

### AUDIENCE

College Students

### TOPIC

Stress

### TIME NEEDED

60 minutes

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the completion of the program,

1. At the completion of this lesson, at least 70% of students will be able to list their university's stress management resources on the post-test.
2. At the completion of this lesson, at least 80% of students will be able to list at least one physical effect of stress on the post-test.

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- Wifi
- Computer
- Powerpoint presentation (1)
- Appendix A: College Life Scenarios worksheet (make sure each student has access)
- Appendix B: Post-Test Assessment
- Youtube videos (2)

### PREPARATION

Before the lesson, each student should ensure their wifi connection is stable and that they have access to the Zoom link. Tabs with the Powerpoint and prepared video(s) should be loaded on the

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computer. The polling questions should be set up in Zoom prior to the start of the presentation. The access code and questions for Poll Everywhere should be set up prior to the presentation and the worksheet file should be shared with all members of the session.

## PROCEDURE

### Introduction (10 mins)

#### PowerPoint Slides 1, 2, 3, & 4

1. Introduce yourself to the audience and state the topic: stress among college freshmen.
2. State the objectives for the lesson
  - a. *“By the end of this session, you will be able to identify your university’s stress management resources in the comment section.”*
  - b. *“At the completion of this session, you will also be able to list at least three stress management coping strategies.”*
3. Define stress.
  - a. *Stress is a feeling of mental and/or physical tension due to certain events or thoughts.*
4. Icebreaker questions:
  - a. Ask students to use the “raise hand” option as “yes” in Zoom to answer the following question: “I have experienced stress within the last week”.
  - b. Ask students to type their answer to the following question in Zoom’s comment section: *“On a scale of 0 to 10, what level of stress have you experienced in the past week? (0 being none to 10 being severe)?*
    - i. Acknowledge the students answers
5. Explain that stress is a natural occurrence that every person experiences at varying degrees. It is not a feeling that should be viewed wholly negative because a bit of stress or pressure motivates people to take action. However, overwhelming stress is what we want to mitigate and prevent because it can have a negative impact on your mental/physical health, relationships, and student performance.
6. Explain the purpose of this lesson:

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- a. The purpose of this lesson is to help you identify the symptoms of stress, how stress impacts you, and strategies that you can use to prevent, mitigate, and cope with stress.

## PowerPoint Slides 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9 (10 minutes)

1. Discuss the risk factors of stress
  - a. Experiencing or witnessing traumatic events
  - b. Social network: expectations from family, friends, lovers, and peers, lack of support, they rely heavily on you, etc.
  - c. Lack of consumption of nutritious foods
  - d. Lack of sleep - recommended 7-9 hours
  - e. Lack of exercise
  - f. Excessive use of alcohol and/or drugs
  - g. Finances: tuition, rent, groceries, pets, etc.
  - h. Workload: work study/ job, studies, extracurricular activities, volunteering, chores, etc.
2. Instruct students to go to PollEv.com on their computers/ cellular devices and show the slide with the access code. Launch poll questions:
  - i. Give students 1-2 minutes to answer the following question: “What are the usual causes of stress in your life?”
  - ii. Show and go over some of the results with the students.
3. Statistics of stress
  - a. 87% of students have experienced stress during their college years.
  - b. 45% of college students claim to go through “more than average stress”
  - c. 63% of American college students report health-related issues as the main stressor.
  - d. Only 11% of college students in the US sleep well.
  - e. 53% of the students neglected their social life because of stress.
4. Play this Youtube video: Stress in College Students by RU-tv Network (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rk2sniwW E>)
  - a. This video discusses stressors and gives a few tips about how to cope with stress

- b. Ask students answer the following questions:
  - i. What was something new you learned from this video?
  - ii. What are some of the different types of stress identified in the video?

