

Wellness Trainer's Manual for School Personnel



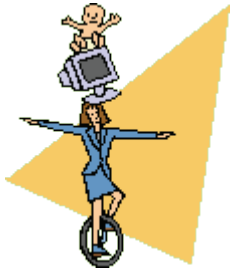
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We encourage the use of this manual in its entirety for the purpose of conducting support group for staff within the school setting. Borrowed content from the manual must be cited appropriately, protecting the academic/intellectual property of the developers. All rights are reserved by the authors. Permission has been granted only for the copying and use of this manual for wellness efforts for school hired and school-based personnel. Permission for copying and use of the manual for any other purpose is not granted. Special permission would need to be obtained from the authors for the use of the manual in any other capacity. We are hopeful that this manual will help structure wellness groups in schools. As this is the first edition of the manual, we would like to solicit feedback and suggestions for improvement and modification. This manual represents ongoing collaborative efforts between the Center for School Mental Health Analysis and Action and the University of Missouri Center for the Advancement of Mental Health Practices in Schools. The content of this manual has greatly benefited from the research, teaching, and practice experiences of both Centers. Please send your feedback and recommendations to nlever@psych.umaryland.edu and/or KollerJ@missouri.edu

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Session 1 – Introduction to Wellness Group



Objectives: To review the purpose of the group and the value of wellness to overall health and job performance.

To introduce and discuss the concept of occupational stress and unique stressors related to school-based work

To assess and become more aware of personal stressors

Resources: Pullis Stress Inventory
Scoring for Pullis Inventory

Purpose of Group

The purpose of this group is to provide an opportunity for promoting wellness in school-based staff. Many school-based professionals are so busy taking care of everyone else that they neglect their own wellness. Investing time and energy into the wellness of the caregiver is often overlooked. With the many academic, social, and emotional needs of children today, at times working in the school can feel overwhelming for school personnel. Each day not only do school staff contend with the many needs of children and families and increasing pressure to achieve academic benchmarks, they also are confronted with their own personal stress. For the adults in the school building to be effective, it is critical that they are managing their own stress levels and striving to promote their own wellness. Taking the time for self-care is essential for optimal practice, well-being, and the promotion of healthy learning environments. Through participation in this group, staff will increase their knowledge and skills related to stress reduction and positive coping skills and will have peer support to help promote their own wellness. The group provides a forum for discussion, information sharing, and problem solving. Participants will be able to develop their own wellness plans and will be given encouragement and practical strategies for achieving their wellness goals.

Background Information

In the past 20 years, research on occupational stress has shown that stressful working conditions are associated with poor mental and physical health (Ganster and Schaubroeck, 1991; Jex and Beehr, 1991). Occupational stress and burnout is a problem in many professions, but is particularly prevalent in the human services or helping professions. Teachers, as well as administrators, counselors, doctors,

nurses, police officers, and so on have the additional burden of extreme responsibility for the well being of others on top of the multitude of stressors that stem from routine job activities. This heavy responsibility combined with limited resources, long hours, marginal working conditions, and often unreasonable demands from those receiving services, can lead to chronic stress, and ultimately, burnout. (Adapted from <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>). In the helping profession, it is often easy to overlook the psychological well-being of staff in the pursuit of improving the quality of life for others. However, one important aspect of staff wellness that is often overlooked is that when staff do not feel good about themselves, it is unlikely they will be as effective with the individuals they serve.

In the research literature, various models of psychological stress exist, however, these models can be broadly described as stimulus models, response models, or a combination of both. Stimulus models tend to concentrate on external sources of stress, such as a stressful environment. For example, according to the Holmes and Rahe (1967) Life Events schedule model, people are more likely to develop illness or stress-symptoms when they have had to deal with and adapt to many life events. Response models, as the term implies, focus on the response by the individual to the disturbing stimuli. An example of a response model of stress is Selye's General Adaptation Syndrome (1956). In Selye's model, the body reacts physiologically under stress (the flight or fight response); however, if the stress is chronic and continues and the body continues to react (the flight or fight response continues unchecked), negative physical and psychological effect such as exhaustion occur. In this model, three stages of reaction to stress are posited: 1) Alarm; 2) Resistance; and 3) Exhaustion. In fact, in some writings, burnout is conceptualized as remarkably similar to the final exhaustion stage in Selye's model (Maslach, 1999). A model that looks at both the transaction between the environment and the person responding to its demands is Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional model of stress (1984). This model focuses on three major components of the stress process: 1. the internal or external demands placed on a person, 2. the person's appraisal both of the seriousness of those demands (primary appraisal) and adequacy of his or her resources and options for coping with these demands (secondary appraisal) and finally, 3. the response. This led to Lazarus' celebrated definition of stress: "Any situation in which internal demands, external demands, or both, are appraised as taxing or exceeding the adaptive or coping resources of an individual or group." (Lazarus 1977).

"Burnout" is a term that was first used by Fruedenberger (1974) to describe healthcare workers who were physically and psychologically depleted. This term is now commonly used in reference to human services professionals and generally represents "a response to the chronic emotional strain of dealing with others in need" (Byrne, 1999, p. 15). While there is debate about an exact definition of burnout, the most commonly used definition (and corresponding measure in the research) is that of Maslach. Maslach defines burnout as a psychological symptom with three components: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishments (Adapted from Mintz, Center for the Advancement of Mental Health Practices in Schools Wellness Course).

It is also important to consider the difference between stress and burnout. According to Maslach, “Burnout is considered by most researchers to be a long-term process, in which prolonged exposure to chronic job stress results in emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, as well as reduced personal accomplishment.” In other words, burnout is often conceptualized as resulting from cumulative job stress. As noted above, burnout also is thought to conceptually parallel the final exhaustion stage in Selye’s General Adaptation Syndrome (1956).

In addition, when considering possible causes and strategies for reducing occupational stress and burnout, one must consider individual, interpersonal and organizational factors (Corey, 1996). Most interventions to date focus on individual-centered solutions, such as: strengthening internal resources, changing work behaviors and enhancing individual capacity to cope in the workplace. Some common strategies used with individuals include: stress inoculation training, relaxation techniques, time management strategies, assertiveness training, social skills training, team building and meditation techniques. In addition to individual coping mechanisms, however, changes in the job environment are also necessary to prevent occupational burnout. In his book, **Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy** (1996), Gerald Corey lists the following examples as the causes of burnout:

- doing the same type of work with little variation, especially if this work seems meaningless;
- giving a great deal personally and not getting back much in the way of appreciation or other positive responses;
- lacking a sense of accomplishment and meaning in work;
- being under constant and strong pressure to produce, perform, and meet deadlines, many of which may be unrealistic;
- working with a difficult population, such as those who are highly resistant, who are involuntary clients, or who show very little progress;
- conflict and tension among staff; absence of support from colleagues and an abundance of criticism;
- Lack of trust between supervisor and mental-health workers, leading to conditions in which they are working against each other instead of toward commonly valued goals;
- not having opportunities for personal expression or for taking initiative in trying new approaches, a situation in which experimentation, change, and innovation are not only unrewarded but also actively discouraged;
- unresolved personal conflicts beyond the job situation, such as marital tensions, chronic health problems, financial problems, and so on.

1. Begin with a discussion about what is meant by wellness. As defined by the National Wellness Institute (2001)—Wellness is an *active* process of becoming *aware* of and making *choices* toward a more successful existence. Emphasize the idea that it is an active process that involves awareness and choices.
2. Discuss why a wellness group is being created and talk about why it is important and how it can be useful to school staff. Have group members share their feelings (both positive and negative) about having such a group and allow them to express their ideas about how to make the group meaningful. Remind them that often caregivers (which would include all school staff) are not good at taking care of themselves. As caregivers, they spend a large part of the day taking care of others in the school. Sometimes it is hard to turn off this role at the end of the day. Many helping professionals are caregivers in other parts of their lives as well (with family, friends, in the community etc). Emphasize that the primary goal of the group is to allow school staff to take the time to focus on and prioritize their own wellness.
3. Brainstorm as a group about what causes job stress in general for all professions.

Generally speaking, work-related stress can come from:

- Unfavorable working conditions
- Punishing workloads
- Scarcity of resources
- Lack of autonomy and decision making latitude
- Interpersonal problems
- Management/ leadership style
- Job insecurity

(Guglielmi & Tatrow, 1998; NIOSH, 2004)



4. Brainstorm as a group about unique stressors faced by school staff. List as many stressors as the group can come up with.

Work-related stress in a school system is often attributed to:

- Large workload, long working hours
- Relatively low salary
- Bureaucracy
- Educational mandates- e.g., No Child Left Behind, standardized assessments, benchmarks

Conflicting or numerous job roles
 Large class size
 Behavioral problems in the classroom
 Perceived lack of support
 Poor working environment
 Changes in technology and at times limited or no access to technology



4. Have group complete the Pullis Inventory of Teacher Stress. Discuss their reactions to the Inventory as well as scoring results and areas of greatest and least concern. Explain that the inventory can be used with other professions within the school outside of teaching.
5. Brainstorm as a group about how work related stress displays itself in a school system.

Work-related stress in a school system can lead to the following:

High turnover
 Absenteeism
 Numerous teaching vacancies
 Repeated and increasing difficulty with classroom management
 Poor evaluations from co-workers and supervisors
 Lower levels of productivity and job satisfaction
 (Jarvis, 2002)

6. Brainstorm as a group about how work related stress displays itself in an individual's personal life?
 Work related stress can impact an individual's personal life in the following ways:

Marital problems
 Depression
 Irritability
 Anxiety
 Financial concerns
 Parenting challenges
 Presence of stress related ailments such as hyper insomnia, gastrointestinal problems



Take Home Assignment: Between now and the next session, think about the stressors in your life. How are they impacting your life?

