



Teen Leadership 20

Stress Reduction

Intended Audience:

- Teens

Lesson Objectives:

Participants will:

- Identify stressors in their everyday life.
- Develop ways to manage and reduce stress.

Time: 20 minutes

Equipment and supplies:

- Flipchart/Paper
- Markers
- Post It Notes

Do Ahead:

- Review Lesson
- Gather equipment and supplies
- Prepare flipcharts
- Print a copy of “A Lesson on Stress”

BACKGROUND

In today’s world, everyone, including teens, are busier, under more stress and face higher demands than ever before. With these higher demands it is important to help teens build the skills they need to reduce their stress and keep calm. Having ways to reduce stress can help youth to be more productive, happier, and healthier. Additionally, these are vital skills that will help teens throughout life.

WHAT TO DO

Activity: Stress Brainstorm

Break into small groups if desired. Distribute Post It notes and ask the following brainstorming questions:

- What stresses you out?
- What triggers those moments when you feel like you can’t take any more?
- What are the little things that bug you?

Write all the different stressors on individual Post It notes. Let the group brainstorm for 4-5 minutes; longer if they are still being productive.

Hang two sheets of flipchart paper on the wall. One labeled “Control” and one labeled “No Control.” Invite individuals to categorize their stressors onto the “Control” or “No Control” flipchart papers.

Discuss as a group how sometimes we can’t control everything, but there are strategies we can use to minimize how it impacts our lives.

Activity: STOP Technique

(Adapted from Elisha Goldstein, mindful.org)

Now that we have identified different stressors and know what we can and can’t control, it is good to have techniques that can help refocus our minds and bring us back to a calm state. The S.T.O.P. technique is one option that can be used.



Sources:

Goldstien, E. (2013, May 29). Stressing Out? S.T.O.P. - Mindful. Retrieved January 25, 2016, from <http://www.mindful.org/mindful-magazine/stressing-out-stop>

Stop

Take a breath

Observe where you feel the emotion in your body

Proceed

- Stop what you're doing
- Take a few deep breaths. Take as long as you need to calm yourself.
- Observe your experience. Reflect on what is happening, what is on your mind and the emotions present.
- Proceed with an action that will help you reduce or eliminate the stressor.

Review and practice the S.T.O.P. technique. Discuss what are different actions they can do for the "Proceed" stage. E.g., talk with a friend or listen to music.

TALK IT OVER**Reflect:**

What are some of the biggest stressors in your life? What strategies have you found successful in managing your stress in the past? Why is it important to reduce/manage your stress?

Apply:

What is one new strategy you will try to manage stress appropriately? What are some things you can incorporate into your day to help minimize stress? (ex. Journaling, meditating, music).

Digging Deeper:

Share the story a lesson on stress.

ADDITIONAL LINKS

<http://www.uaex.edu/health-living/health/youth.aspx>

<http://www.mindful.org>

Please take time to complete the Participant and Facilitator evaluations, found online at go.osu.edu/TeenLeadership20.

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A Lesson On Stress

Author: Unknown

A young lady confidently walked around the room with a raised glass of water while leading a seminar and explaining stress management to her audience. Everyone knew she was going to ask the ultimate question, 'Half empty or half full?' She fooled them all. "How heavy is this glass of water?" she inquired with a smile. Answers called out ranged from 8 oz. to 20 oz.

She replied, "The absolute weight doesn't matter. It depends on how long I hold it. If I hold it for a minute, that's not a problem. If I hold it for an hour, I'll have an ache in my right arm.

If I hold it for a day, you'll have to call an ambulance. In each case it's the same weight, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes."

She continued, "and that's the way it is with stress. If we carry our burdens all the time, sooner or later, as the burden becomes increasingly heavy, we won't be able to carry on."

"As with the glass of water, you have to put it down for a while and rest before holding it again. When we're refreshed, we can carry on with the burden - holding stress longer and better each time practiced.

So, as early in the evening as you can, put all your burdens down. Don't carry them through the evening and into the night. Pick them up again tomorrow if you must.