## ***PowerPoint Slides 10 & 11***

### **Activity 1: How Stress Affects You (20 min)**

1. Discuss the effects of stress
  - a. Physical: In response to stress, a person's muscles tense up because stress engages the body's *fight or flight* system. Constant stress can cause chronic muscle tension which can lead to other physical problems such as headaches, migraines, nausea, laboured breathing, and pain in the shoulders and back. Constant stress can also increase an individual's risk of developing hypertension, heart attack, and stroke because stress contributes to higher rates of heart contractions, higher blood pressure, and high levels of stress hormones: adrenaline, noradrenaline, and cortisol. Stress can decrease a person's ability to sleep peacefully, libido, sperm count in males, and cause irregular and painful menstrual cycle among females.
  - b. Mental: Stress can cause a person to lack the ability to concentrate and increase forgetfulness and worrying . Prolonged stress leads to a higher risk of developing depression, and anxiety.
  - c. Emotional: stress can cause general unhappiness, agitation, moodiness, irritability, anger, loneliness, and feelings of being overwhelmed
2. Send students to breakout rooms in groups of 4 for 5-7 minutes with the scenario document and the following instructions :
  - a. Students will be given a scenario based on their breakout room number
    - i. Tell students their breakout room number is the same number scenario they will use from Appendix A (College Life Scenarios Worksheet).
  - b. Students will identify the stressor and create three solutions to their scenario's issue.
  - c. Students will come back to the main room to discuss the three solutions they came up with.

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- i. Ask the students what solutions they came up with by unmuting and talking or typing their answers in the chat.
- ii. Ask the students what they learned from their group members when creating a solution.

## PowerPoint Slide 12, 13, 14, 15, & 16

### Stress Management Strategies (20 min)

1. Instruct students to go to PollEv.com on their computers/ cellular devices and show a slide with the access code. Launch poll question:
  - a. Give students 2 minutes to answer the following question: “How do you manage your stress”
    - i. Show and go over some of the results with the students.
2. Discuss stress management strategies
  - a. Identify and confront the stressors.
  - b. Spend time with loved ones.
  - c. Get professional support.
  - d. Manage time wisely.
  - e. Get the recommended hours of sleep every night
  - f. Eat nutritious, well balanced meals
  - g. Get the recommended hours of exercise
  - h. Do not use alcohol/ drugs to cope with stress
3. Ask students to take a few minutes to brainstorm about a personal experience with stressful situations. Then, send students to breakout rooms in groups of 2-3 for 5 minutes to share their own personal experience and answer the following questions:
  - a. How were you able/ unable to cope with the situation?
  - b. Knowing what you know now, would you cope differently, why or why not?
  - c. Students will come back to the main room and share one story per group.
    - i. Ask the students what they learned.
    - ii. Ask the students if this activity was helpful for the future.

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4. Play this Youtube video for 3 minutes: RELAX AND BREATHE: Do Nothing for 10 Minutes (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aXIitOY0sLRY>)
  - a. *“Now, we're going to watch and participate in a relax and breath video.”*
  - b. Beforehand, instruct students to repeat the following actions: *“Take a deep breath, hold it for 5 seconds, and slowly exhale. Remember to sync your breathing with the shape's expansion.”*
  - c. After this activity, ask the following questions:
    - i. How did the activity make you feel?
    - ii. Why do you think that simply focusing on our breathing can help us to de-stress?
    - iii. On a scale of 1(very unlikely) to 10 (very likely), how likely are you to utilize this technique in future?

## PowerPoint Slides 17 & 18

### Conclusion (5 min)

1. Provide students with resources provided by the university
2. Conclude the lesson by, restating what we have learned, the importance of what they have learned, and how these skills could prove valuable for stressful events in the future.
  - a. *“Today you learned about the risk factors for stress and ways to cope with stress. Learning this information will be useful for you to identify the stressors in your life and be able to use the skills we learned to cope with the stress.”*
3. Ask the entire class if they have any questions about the material or any of the activities. After answering questions, thank the class for taking the time to attend and participate in the workshop.

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## Appendix A

**Scenario 1:** Brittney and Piper have a cleaning agreement set up. They alternate cleaning the bathroom, but lately Piper has been going out with her friends and not cleaning the bathroom. When Brittney addresses Piper, Piper agrees to clean the bathroom more. Unfortunately, the problem is still not solved and Brittney does not know what to do.