What would it take for you to feel better?



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PULLIS STRESS INVENTORY

Part I: Sources of Stress

Please use the following code for responding to this section. The statements below have come from a variety of studies of teacher/school personnel stress. These studies have shown that each person perceives different aspects of their work as stressful. Please indicate how you perceive the typical amount stress associated with each of the items.

Please rate yourself in terms of your own general anxiety level.

1 = Not anxious at all

2 = Mildly anxious

3 = Moderately anxious

4 = Extremely anxious

1	2	3	4	5
NOT AT ALL	MILDLY	MODERATELY	QUITE	EXTREMELY
STRESSFUL	STRESSFUL	STRESSFUL	STRESSFUL	STRESSFUL

In general, how stressful do you find being a

teacher/school professional?	1	2	3	4	5
Loud, noisy, disruptive students	1	2	3	4	5
Poor career opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Not enough time allotted to do the work	1	2	3	4	5
Inadequate disciplinary policy of the school	1	2	3	4	5
Participation in IEP or other mandatory meetings	1	2	3	4	5
Students' impolite or rude behavior	1	2	3	4	5
Inadequate salary	1	2	3	4	5
Too much work to do	1	2	3	4	5
Attitudes and behavior of the building principal	1	2	3	4	5
Responsibility for the students' progress/learning	1	2	3	4	5

Writing and on-going evaluation of IEPs (paperwork)	1	2	3	4	5
Low status of the teaching/school personnel profession	1	2	3	4	5
Poorly motivated students	1	2	3	4	5
Lack of recognition for good teaching/work	1	2	3	4	5
Dealing with the parents of the students	1	2	3	4	5
Constant monitoring of the students' behavior	1	2	3	4	5
Inadequate equipment and instructional materials	1	2	3	4	5

1	2	3	4	5
NOT AT ALL	MILDLY	MODERATELY	QUITE	EXTREMELY
STRESSFUL	STRESSFUL	STRESSFUL	STRESSFUL	STRESSFUL

Demands on after-school time	1	2	3	4	5
Lack of effective consultation and assistance	1	2	3	4	5
Students' defiance of teacher/school professional authority	1	2	3	4	5
Attitudes and behavior of other teachers/professionals	1	2	3	4	5
Having to punish students or use aversive techniques	1	2	3	4	5
Lack of participation in decision-making	1	2	3	4	5
Number of students you have to serve (Lack of time to spend with individual kids)	1	2	3	4	5
Evaluation by principal or supervisors	1	2	3	4	5
Threat of aggression physical harm	1	2	3	4	5
Lack of appreciation from your students	1	2	3	4	5
Inability to meet your personal or professional goals	1	2	3	4	5
Lack of fun or enjoyment involved in teaching/working in schools	1	2	3	4	5

Other Sources of Stress

Please describe other factors that are stressful to you. I am especially interested in those sources of stress that are associated with the particular types of students that you work with or those associated with the type of setting in which you work.

Part II: The Effects of Stress

Each person feels anxiety and stress in different ways. The following items are a list of feelings, thoughts and physical symptoms representative of the various effects that stress has on us.

	1	2	3	4	5	6			
	HARDLY EVER	ONCE IN AWHILE	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	VERY OFTEN	ALMOST ALWAYS			
How often do you feel exhausted?				1	2	3	4	5	6
How often do you feel frustrated?				1	2	3	4	5	6
How often do you feel quite angry?				1	2	3	4	5	6
How often do you feel depressed/sad?				1	2	3	4	5	6
How often do you feel nervous/anxious?				1	2	3	4	5	6
How often do you have headaches?				1	2	3	4	5	6
How often do you feel your heart beating fast?				1	2	3	4	5	6
How often do you feel unable to cope?				1	2	3	4	5	6
How often do you get an upset stomach?				1	2	3	4	5	6
How often do you feel irritable?				1	2	3	4	5	6
How often do you feel guilty about not doing enough?				1	2	3	4	5	6
How often do you feel tearful?				1	2	3	4	5	6
How often do you feel like quitting your job?				1	2	3	4	5	6
How often do you feel distant from students?				1	2	3	4	5	6
How often do you feel unsuccessful in your job?				1	2	3	4	5	6

How often do you feel bored by your work?	1	2	3	4	5	6
How often do you feel overwhelmed by the work?	1	2	3	4	5	6
How often does school stress carry-over to other aspects of your life?	1	2	3	4	5	6

Other Effects of Stress

Please describe any of the effects of stress that you have experienced but that were not covered in this section. Please use the back of this page to respond if you need to.

Part III: Coping with Stress

The following is a list of coping strategies reported by teachers and other educational professional. These are techniques that people have used to deal with the anxiety and/or symptoms associated with stress. First, in the left-hand column place a check mark next to any of those strategies that you have personally tried. Then rate the effectiveness of each strategy on the right side. Please rate only those strategies that you have tried.

1	2	3	4
NOT VERY	MILDLY OR	PRETTY	EXTREMELY
EFFECTIVE	TEMPORARILY	HELPFUL	EFFECTIVE
	EFFECTIVE		

_____Discussing problems with professional colleagues	1	2	3	4		
_____Discussing problems with personal friends and family		1	2	3	4	
_____Leaving the school problems at school			1	2	3	4

_____ Taking courses and workshops to improve skill	1	2	3	4
_____ Organizing your time and setting priorities	1	2	3	4
_____ Doing relaxing activities (hobby)	1	2	3	4
_____ Taking a nap; forgetting it; walk away for awhile	1	2	3	4
_____ Taking a day off	1	2	3	4
_____ Revamping personal/professional expectations or goals	1	2	3	4
_____ Waking/jogging/maintaining diet and exercise	1	2	3	4
_____ Drinking coffee	1	2	3	4
_____ Drinking alcohol; taking drugs (including prescriptions for relaxants or stimulants)	1	2	3	4
_____ Eating	1	2	3	4
_____ Smoking cigarettes	1	2	3	4
_____ Getting professional counseling or therapy	1	2	3	4

Please list only other strategies that you have tried.

The strategies listed above are personal ones. I am also interested in what you think the schools might do to help you reduce and/or cope with stress. Please list on the back of this page those things that you feel the school district, your particular school, and/or your supervisors could do to help reduce the stress associated with your work.

Scoring for Pullis Inventory

Pupil Characteristics

Add scores from the following items:

2. _____
 7. _____
 14. _____
 16. _____
 21. _____
 27. _____
 28. _____

TOTAL: _____

Divide by 7

SCORE = _____

Career Issues

Add scores from the following items:

3. _____
 8. _____
 13. _____
 29. _____
 30. _____

TOTAL: _____

Divide by 5

SCORE = _____

Workload Issues

Add scores from the following items:

4. _____
 6. _____
 9. _____
 11. _____
 12. _____
 17. _____
 19. _____
 25. _____

TOTAL: _____

Divide by 8

SCORE = _____

School/Setting Factors

Add scores from the following items:

5. _____
 10. _____
 15. _____
 18. _____
 20. _____
 22. _____
 23. _____
 24. _____
 26. _____

TOTAL: _____

Divide by 9

SCORE = _____

This inventory contains 29 items regarding your working conditions as a teacher. The total scores can be evaluated to find your target areas of stress. The higher the score, the more stressful that area is for you personally. School/Setting factors have been shown to be the most stressful, followed by Career Issues, then Workload Issues, and finally, Pupil Characteristics (Pullis, 1992).

- **School/Setting factors are related to issues involves school policies, administrators, resources, colleagues, etc.**
- **Career Issues concern salary, advancement, occupational status, etc.**
- **Workload Issues are related to size of your workload, time required, paperwork, etc.**
- **Pupil Characteristics are related to negative characteristics of students you may encounter**

Wellness Manual Session 2 – Awareness and Goal Setting

Objective: To review signs of burnout and the value of wellness for school staff.

To reinforce the importance of school personnel needing to take care of their own wellness

To draft personal wellness goals and break them into short range, easy to achieve steps

Resources: Pathways to Productivity Handout
Burnout and Renewal Handout
How Do You Spend Your Time? Pie Chart Activity
Name Your Goals Handout
Wellness Treatment Plan
Goal Setting Handout: Helpful Hints and Strategies

Background Information

One of the best ways to tackle the challenge of changing behavior that may lead to experiencing more stress is to set goals for changes. Various studies have found that goal setting is a major factor that influences the changes in one's ability to cope (Joy, 2002; Lemos, 2002). For example, in a study done by Lemos (2002), the results indicated that goals play a major role in dealing with stress. More specifically, he found:

1. Low goal setting is associated with reduced activity levels or behavior passivity and with mild emotions.
2. Goal setting is a necessary condition for adequate coping. Participants who did not set goals showed deficits in planning, and organization/adjustment of resources.
3. Goal difficulty is related to emotional level. Easy goals are associated with mild emotions, which show behavioral patterns of avoidance. Unattainable goals are associated with overwhelming emotions. Challenging but attainable goals is associated with extreme levels of emotion, which are unique to poor coping.

