is bad concept
- “ Make baby steps; one change at a time.
- “ For example, snack on almonds instead of chips.
- “ Three easy changes: whole grain bread instead of white, whole grain pasta instead of white, and garbage salads.



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## Exercise

- “ Forget about the 60 minute goal
- “ Six ten minute sessions are better than one 60 minute one
- “ Any movement is better than none
- “ Park at the far end of the parking lot, take a subway one stop farther, etc.



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## Cognitive Restructuring

- “ Think about one of your recurrent negative thoughts. Ask yourself four questions:
  - . Does this thought contribute to your stress?
  - . Where did I learn this thought?
  - . Is this a logical thought?
  - . Is this thought true?



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## Cognitive restructuring example

- “ I won’t make my sales goal this year.
- . 1. *Does it contribute to my stress?* Yes.
  - . 2. *Where did I learn this thought?* It hasn’t happened yet, so it must be my fear speaking
  - . 3. *Is it logical?* Not really, the year isn’t up yet
  - . 4. *Is it true?* I don’t know yet



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## Restructured Thought Example

- “ I am nervous that I won’t make my sales goal this year, but I am working as hard as I can and just hope for the best.



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## Cognitive Restructuring

- “ Write down one of your own negative thoughts. Ask yourself four questions:
  - . Does this thought contribute to your stress?
  - . Where did I learn this thought?
  - . Is this a logical thought?
  - . Is this thought true?
  
- “ Then restructure it to one which is logical and true, and write it down.



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## Social Support

- “ News and goods: at the end of the day, we tend to focus on what went wrong during the day, even though, on most days, 70% of events are mood neutral, 15% are positive and 15% are negative.



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- “ At the end of each day, ask a loved one, what new and good thing happened to you today?
- “ And no ~~Buts~~ allowed!



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- “ Turn to the person next to you, and ask them what new and good thing has happened to them within the past 24 hours.
- “ Then switch.
- “ Catch the ~~%~~ butst.



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## Self Nurturance

- “ Take a piece of paper and number it 1 to 20.
  - . 1
  - . 2
  - . 3
  - . 4
  - . 5 etc.



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- “ Hand that piece of paper to the person sitting next to you. And they hand you theirs.
- “ Decide who is going to go first.



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- “ The person going first is going to dictate to their partner, as fast as they can, 20 things in their life which brings them joy.
- “ The partner is going to write them down.
- “ GO!
- “ When done, switch.



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## Anti Perfectionism

- “ Look in the mirror
- “ Relationship quadrant
- “ Water your bulbs



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# Questions

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