**Scenario 2:** Brian is in his Psychology class and he has a group project to accomplish. His team members have not been very active in group discussions. He tried to inform his team members the project would not be done on time without everyone's effort. Unfortunately, no one responded to his email. Brian is nervous because the project is due in two days.

**Scenario 3:** Eric has completed two terms at Radford University. He brought home his final grades and his parents were not pleased. He was a straight A student in high school. He has become very involved in extracurricular activities at college, and is having a great social experience. If Eric wants to return to school his parents said his grades must improve, or he will return home.

**Scenario 4:** Rachael lives in a four bedroom apartment and one of her roommates has her boyfriend constantly over. Her boyfriend eats all of the three other roommates food and never asks nor replaces the food. Her roommates are becoming impatient but they do not want to cause conflict.

**Scenario 5:** Lauren receives \$500 a month from her parents. She has to pay her rent, which is \$250, including utilities. Lauren has \$250 left over to spend on food, clothes, or any other miscellaneous items. Lauren decided to take all of her money and spend it on a brand new purse. Unfortunately, Lauren realized that her parents are not going to send her any more money. Lauren has 3 weeks left in the month with no money.

**Scenario 6:** Dustin wants to take Chelsea out on a date this weekend. Dustin knows nothing about Chelsea, but he thinks she is really pretty. Dustin's best friend Ryan knows Chelsea from high school and has heard a rumor that she has an STD. Ryan doesn't know how to present this information to Dustin and he is afraid he is not going to believe him.

**Scenario 7:** Katie has a friend who she begins to become concerned about. Recently, her friend has been home by herself a lot and she has been wearing sweaters and long sleeves during the summer time. Katie asks her friend if she's doing alright; her friend screams at her and tells her to mind her business. Now, Katie is extremely nervous. worried she is losing her friend and does not know how to handle the situation.

**Scenario 8:** You are a parent and your son constantly complains about the noise in his residence hall. He claims they are keeping him awake and he is afraid to speak to his R.A. As a parent, you are concerned and you call the university. The university feels that your son is over exaggerating, but they will handle the problem. You speak with your son a week later, and the problem is still not handled.



## Appendix B

*Note: This post assessment should be put into a Google Form for a virtual presentation, so the link can be shared with the students and results will be saved.*

### Post Assessment

Please complete this assessment when instructed to do so during the workshop. Answer the questions to the best of your knowledge.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

1. List the resources on campus that are available to help with stress management :

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2. List a physical effect of stress:

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3. List as many risk factors for stress that you can recall:

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4. On a scale of 1-10 how would you rate this workshop in reference to helpfulness?

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

5. What was the most helpful information in this workshop?

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## Appendix B (Answer Key)

*Note: This post assessment should be put into a Google Form for a virtual presentation, so the link can be shared with the students and results will be saved.*

### Post Assessment

Please complete this assessment when instructed to do so during the workshop. Answer the questions to the best of your knowledge.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

1. List the resources on campus that are available to help with stress management :

Answers vary

2. List a physical effect of stress:

Constant stress can cause chronic muscle tension which can lead to other physical problems such as headaches, migraines, nausea, laboured breathing, and pain in the shoulders and back.

Constant stress can also increase an individual's risk of developing hypertension, heart attack, and stroke because stress contributes to higher rates of heart contractions, higher blood pressure, and high levels of stress hormones: adrenaline, noradrenaline, and cortisol. Stress can decrease a person's ability to sleep peacefully, libido, sperm count in males, and cause irregular and painful menstrual cycle among females.

3. List as many risk factors for stress that you can recall:

Experiencing or witnessing traumatic events, Social network: expectations from family, friends, lovers, and peers, lack of support, they rely heavily on you, etc, Lack of consumption of nutritious foods, Lack of sleep, Lack of exercise, Excessive use of alcohol and/or drugs, Finances: tuition, rent, groceries, pets, etc, workload: work study/ job, studies, extracurricular activities, volunteering, chores, etc.

4. On a scale of 1-10 how would you rate this workshop in reference to helpfulness?

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

Answers vary

5. What was the most helpful information in this workshop?

Answers vary