4. Personalized goal valuing is a necessary condition for adaptive coping. Personalized goals help to motivate students to search for additional problem-solving strategies and help to facilitate competent adaptation. Personalized goals help students to autonomously and productively overcome challenging situations. Students with low goal personalization were unable to organize resources to effectively deal with stress.
5. Goal personalization also protects students in stressful situations by helping them deal more reflexively and autonomously with negative emotions associated with adversity.

Determining and mapping out goals can be a concrete and successful way to modify behavior and maintain improvements. Often when making changes, people focus on the outcomes of the changes, i.e. losing 25 pounds, smoking less. However, attention to the process of getting to the goal is often a necessary part of making real strides toward desired outcomes. For example, a process goal for losing weight may be eating out 2 times a week rather than 5 times or walking 20 minutes a day to increase caloric burn.

Focusing on how to accomplish the goal is as important if not more important than only focusing on the outcome. Altering thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors will aid the process of change. Writing down goals and recording processes will help you stay more focused on the behaviors that will lead to your outcomes being actualized. In addition to choosing goals and how to make step by step progress, it helps to identify what is needed to attain steps, which possible roadblocks that may thwart efforts, and how to evaluate progress in meaningful terms.

Session Activities:

1. Consider the following questions and briefly discuss them as a group: Can you really work effectively with children and families if you are burned out? If you are not taking care of yourself, what kind of an example are you setting?
2. Review Burnout and Renewal Handout. Explain that the focus of the group today will be on renewal and that by the end of the session each of the participants will develop their own wellness plan.
3. Review Pathways to Productivity Handout. Consider the two paths represented and discuss how it fits with their experiences.
4. Review the 6 dimensions of wellness (listed below) with the participants and have them think about what area needs the most attention in their lives? What area needs the least attention?

Social	Physical
Occupational	Intellectual
Spiritual	Emotional

5. Have participants complete the three pie charts related to the actual, ideal, and realistic use of their time (e.g., percentages of time devoted to family, work, friends, spirituality, hobbies, reading, sports, exercise, health, sports, learning, education, eating, sleeping, rest, arts and culture). Consider how close they are to their ideal or realistic use of their time. Discuss what needs to change to bring their actual closer to their realistic use of time.
6. Review the Goal Setting Handout with the group. Encourage them to keep this information in mind when developing their wellness goals.
7. Have participants complete the Name their Goals Worksheet
8. Have participants complete the Personal Wellness Plan

***Activities from this session may need to carryover to the next session due to time constraints.

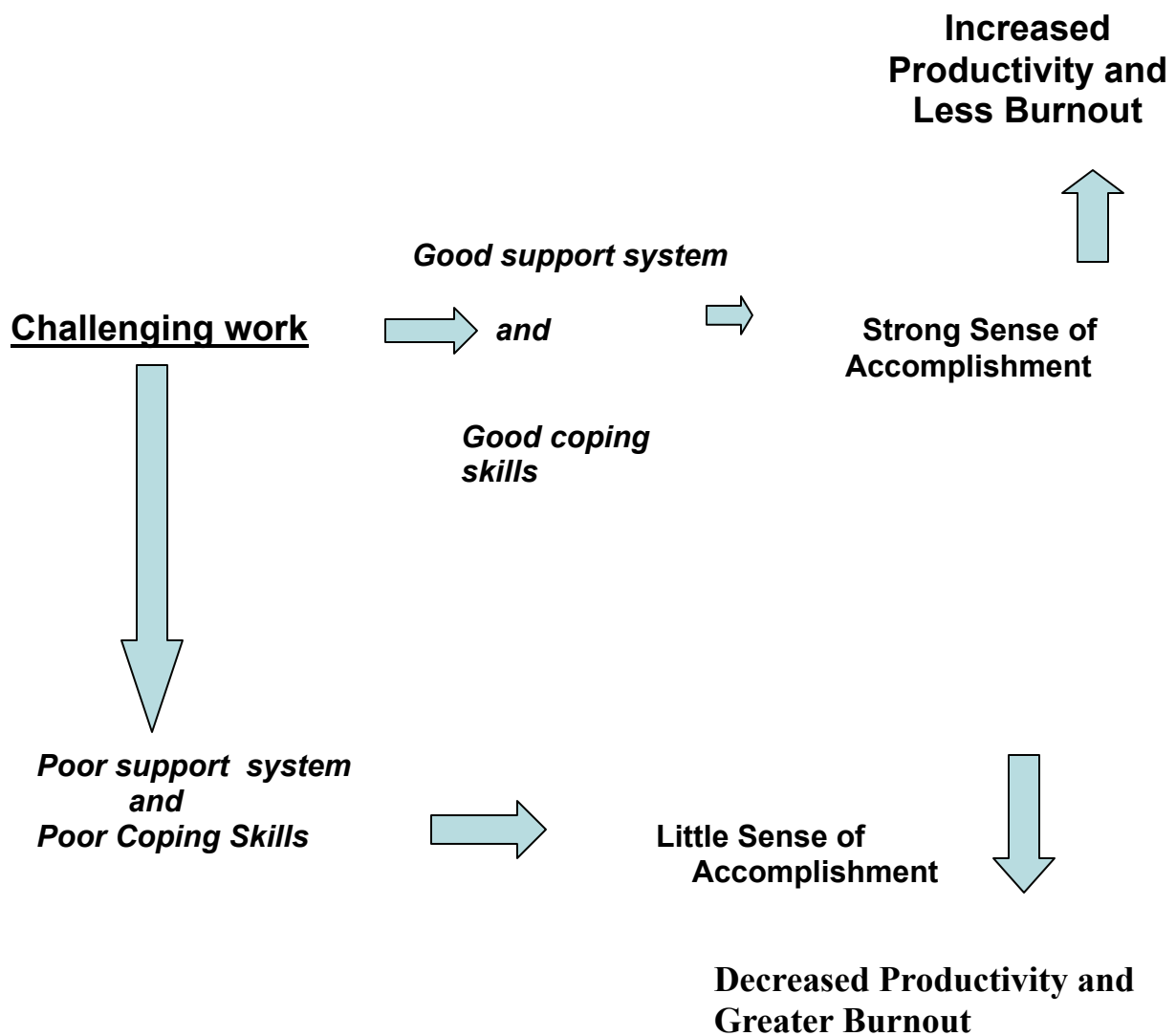
Take home question: What can you do to make sure you actually achieve your short and long term goals? Brainstorm about the challenges that may impede goal attainment and how you will surmount them.



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Pathways to Productivity



Burnout and Renewal Handout

Signs of Exhaustion and Burnout

Emotional numbing	Loss of enjoyment of sexual activity
No time or energy for yourself	Lessened interest in spending time alone
Finding that you talk about work all the time	Sense of cynicism or pessimism
Increased illness or fatigue	Increased absenteeism
Greater problems with boundaries/limits	Difficulty making decisions
Feeling that you can't discuss work with family/friends	Less time spent reflecting on your experiences

What causes job strain?

Physical environment	Perceived inadequate recognition or advancement
Poor or limited interpersonal relationships	Vicarious traumatization
Job instability	High responsibility for others

Recipe for Recovery & Growth

Friends, Family & Colleagues

Meaningful Work

Feeling Valued & Respected

Realistic Goals & Expectations

Taking care of yourself (nutrition, fitness, sleep)

High self esteem

Resources

Stress Management from Mind Tools, *How to Avoid Burnout*

<http://www.mindtools.com/burnout.html>

Stress Management from Mind Tools, *Burnout Self Test*

<http://www.mindtools.com/courses/SMMC/BurnoutSelfTest.xls>

Fried Social Work, *The Burnout Problem*

<http://www.friedsocialworker.com/socialworkburnout.htm>

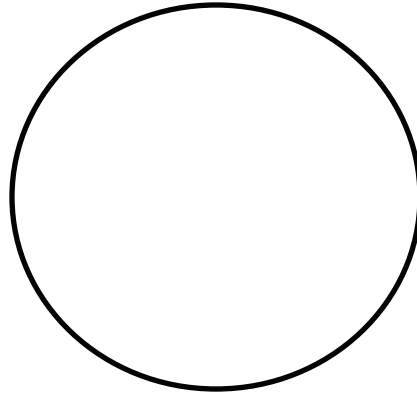
APA, *The Road to Burnout*

<http://helping.apa.org/work/stress6.html>

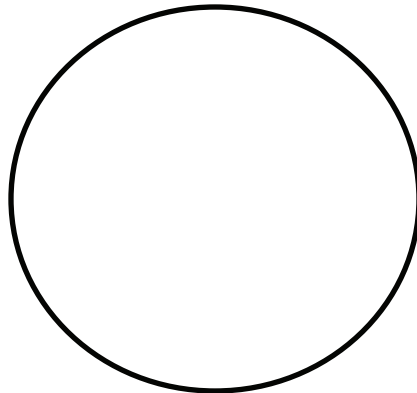
HelpGuide.org, *Stress Burnout: Signs, Symptoms, and Prevention*

How Do You Spend Your Time?: Pie Chart Activity

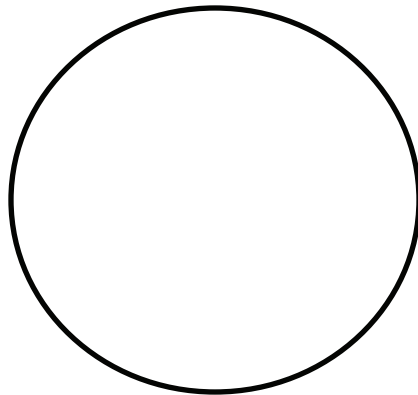
ACTUAL



IDEAL



REALISTIC



Name Your Goals

Please identify your long term and short term goals. Short term goals should be able to be achieved over the course of the wellness group (5 -7 weeks). Long term goals may be achieved over the course of the entire school year.

<p>Areas of Focus for Wellness (e.g., nutrition, physical fitness, relationships, etc)</p>
1.
2.

<p>Two Wellness Goals to Achieve by the End of the School Year</p>
1.
2.

<p>Change Tools- Things that Will Help to Achieve Goal</p>
1.
2.
3.

<p>Challenges- Potential Pitfalls to Watch Out For</p>
1.
2.
3.

I am committed to achieving the goals I have identified and will make every effort to prioritize my own wellness.

Signature

Date

PERSONAL WELLNESS “TREATMENT” PLAN

Name:

Completion Date:

My Treatment Expectations:

1.

2.

My Strengths:

1.

2.

LONG TERM GOALS (State long term wellness goals. Specify target date for achieving each goal.)

Wellness Goal	Target Date
1.	
2.	
3.	

PROBLEM LIST/SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES: State short term treatment goals and identify small steps and target dates to achieve each goal

<i>Short Term Goal</i>	<i>Steps to Achieve Goal</i>	<i>Target Date</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		

Goal Setting Handout: Helpful Hints and Strategies

- **Determine your overall long term goals:** Base this on your identified wellness needs and wants for the next year.
- **Be specific and realistic with your short term goals:** This helps you know whether or not you are making progress toward your long term goals
- **Make your beginning steps process small and build upon them:** The more success you experience, the more motivated and successful you'll continue to be.
- **Choose one or two goals:** Don't overwhelm yourself with doing too much; focus is important and easier with fewer items.
- **Remember that goals actualize at different rates:** Some things may change quickly while others seem to move very slowly.
- **Be patient with yourself and continuously acknowledge your progress:** It took you years to build the habits you have, it will take some time to unlearn and change them

Goal Setting Strategies: Plan **SMART**

- ◆ **S**alient- Easy to understand and meaningful
- ◆ **M**easurable- Define exactly what needs to be accomplished
- ◆ **A**ctive- State what action is needed
- ◆ **R**eachable- Realistic and based on skills/experience
- ◆ **T**imed- Set a clear date for completion

Write goals down and post them in a place you will see often.

Take advantage of the power of 10: Work on your goal for 10 minutes at a time.

Think positively and visualize success.

Ask for help. Support from peers working on a similar goal can be an invaluable motivator. (Bachel, 2001)

Wellness Manual Session 3 – Understanding the Change Process

Objective: To learn about the process of change

To gain insight into ways to maintain momentum and motivation for goal achievement

Background Information

Below is information for the team leader to use as background information and to use as questions to prompt discussion within the group:

Although an individual may become more aware of his/her difficulties and the necessity to make changes, the process of change and their true readiness to make those changes may be unforeseen obstacles to success.

Stages of Change Readiness

(Prochaska & DiClemente, 1986)

Pre-contemplation- No intention to make changes in a given area

Contemplation- Intention to make changes in a given area within the next 6 months

Preparation- Intention to make changes in a given area within the next month

Action- Changes in a given area have been started (but not completed) within the last 6 months.

Maintenance- Desired changes have been maintained for more than 6 months

Relapse- There exists a perception of a loss of control over making desired changes (**may occur in any stage**)

Below is information for the team leader to use as background information and to use as questions to prompt discussion within the group:

1. Which of your identified goals do you think you are actually **READY** to change?
2. Which change stage are you in regarding your wellness goal? Take the time to honestly recognize where you are with their willingness to move and make advances toward wellness goals.
3. Regarding the goals assessed on the Name Your Goals handout, how readily could you put in place what you need to achieve your goal and work around the pitfalls you anticipate?

Catalysts or pitfalls can be external or internal. One can be motivated by tangible incentives (i.e. gym memberships, restaurant coupons) or impeded by emotions and defeating attitudes. For a greater sense of accomplishment, pay attention to your challenges and plan around them; when motivated, push yourself to achieve more than is required.

4. Can you think of intrinsic and extrinsic factors that may encourage or hinder your ability to achieve your goals?

Goal #1	Intrinsic (thought, emotion)	Extrinsic (event, outcome)
Motivator(s)		
Obstacle(s)		

5. How will you motivate yourself to the next level or recommit when you've encountered a setback?

IV. Activities

- A. Finish Wellness Plans and Activities from last week if they were not completed
- B. Review Stages of Change. Ask participants to think about the long term goals they identified in the previous lesson and their ascertained level of readiness to advance each wellness goal.
- C. Discuss steps to achieve short term goals and potential pitfalls that may prevent them from achieving their goals.
- D. Problem solve about how they can surmount barriers that they confront that may impede their achievement of goals.

Take home question: How will you reward your positive steps in reaching your short and long term goals.

Next Session: How to resolve self-imposed and situational roadblocks to wellness.

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Wellness Manual-Session 4 – Time Management

Objective: To examine the barriers to effective time management.

To discuss negative consequences of poor time management.

To generate practical solutions for effective time management.

Resources: Balancing Priorities Worksheet
Time Management Handout
10 Techniques for Overcoming Procrastination

Background Information:

Time urgency, which is demanded by virtually all organizations, is one of the most obvious conditions that fosters the development of overload and eventually burnout (Girdano, Everly, & Dusek, 2001). In some cases, deadlines will motivate an employee to achieve high levels of performance, however, there comes a point when time urgency can become destructive. In addition, it can be difficult to keep the stress from work from interfering with one's home life. For those who experience a considerable amount of occupational stress, it often comes at the expense of balance in other life interests and activities (Dorn, 1992)

A simple and economical approach to reduce the impact of work-related stress is through use of time-management techniques. For example, Lang (1992) found that the use of time management coping strategies was associated with lower level symptoms of subsequent depression, anxiety, and physical problems. In addition, Macan (1994) also discovered that employing time management techniques was associated with lower levels of job-related tension, somatic tension, and higher levels of job satisfaction. Finally, in a study by Jex and Elacqua (1999), the evidence supports the use of time management strategies suggesting that such techniques have a positive impact on the mental health of employees.

In this session, we hope to make participants more aware of how they spend their time and to take the time to consider if they are happy with it and if it is conducive with promoting wellness. After assessing how their time is spent, they can begin to think about what they would like to change. It is the intention that this exercise will increase awareness of where participants are and where they would like to be in relationship to how they are spending their time.

Activities:

- A. Complete Balancing Priorities Worksheet. Discuss how the group feels about whether their own priorities are balance. Consider how they could improve the balance in their lives.

- B. Review Time Management Handout. Review symptoms of poor time management. Discuss as a group whether and how time management issues are impacting their wellness.

- C. Discuss the challenges of procrastination and brainstorm strategies to overcome procrastination. Review 10 Techniques for Overcoming Procrastination handout.

Balancing Priorities

Adapted from "The Frazzled Teacher's Wellness Plan"

- Identifying Your Priority Areas

Examine each item and rate your perception with "A" – *Usually*, "B" – *Sometimes*, or "C" – *Seldom*

	<i>Usually</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Seldom</i>
From my perception, I:			
1. Have enough time for myself:	_____	_____	_____
2. Have enough time for my family:	_____	_____	_____
3. Have enough time for responsibilities at school:	_____	_____	_____
4. Have a clear understanding of ALL my priorities:	_____	_____	_____
5. Set long-range and short-range goals:	_____	_____	_____
6. Achieve my teaching goals:	_____	_____	_____
7. Maintain a high level of energy:	_____	_____	_____
8. Maintain a high level of enthusiasm:	_____	_____	_____
9. Am motivated to do my best in teaching:	_____	_____	_____
10. Avoid postponing difficult or unpleasant tasks:	_____	_____	_____
11. Consolidate activities at home:	_____	_____	_____
12. Keep a place for everything:	_____	_____	_____
13. Manage change effectively:	_____	_____	_____
14. Can say "no" easily & tactfully, even to my principal:	_____	_____	_____
15. Use time wisely in the classroom & personally:	_____	_____	_____
16. Allow other people to use their time appropriately:	_____	_____	_____
17. Control interruptions to planned lessons:	_____	_____	_____
18. Avoid taking on too many responsibilities, especially at school:	_____	_____	_____
19. Avoid taking on too many responsibilities with family/friends:	_____	_____	_____
20. Coordinate work with others:	_____	_____	_____
21. Delegate responsibilities responsibly to family members:	_____	_____	_____
22. Communicate well with colleagues and administrators:	_____	_____	_____
23. Listen while others talk, especially students:	_____	_____	_____
24. Maintain a high level of written communication skills:	_____	_____	_____
25. Manage unexpected change effectively:	_____	_____	_____
26. Manage well in crisis situations at home and school:	_____	_____	_____
27. Prioritize my personal interests:	_____	_____	_____
28. Review personal goals periodically:	_____	_____	_____
29. Keep a personal daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly plan:	_____	_____	_____
30. Acknowledge personal & teaching weaknesses:	_____	_____	_____

- Areas to Examine Further:

○ For any item marked “*Seldom*,” identify that problem as personal, teaching, or both:

Personal Priorities:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Teaching Priorities:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

○ Analyze which of these items causes you the most frustration and organize them in priority order with the most frustrating as 1.

Personal Priorities

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Teaching Priorities

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

After evaluating your responses and rankings, you should have determined your needs and discovered relationships between these two sectors of your life. Use the space below to make note of areas of overlap and those areas most important to you, and devise a plan to tackle these needs:

Time Management Handout

Symptoms of Poor Time Management

Low productivity, energy and motivation	Difficulty setting and achieving goals
Frequently feeling frustrated	Impatience
Constantly rushing	Frequently late

Procrastination

The number one cause of problems in time management!
If you can avoid procrastination, you will be less stressed and more effective!

Steps to Avoid Procrastination

- Step 1: Do a cost-benefit analysis
- Step 2: Make a plan to combat procrastination
- Step 3: Set realistic goals
- Step 4: Think positively!
- Step 5: Reward yourself/give yourself credit
- Step 6: Team with a Partner



Strategies for Organizing your time

Buy and use an organizer	Post copies of your written values/goals
Combine your activities	Stop wasting time
Learn to say "no"	Set aside time for relaxation
Arrange your environment to support your priorities and goals	When you are doing something that is top priority, give it your full attention

10 Techniques for Overcoming Procrastination

1. **Knockout” Technique:**

The harder and more unpleasant a task is, the more quickly it would better be done: so do it *immediately*, and get it over with!

2. **Small Sequential Steps:**

When you procrastinate on a task, break it down into smaller, manageable parts, and set yourself the goal of doing a small step by a specific deadline. Once you have finished one step, go on to the next one.

3. **5-minute Plan:**

Take a task you have been procrastinating at, and work a minimum of 5 minutes of it. Once you have finished 5 minutes, then you can set yourself another 5 minutes, and so on.

4. **“Work First” Approach:**

Identify the most difficult part of the task, and do that first.

5. **“Remember Forgetting” Technique:**

Whenever you remember a task you keep forgetting to do, *do it* – or at least some of it – *immediately*.

6. **“Swiss Cheese” Method:**

Do *anything at all* that is connected to the task you want to accomplish. Gradually “eat” large chunks or holes in the task until it becomes easier to do.

7. **Self-Reward:**

Reward yourself with something pleasant when you have finished any difficult or onerous task.

8. **Self-Punishment:**

Penalize yourself by depriving yourself or forcing yourself to do something you do not like until you finish the task.

9. **Cost-Benefit Analysis:**

Make a list of all the good things that will happen if you stop procrastinating on an Important task, and review that list regularly. List all the negative results of your procrastination, and review that list each night before bed.

10. **Stimulus Control:**

Make as many changes in your environment as necessary to remove distractions, ensure privacy, become neater, and have important materials on hand.

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- MindTools, *Time Management Skills - Maximize your Effectiveness*
http://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_HTE.htm

Wellness Manual- Session 5 – Effective Communication Skills

Objective: To communicate more effectively and assert personal needs
To become more familiar with conflict resolutions strategies

Resources: Writing a Script for Change Handout
Assess your Assertiveness Handout
Nonassertive Responses to Criticism Cartoon

Background Information

In the helping profession, one main tenet of our job is interacting with others – whether it is with clients, students, fellow co-workers, supervisors, etc. In addition, most stressors involving other people are due to miscommunication. Therefore, improving communication skills is important to help minimize and resolve misunderstandings and reduce stress.

Furthermore, one essential to communication is learning assertiveness. Assertiveness promotes the best communication in a relationship because individuals are able to state their likes and dislikes without demeaning the other person. According to Alberti and Emmons (1995) in becoming more assertive, it is important to know you have certain inalienable assertive rights including the following:

- Say no without feeling guilty
- Change your mind
- Take your time in planning your action or answer
- Ask for instructions or directions
- Demand respect
- Ask for what you want
- Experience and express your feelings
- Feel good about yourself, no matter what

Assertiveness is a learned choice. Learning to stand up for your rights requires a certain situational sensitivity that some people lack: knowing when to assert yourself is almost as important as knowing how to assert yourself. Assertiveness involves a willingness to do the following:

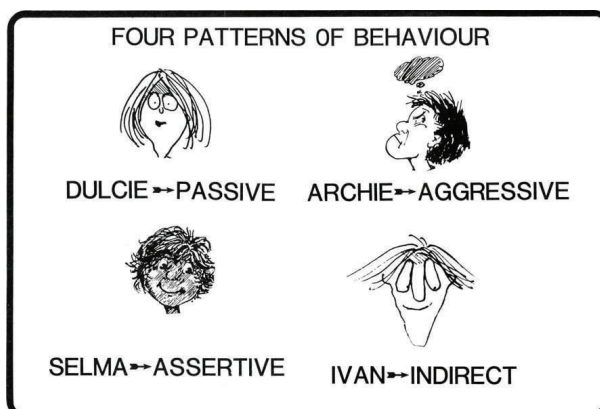


- To speak up, make requests, ask for favors and generally insist that your rights be respected as a significant, equal human being.
- To express negative emotions and to refuse requests.
- To show positive emotions and to give compliments.
- To ask why and question authority or tradition, not to rebel but to assume responsibility for asserting your share of control of the situation.
- To initiate, carry on, change and terminate conversations comfortably.
- To deal with minor irritations before your anger builds into intense resentment.

Learning to be assertive also entails shifting your locus of control. Those who do not exhibit assertiveness may feel that they do not have a right to their feelings. These people feel like they have no control (*passive*). On the other hand, some individuals feel they have a right to their opinions irrespective other points of view. These people feel like they (should) have total control (*aggressive*). Assertiveness seeks a balance between passivity and aggression – a locus of control that posits value in self-worth as well as the worth of others.

3 basic interpersonal styles

1. **Aggressive:** feelings expressed at the expense of others
2. **Passive:** feelings withheld or expressed indirectly.
3. **Assertive:** feelings expressed without violating others.



Simple Assertiveness Techniques

1. you understand and summarize the facts of the situation
2. you indicate your feelings towards the situation
3. you state your requirements, reasons and benefits to the other party.

Assertion normally comprises this three line assertive message. This technique enables you to confront the other person with your concern without being personally aggressive, but it is not easy and demands skilful conversation control. For example, you might say:

1. ***"When you....." (state facts)***
2. ***"I feel uncomfortable" (state feelings)***
"I would like.....(state requirements).....in this way we will be able to work together more productively because....." (benefits to the other party)

Activities

- A. Review the three interpersonal styles (aggressive, passive, assertive)
- B. Reviews problems associated with passivity and aggression.
 1. Passivity - loss of self-esteem, internal tension, stress, anger, depression.
 2. Aggression – guilt, shame, displaced anger, resentment, low self-esteem.
- C. Discuss what is meant by assertiveness. Review descriptions of assertiveness in background section and complete Assess Your Assertiveness Handout
- D. Discuss benefits of assertiveness at home, at work, and in social situations.
- E. Review techniques of assertion below and review Writing a Script for Change Handout. Remind participants what nonassertiveness looks like by reviewing cartoon handout related to nonassertive responses to criticism.
 - Body language –
 - Stand straight, face people.
 - Maintain eye contact.
 - Do not point or shake head.
 - Do not put hands on hips.
 - Vocal cues –
 - Maintain steady volume level.
 - Do not speak too quickly or slowly.
 - Learning to say “No —
 - Be honest, but not rude.
 - Express feelings that you find difficult.
 - Do not apologize or give elaborate explanations.
 - Remember to be truthful.

Assess your Assertiveness

The following questions and examples can help you evaluate your level of assertiveness and help to identify sources that lead to non-assertive responses.

1. Describe situations that result in non-assertive behavior in your life

For example:

- a. Speaking up when something annoys me
- b. Asking for help
- c. Talking when all eyes are on you

2. Who are the people with whom you are non-assertive?

For example:

- a. Spouse or mate
- b. Boss
- c. Children
- d. Co-workers
- e. Parents

3. What would you like to accomplish that you have been unsuccessful with using non-assertive styles?

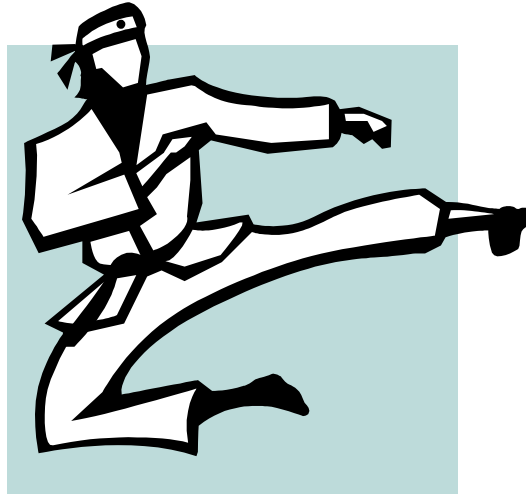
For example:

- a. Approval for things I have done well
- b. Confidence in speaking up
- c. To get a new job, ask for raises, etc.

Writing a Script for Change

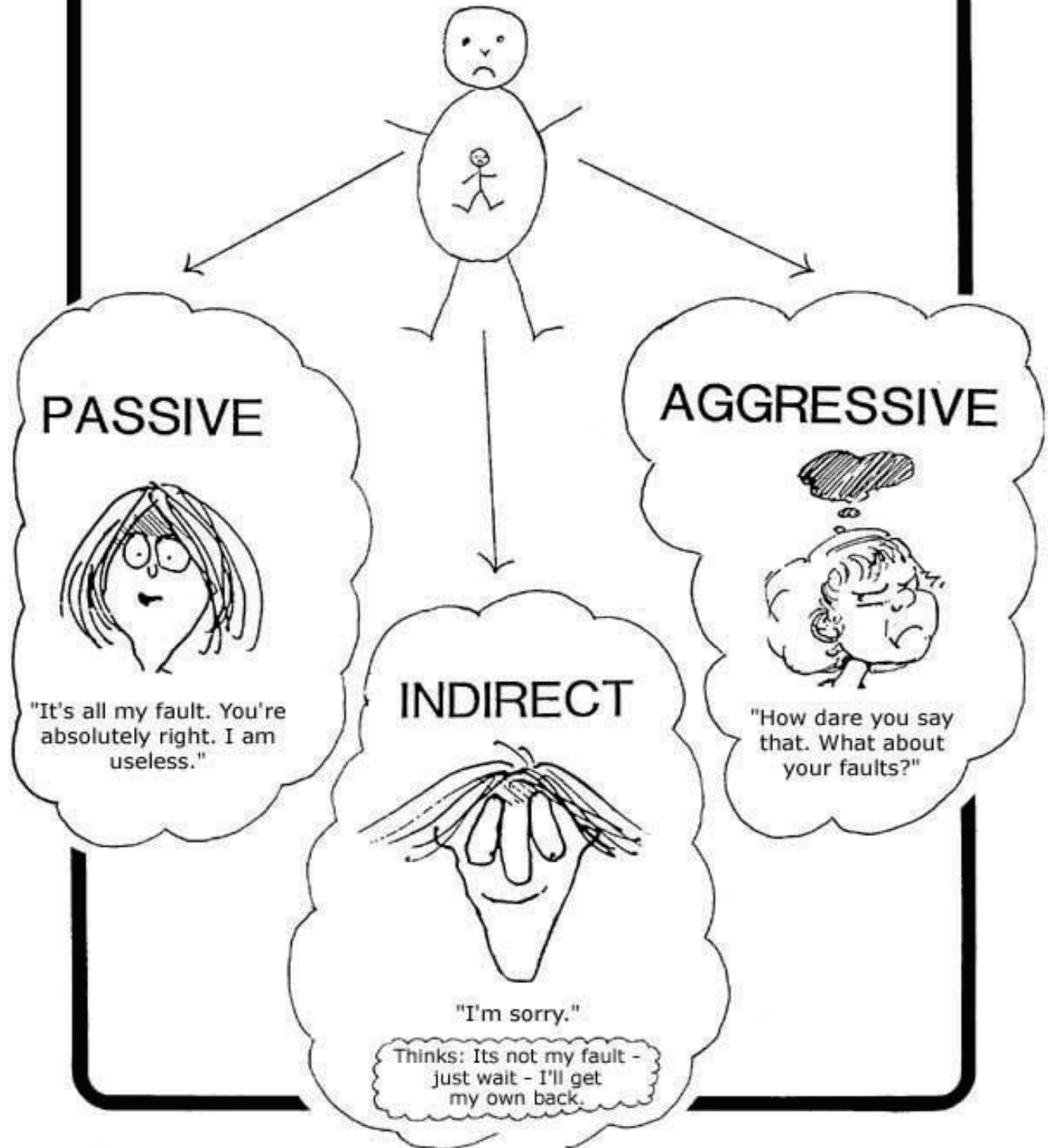
Following these six steps can help you in your quest for enhancing communication skills and becoming more assertive. This can serve as a working plan for addressing problems assertively.

1. Look at your rights. What do you want, what do you need, and what are your feelings about the situation?
2. Arrange a time and place to discuss your problem that is convenient for you and for the other person.
3. Define the problem situation. Be as specific as possible.
4. Describe your feelings to help the other person understand how important the issue is to you.
5. Express your request in one or two easy-to-understand sentences.
6. Reinforce the other person to give you what you want.



NON-ASSERTIVE RESPONSES TO CRITICISM

Most of us receive criticism in one of the following ways because we feel **we** are being rejected rather than our actions. This is usually because in the past, we have been criticized in an unhelpful way - in a way that has made us feel unwanted, rejected or blamed.



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Wellness Manual – Session 6 – Coping and Cognitive Restructuring

Objectives:

Participants will increase their knowledge of and skills related to effective coping

Participants will increase their proficiency in the use of cognitive restructuring as a stress management technique.

Resources: Coping and Relaxation Handout
Physical Fitness and Exercise Handout
Cognitive Restructuring Worksheet

Background Information: Stress is a normal part of everyday life. While some levels of stress may be positive and encourage action, too much stress can be overwhelming and can lead to burnout (Davis, Robbins Eshelman, & McKay, 2000). To contend with stress, coping skills are needed. Coping is defined as the “cognitive behavioral efforts made to master, tolerate, or reduce external and internal demands and conflicts among them” (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980). There are various coping strategies that individuals can use to help to reduce the stress they are experiencing. A reduction of stress as a result of these strategies will not occur overnight and will take much persistence and effort (National Mental Health Association, 2005). Coping strategies encompass a wide array of techniques including: visualization, exercise, deep breathing, meditation, problem solving, humor, positive self-talk, guided imagery. Within this section a general discussion about coping will be held and will then be followed in more detail with an example of one stress management technique, cognitive restructuring.

Cognitive restructuring is a cognitive-behavioral therapy approach that attempts to modify thoughts that lead to maladaptive functioning. This technique focuses on stopping and/or controlling those automatic thoughts that are central to the cognitive restructuring process (Beck, 1999) and is classified as having components of both emotion-focused and problem-focused interventions (Auerback & Gramling, 1998). Therapists such as Albert Ellis (1999) and Aaron Beck (1999) argue that the environment is not what causes most people stress, rather it is their interpretations that actually cause the stress response to be triggered. According to Beck, cognitive restructuring consists of 4 major steps: Awareness, examination of irrational beliefs, implementation of new thoughts and evaluation.

Awareness: 1. Identify stressor event and/or situation 2. Identify why this situation and/or event creates a stress reaction 3. Identify any feelings and/or emotional reactions associated with each stressor.

Examining irrational beliefs: Ask yourself the following questions – Is there any reason to think that this belief is true? Is there evidence that this belief might not be true? If I rejected this belief, what is the worst that could happen to me? If I reject this belief, what good things might happen as a result?

Implementation of new thoughts: Substitute old irrational beliefs with new rational beliefs. Replacing negative thought with positive thoughts is a good start...even if you don't completely believe them at first. Eventually, you will begin to believe your rational thoughts, especially after experience a positive change in your situation because of the changes in your perceptions of the situation.

Evaluation: Evaluate the effectiveness of changing your perception of the situation. If you continue to have negative thoughts, go back to step 2 and create a new viewpoint.

To sum up, negative reactions to a stressor event are often not a result of the event itself, but of the view people take on it. Often people do not realize this because they are not aware of their own thinking. People are so good at thinking, and do it so often, that it can be automatic. It is important to be cognizant of your own thinking in order to identify thoughts that are influencing your emotions and ultimately your responses toward the individuals you work with. Not only will an awareness and ability to influence your own thoughts reduce your own stress level, it should also help foster a more effective work environment for those on your caseload.

Examples of Cognitive Distortions:

All-or-nothing thinking: Seeing things in black-or-white categories. If a situation falls short of perfect, it is seen as a total failure.

Overgeneralization: Drawing a conclusion based on one or more isolated events and applying this concept to related and unrelated situations.

Mental Filter: A single negative detail may become the exclusive focus, rather than all the positives that they have in their lives.

Discounting the positive: Rejecting positive experiences by insisting that they "don't count." When doing a good job, you may insist that it wasn't good enough.

Jumping to conclusions: Interpreting things negatively when there are no facts to support your conclusions.

Magnification and minimization: Exaggerating the importance of your problems and shortcomings and minimizing the importance of your desirable qualities.

Emotional Reasoning: Assuming that your negative emotions reflect the way things really are.

"Should" statements: Should statements reflect the way you expect or hoped them to be. These can apply to self or others.

Labeling: An extreme form of all-or-nothing thinking. One mistake, and you label yourself "loser."

Personalization and blame: Relating events to yourself when there is no basis for making such a connection.

Type of Cognitive Distortion	Definition 44	Example
All-or-nothing thinking	Seeing things in black-or-white categories. If a situation falls short of perfect, it is seen as a total failure.	If a teacher is having problems in one area, it is because he or she is a "lousy teacher."
Overgeneralization	Drawing a conclusion based on one or more isolated events and applying this concept to related and unrelated situations	Teachers may feel that they will <i>always</i> have problems managing behavior in the classroom and that the situation will never improve.
Mental filter	A single negative detail may become the exclusive focus, rather than all the positives in one's life.	Teachers may focus on one negative comment from others, without recognizing the positive feedback given by others.
Discounting the positive	Rejecting positive experiences by insisting that they "don't count." When doing a good job, one may insist that it wasn't good enough.	Teachers may feel that they never measure up. This can lead to teachers feeling inadequate and dissatisfied.
Jumping to conclusions	Interpreting things negatively when there are no facts to support your conclusions.	Assuming that others are judging you (mind reading), or making predictions about what you think may happen (fortune telling).
Magnification (Catastrophizing) and Minimization	Exaggerating the importance of your problems and shortcomings and minimizing the importance of your desirable qualities.	Focusing on what you are having difficulty with, while ignoring all of the things you do well.
Emotional Reasoning	Assuming that your negative emotions reflect the way things really are	"I feel _____, therefore it must be true."
"Should" statements	Should statements reflect the way you expect or hoped them to be. These can apply to self or others.	Teachers may have unrealistic expectations of themselves (what good teachers should do) or others (students should remain quiet throughout the school day).
Labeling	An extreme form of all-or-nothing thinking. One mistake, and you label yourself "loser."	Teachers may call themselves "lousy," "stupid," or "bad." They may also apply negative labels to their students.
Personalization and blame	Relating events to yourself when there is no basis for making such a connection.	Teachers may blame themselves (or their students) for things they cannot control.

Activities:

1. Review the Coping and Relaxation Handout
2. Have participants write down what strategies they use for coping and then to consider the following: 1) Does their strategy help to reduce stress? 2) Is it healthy, 3) Can the strategy be improved or other strategies added?
3. Discuss what strategies they are using related to their physical health. Review Exercise and Physical Fitness Handout.
4. Have participants discuss what coping strategy is most effective for them and to identify one new coping strategy that they will try to use in dealing with their stress during the school year.
5. Review the concept of cognitive restructuring. Discuss examples of cognitive distortions.
6. Teach participants the basics of Cognitive Restructuring using stressors from their own lives. Have participants complete the Cognitive Restructuring Handout)

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Coping and Relaxation Handout

Coping is... A process of managing the discrepancy between the demands of the situation and the available resources. Coping allows you to alter the problem, change the behavior, change the cognition, and regulate the emotional response.

What works for you?

Support systems	Using health care professionals
Asking for help when you need it	Problem solving
Humor	Exercise
Self reward	Internal locus of control
Positive self talk	Relaxation techniques
Guided imagery	Breathing exercises
Time management	Realistic expectations

Relaxation can help you cope! Try to incorporate a few of these activities into your work day.

- Stretching
- Deep breathing
- Take a walk
- Imagery
- Call a colleague
- Positive self talk and affirmations
- Take a *healthy snack and water break*

What else can help you cope?

Learn to say "no" and ask for help when you need it.

- Check your diet
- Exercise/sports
- Sleep!
- Have realistic expectations
- Take time for yourself every day
- Focus on breathing when stressed
- Vacation!

EXERCISE AND PHYSICAL FITNESS HANDOUT

Benefits of Exercise

- *Reduces risk of diabetes*
- *Prevents weight gain*
- *Lowers body fat*
- *Reduces risk of heart disease*
- *Relieves stress*
- *Strengthens muscles, slows age-related muscle loss*
- *Reduces back pain and strain*
- *Helps prevent osteoporosis*
- *Weight-bearing exercise strengthens bones*
- *Improves self image*
- *Increases energy*
- *Improves sleep*
- *Boosts immune system*
- *Live longer!*

If you don't exercise now...

- *Set goals*
- *Be realistic, and start slowly*
- *Talk to your doctor first*
- *Make fitness a priority*
- *Take small steps toward fitness every day*
- *Walk up stairs instead of taking the elevator*
- *Do more housework or yard work*
- *Play outside with your own children, your clients, or kids in your neighborhood*

If you already exercise...

- *Check your goals*
 - *Re-evaluate your regimen*
 - *Keep up your interest & motivation*
- .

Cognitive Restructuring

Many of us do not realize that our own *perceptions* of an event may very well be what is causing us stress, rather than the event itself. It is important for us to make a conscious effort NOT to blame the event, but rather reframe our own thoughts and perceptions about the event that are causing us stress.

Environmental Stimulus ® Cognitive Meaning (INTERPRETATION) ® Emotions & Stress (Beck, 1999)

Rationale: Misinformation in one's beliefs or thoughts can result in an imbalance between perceived demands and available coping resources.

Goal: Substitute negative, self-defeating thoughts with positive, affirming thoughts that change perceptions of stressors from threatening to non-threatening.

Can you think of some examples of some of these distortions from your own life (or that you have experience in the classroom)?

List the distortions you commonly experience:

Steps to Cognitive Restructuring:

1. Awareness: 1. Identify stressors 2. Identify why these situations and events are stressful 3. Identify any feelings and/or emotional reactions associated with each stressor

Examine irrational beliefs: Ask the following questions~ Is there any reason to think that this belief is true? Is there evidence that this belief might *not* be true? If I rejected this belief, what is the worst that could happen to me? If I reject this belief, what good things might happen as a result?

Irrational Belief	Could this be true?	Could it NOT be true?	By rejecting this belief, what is the worst that could happen?	By rejecting this belief, what good things could happen

Implementation of new thoughts: Substitute old irrational beliefs with new rational beliefs. Replacing negative thought with positive thoughts is a good start...even if you don't completely believe them at first. Eventually, you will begin to believe your rational thoughts, especially after experience a positive change in your situation because of the changes in you perceptions of the situation.

Negative Thought:

Positive Thought:

Negative Thought:

Positive Thought:

Negative Thought:

Positive Thought:

Negative Thought:

Positive Thought:

Evaluation: Evaluate the effectiveness of changing your perception of the situation. If you continue to have negative thoughts, go back to step 2 and create a new viewpoint.

Brainstorm a list of cognitive distortions that may occur in your work at the school & new ways of thinking about these situations:

Cognitive Distortions in Your Work at Your School	News Ways of Thinking

Wellness Manual- Session 7 – Relaxation Techniques

Objective: To become more familiar with relaxation strategies such as deep breathing and massage

To gain more skills in personal stress management, especially some that can be incorporated into the workday

Resources – Exercises 1-4

Extreme stress causes an over activation of physiological systems, leading to the negative consequences of stress on one's health. Therefore, relaxation training helps individuals learn to recognize the physiological processes associated with the stress response. Recognizing physical signs of stress allow him/her to gain control over physiological systems, providing the opportunity to prevent the development of serious health consequences.

Relaxation techniques are widely used to moderate anxiety and to deal with stress-related somatic problems (Auerbach & Gramling, 1998). As breathing control is essential for control of the mind (Iyengar, 1995) breathing is used in nearly all relaxation techniques (Girdano, Everly & Dusek, 2001). In fact, scientists have discovered the location of the neuropeptides associated with the relaxation response where breathing is controlled. Practicing breathing techniques not only facilitates relaxation, but can also alleviate symptoms of chronic stress. Stress and anxiety have a direct affect on breathing which is the natural "fight or flight" response that increases respiration.

What is interesting is that the actual exchange of air is only one aspect of breathing that is important to the relaxation process (Girdano, Everly & Dusek, 2001). Breathing is an automatic function that reflects our general state of stress arousal and typically is described in one of two ways: Chest breathing or diaphragmatic (or abdominal) breathing. You can determine which way you typically breathe by placing one hand on your chest and the other on your abdomen. If the hand on your chest moves out farther when you breathe, then you are breathing from your chest and vice versa. Breathing from the chest results in less oxygen transfer to the blood and subsequent poor delivery of nutrients to the tissues. By contrast, diaphragmatic breathing forces air into the lungs and pulls blood into the chest improving the venous return to the heart. Overall, breathing is an excellent tool to stimulate the relaxation response that results in less tension and an overall sense of well being.

Instructions are included for each of the following Wellness Exercises. These exercises will be reviewed within today's session. Participants can select the relaxation techniques they are most interested in practicing since there likely will not be enough time to practice them all today.

1. Passive Relaxation Exercise
2. Autogenic Relaxation
3. Massage
4. Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Exercise 1 — Passive Relaxation

When attempting to relax, many people find it difficult to quiet their mind and ignore distractions long enough to achieve relaxation. Think of your mind as a garden full of beautiful flowers and plants that needs to be tended. However, amidst all the beautiful blooms are many distracting, discouraging weeds. You can't just pretend that the weeds aren't there -- you have to do something about them. With a real garden you could always just get rid of it or hire someone to look after it. With your mind you don't have that luxury. Leave it alone and it will just get worse. The best thing to do is get started as soon as possible on clearing those mind-weeds.

The first stage in creating a beautiful garden is to realize how many weeds there are to be cleared up. If you feel a bit daunted by the volume of trivia that your mind creates, that is okay. Remember that you need to know it's there before you can do anything about it. Also bear in mind that dealing with it will gradually bring you peace of mind. If you become frustrated with your distractions, remember that you can choose to exercise patience and gentleness with yourself or fuel your frustration with the process. Getting mad or getting despondent will only make things worse.

Imagine yourself pulling each distracting weed from the flower bed, disallowing it the chance to take away from the peaceful beauty you are trying to attain. Concentrate on watering and nurturing the flowers and seeing the weeds fade away slowly and effortlessly. With time, your mind will no longer be a wild, unruly field but a well-cared for grove of calm. (Wildmind Buddhist Meditation, 2005)

Exercise 2 - Autogenic Relaxation

For the next method, you will read or think through these statements. After reading each one, pause long enough to silently, mentally repeat the phrase to yourself while just allowing yourself to imagine and feel what that phrase suggests to you. Just continue sitting back with your eyes closed and let your mind and body relax deeply and comfortably.

I feel quite quiet.

My feet feel heavy, heavy and relaxed.

My calves, my knees, thighs and hips feel heavy, relaxed and comfortable.

My solar plexis and the whole central portion of my body feel relaxed and quiet.

My neck, my jaws, and my forehead feel relaxed; they feel comfortable and smooth.

My shoulders, arms, and hands feel heavy, relaxed and comfortable. My arms and hands are heavy and warm.

My hands are warm, relaxed and warm.

I feel quite quiet. My mind is quiet.

I withdraw my thoughts from the surroundings and I feel serene and still. My mind is calm and quiet and, I feel an inward quietness. (Kent State University)

Exercise 3 — Massage

Massage Techniques for Individuals

Physical Benefits of Therapeutic Massage

Helps relieve stress and aids relaxation

Helps relieve muscle tension and stiffness

Alleviates discomfort during pregnancy

Fosters faster healing of strained muscles and sprained ligaments; reduces pain and swelling; reduces formation of excessive scar tissue
 Reduces muscle spasms
 Provides greater joint flexibility and range of motion
 Promotes deeper and easier breathing
 Improves circulation of blood and movement of lymph fluids
 Reduces blood pressure
 Helps relieve tension-related headaches and effects of eye-strain
 Enhances the health and nourishment of skin
 Improves posture
 Strengthens the immune system

(Source: American Massage Therapy Association– AMTA)

Mental Benefits of Massage Therapy

Fosters peace of mind

Promotes a relaxed state of mental alertness
 Helps relieve mental stress
 Improves ability to monitor stress signals and respond appropriately
 Enhances capacity for calm thinking and creativity

Emotional Benefits

Satisfies needs for caring nurturing touch
 Fosters a feeling of well-being
 Reduces levels of anxiety
 Creates body awareness
 Increases awareness of mind-body connection

(AMTA)

Exercises 3A-F – Massage

When people think of massage as a relaxation strategy, they often think of going to a masseuse or someone giving them a shoulder or back rub. Actually, there are simple self-massage techniques that one can use anywhere to aid with stress and tension. Massage has tremendous health benefits. The following are examples:

Promotes deeper and easier breathing
 Improves circulation and reduces blood pressure
 Strengthens the immune system
 Enhances capacity for calm thinking and creativity
 Satisfies needs for caring nurturing touch
 Reduces levels of anxiety
 Increases awareness of mind-body connection

(AMTA)

Self massage techniques are versatile in that they can be done anywhere and anytime. You can massage your feet while watching TV, massage your face while at your desk, or massage your hands while talking on the phone. Sit in a chair, on the floor, or lie down with your knees bent and your feet on the floor to use these techniques.

Exercise 3A- FACE MASSAGE

Just touch your face. There's no need to knead it. With a very light touch, cup your cheeks and temples with your hands using no more pressure than the weight of a nickel. Hold your hands there for a minute. The warmth of the hands relaxes the muscles and connective tissue, bringing on an overall sense of relief.

Exercise 3B- JAW MASSAGE

Pull the sides of your ears gently straight outward, then straight up, then straight down. Or, with your index finger, press the tender spot next to your earlobe where it attaches to your head. Press and release. Now do it on the other ear. Repeat, alternating (ears, 10 to 15 times).

Exercise 3C- TORSO MASSAGE

Get a quick boost by rubbing the area above your kidneys. That's at waist level where the tissue is still soft. Rub briskly with your fists in a circular motion. This energizes the whole body.

Exercises 3A-F – Massage con't

Exercise 3D- HEAD MASSAGE

Most people suffer from occasional stiff necks, aching shoulders and headaches, so the shoulders are the perfect place to begin self-massage.

Pressure points in your skull can relax your whole body. There are two very significant acupressure points at the base of the skull on what's called the occipital ridge. If you apply consistent pressure there, you can achieve total relaxation.

How do you find these points and apply pressure on those spots? There is a simple solution. Put two tennis balls in a sock and tie the end. Lie on your back on the floor and place the sock behind the upper neck, so that the two balls each touch the skull ridge that's right above the hollow spot. Stay like that for 20 minutes. If you like, you can listen to soothing music. The pressure on those acupuncture points send messages down the spinal column to relax all the muscles and it is very effective. (Self Massage -<http://www.holistic-online.com/massage/>)

Exercise 3E- FOOT MASSAGE

It's easy to massage your own feet. If you are sitting up, rest one foot on the opposite leg. Bad posture, back ache and fatigue can all stem from unnoticed foot problem. By massaging your feet daily you can refresh your whole body.

1. Put one hand on top of the foot and the other under the sole, then stroke smoothly from your toes to your ankles. Glide your hands back to your toes and repeat.
2. Support your foot with one hand and work on each toe individually. Squeeze it firmly, and gently stretch each toe with a gentle pull.
3. With one thumb on top of the other, do a line of firm pressures down the center of the sole and lines on either side. Then, with one thumb, do circular pressures on the arch and the ball of the foot.
4. Support your foot with one hand and make the other into a loose fist. Do knuckling movements all over the sole by rippling your fingers around in small circular movements.
5. Then, still holding the foot with one hand, hack the sole with your other hand, Flick your hand away the moment you touch the foot, so that the effect is light and springy.

Exercises 3A-F – Massage con't

6. Stroke around the ankle with your fingertips, as you stroke up toward the leg and gently as you glide back. Finish by stroking the foot as you did at the beginning.

Exercise 3F- SHOULDER MASSAGE

Most people suffer from occasional stiff necks, aching shoulders and headaches, so the shoulders are the perfect place to begin self-massage.

1. Stroke your right shoulder with your left hand. Mold your hand to the curves of your body. Starting at the base of your skull, stroke down the side of your neck, over your shoulder and down your arm to the elbow. Glide back to your neck and repeat at least three times. Then do the other side.

2. Make circular pressures with your fingertips on either side of the spine. Work up the neck and around the base of the skull. Then knead each shoulder; squeeze and release the flesh on your shoulders and at the top of your arms.
3. Loosely clench your left hand into a fist and gently pound your right shoulder. Keep your wrist flexible. This springy movement improves the circulation and can be very invigorating if you are tired. Repeat on the other side.
4. Finish by stroking softly and smoothly both hands. Start with your hands on the side of your face and glide them gently down under your chin. Slide your hands past each other at the front of the neck, so that each hand is on the opposite shoulder. Stroke gently over your shoulders, down your arms and off at the fingertips. Repeat as often as you like. This hypnotic stroke is so and can relieve headaches and tension. (Otis, 2002)

Exercise 4 – Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Mental stress and strain are often tied to physical symptoms such as shoulder tightness, throbbing temples, or lower back pain. Progressive muscle relaxation demonstrates a method of managing physical stress manifestations while teaching you and your body the difference between muscle tension and muscle tranquility. Over time, awareness of muscle stiffness and ability to relax for better health become easier.

Each body part is to be tensed or squeezed as much as possible, held for 5 seconds, and released. All exercises can be sitting in an upright position or lying on the floor. If on the floor, place a towel or pillow under lower back. Continue tightening and releasing body sections until the entire body has been relaxed.

1. Hands -Making fists and release
- 2.Arms- Bending arms and tighten; release
3. Face -Closing the eyes, furrowing eyebrows, clenching the teeth,
4. Shoulders and neck -Pulling up the shoulders, pressing back the head horizontally
5. Chest- Breathing in deeply extending abdomen and holding one's breath
6. Back- Flex out and cave in
7. Belly- Tightening abdominal muscles, pull in pelvic floor muscles (sphincters)
8. Legs-Squeezing thighs and pointing toes
9. Feet- Curl toes down and flex foot up

To reactivate the circulation at the end of the exercise, breathe in deeply and wiggle fingers and toes. Breathe in deeply again and stretch. Breathe in deeply a third time and slowly sit up or stand (and open their eyes if they were closed).

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Wellness Manual- Session 8 – Skill Review and Practice

Objectives: To help participants strengthen the skills they have learned so far and consider how to better incorporate wellness strategies into their work and personal lives

Activities:

1. Ask members about their current stress levels? Consider if the wellness focus is having any impact on how they are dealing with the stress. Discuss how they feel about focusing on their own wellness.
2. Ask a member to give an example of a stressful situation he or she has encountered in the school in the past week. Discuss as a group strategies for handling the situation and where personal wellness could fit in.
3. Ask participants which skills or information have they been using to cope with stress since the start of the group? Discuss what strategies they have used to incorporate the skills into their daily routine.
4. Consider challenges and barriers to wellness and how they can be overcome.



Wellness Manual- Session 9 – Wellness Maintenance: Celebration and Recognition

Objective: To review progress made and to consider strategies for maintaining and enhancing achievements.

To consider how to improve the quality of future wellness groups

Background Information:

The final step we will discuss in this manual is the importance of feedback as a means of maintaining your wellness plan. Travers and Cooper (1998) define feedback as, “looking for signals that stress is being managed more effectively, or seeing if some strategies are not working. This is about making sure that dealing with stress is part of our everyday lives, and is recognized as a skill just like any other. Teachers [and other school personnel] need to monitor what does and does not work for them” (page 384). Therefore, we want participants to recognize the importance of providing regular feedback and progress monitoring to ensure continued wellness.

Activities:

1. Ask each person to share something positive related to their participation in the wellness group. What did they accomplish and/or what did they learn about themselves?
2. Have members review and consider their progress on their wellness goals. Have members discuss what worked and did not work for them. Encourage members to discuss the challenges and strategies they used to overcome the challenges.
3. Have each member review their wellness goals and consider if they should be changed or if they should stay the same? Have them think about their goals for the rest of the school year and ask them to consider what their five and ten year goals would be. Have them decide how often they will revisit their wellness plans to monitor progress.
4. Discuss the structure and the content of the groups—What did they like most and least? How can the group be improved for future school staff? What other topics or skills should be included?



5. Discuss how to maintain a focus on wellness and how to continue to make progress on wellness goals. Ask members what needs to be in place to make sure that their wellness goals are not just pushed aside. For example, does the group need to come together once every other month to gather updates?
6. Consider as a group helpful strategies that can be used to maintain wellness in the long-term. End by asking each participant to identify one positive thing that they will do to promote wellness in their lives