



Group Session 8

Key Behavioral Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Stress Management■ Relaxation Techniques
Participant Behavioral Strategies	<p>Before the next group session, the participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Practice relaxation or stress-reducing strategies when noticing symptoms of stress■ Continue recording eating and physical activity habits daily and analyze nutrients
Process Objectives & Session Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Discuss what stress is and how to identify stress levels■ Explore strategies for reducing stress■ Review portion control as a method of calorie reduction
Handouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Stressed Out?■ Keep Stress Away■ Relaxation Exercise■ My Action Plan for the Week■ Food and Fitness Diary (FFD)■ New Leaf Module Handout: "How can I Deal with Stress?"
Other Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Exercise or Yoga Video
Topics/Agenda (2 hours)	<p>DO IT! ~40 MINUTES</p> <p>CHECK-IN ~15 MINUTES</p> <p>TRY IT! DISCUSSION/ACTIVITIES ~45 MINUTES</p> <p>Managing Stress</p> <p>NEXT STEPS ~20 MINUTES</p>



I. Check-In

- Purchasing food changes based on last week
- Lunch changes attempted
- Record keeping, calorie, physical activity

~ 15 minutes

■ Check- In

- Sample discussion approach:
 - *We are half way through the intervention now. How do you feel? Is there anything you would like to discuss with the group about the program? Any challenges you want to share?*
 - *How about your goals for last week? How much success did you have in reaching your goals? Did you bring your lunch to work? What are some of your favorite lunches from last week? Was it easier or more difficult than you thought it would be to plan ahead? How so?*

Your Notes:



II. Try It

- Managing stress (“**Stressed Out?**”) (“**Keep Stress Away?**”)
- Practicing relaxation techniques (“**Relaxation Exercise?**”)

1. Managing stress

- Discuss common causes of stress
- Identify reactions to stress
- Discuss better ways to deal with stress

Sample Discussion Approach:
Everyone experiences stress from a variety of events. How do you define stress? Stress over a long period of time can be very bad for our bodies. In fact, it can even provoke disease or illness because our body uses energy to deal with stress and that can weaken our immune system.

*What are some of the things that stress you out? (Distribute **Stressed Out?** worksheet). Different people handle stress in different ways. How do you handle stress? How do you know when*

Your Notes

Refer participants to New Leaf handout “How can I Deal with Stress” for additional information. The handout can serve as a resource for more information but will not be covered in class.

~ 45 minutes

you are stressed? What are some of your symptoms of stress? What happens to your eating habits? What about your exercise schedule?

What can you do to reduce stress? (Distribute **Keep Stress Away** handout and discuss). It is important to note that there are different types of stressors in life. Some things we have no control over such as the illness of a loved one. But other things we can help control and can minimize certain stress. We have already talked about planning ahead – how do you think this can help you reduce stress? Also, sometimes little things tend to stress us out. It is sometimes helpful to prioritize the things in life as we did a few weeks ago and not get so caught up in things that do not matter to us. This means, saying no to things that take our time that do not matter to us or trying not to get upset about things such as traffic or long lines. These things just put us in a bad mood if we let them and may prevent us from keeping our goals. Sometimes, stress can simply be avoided by changing our attitude about things. Take the traffic example again. Trying to remain calm or embrace the time alone may help prevent stress. Can you think of other examples?

2. Practicing relaxation techniques

- Discuss importance of relaxation
- Practice certain relaxation techniques

Sample discussion approach:

Even though we can minimize the stress in our life, it will be hard to avoid it all the time. Therefore, it is important to know how to deal with stress in a positive way versus in negative ways such as overeating. Identifying the stress early will help keep it from becoming a bigger problem. One of the best ways to alleviate stress is to exercise. Just go for a walk or walk up and down the stairs at work. This can help clear your head and use some of the energy in a positive way. However, we cannot always just get up and leave. Another effective technique is using relaxation or meditation.

*(Distribute **Relaxation Exercise** handout and discuss). Now, let's try some of these relaxation techniques. (Lead participants through the exercise).*

Another technique is simply to go to a quiet place and meditate. Just close your eyes and try to think of positive thoughts. This can be of a loved one or of your favorite place. It may be hard to concentrate, but focus on your breathing and keep bringing your mind back to a peaceful place. Another idea is to write down what is stressing you out or write a letter to someone who is stressing you out (but don't send the letter). Simply getting your thoughts down on paper will help reduce some of the stress. Depending on the type of stress you are faced with, you can try several techniques. Can you think of other positive ways to deal with stress?

III. Do IT !!!



■ Stress Management
~ 40 MINUTES

Recommend using a beginning yoga tape incorporating stress management

Objectives:

- To introduce the concept of using exercise videos as an alternative source of exercise and have participants practice doing it.
- To show participants one way to keep up with their exercise goals indoors.

Your Notes

Materials/Equipment:

- Variety of videos or DVDs that best meets the participants' needs and interest. May be purchased at a WalMart, Target, Kmart, Best Buy, Costco or Sam's Club, or video store. Also on web site, www.CollegeVideo.com.
- Choose a basic yoga video that requires no special props and one that is geared towards older adults – power or advanced yoga videos are not appropriate for this audience

Instructions for interventionist:

A. Introduce concept of using videos

How many of you have used an exercise video before? What have you tried?

We all know that we need to exercise more. But sometimes we get distracted or we run out of time and we forget to plan for when and how we're going to exercise. Other times we simply need some variety in our exercise routine. Videos are a great success tool. You can choose the exercises that match your goals as well as the workout lengths that fit into your busy day. You can use them anytime in the comfort of your own home.

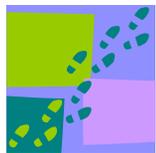
Today I have selected a Yoga video. Yoga is a great way to reduce stress and promote relaxation. The video also concentrates on breathing. As we do these exercises, remember not to push yourself too hard. Yoga is not a competition and you should do only what your body allows you to do. This is a good habit to get into whenever you exercise. Do as much as you feel comfortable doing. If you can't do some of the movements then just do a position you can do.

B. Have participants practice using the video

- Prior to the session, set up the TV/VCR/DVD and forward the video to the beginning of the exercise session.
- Give participants directions for the activity. Include the amount of

- = time for the video and any safety issues.
- = • Have participants drink a glass of water before the exercise.
- = • When exercise is completed, encourage participants to drink a few glasses of water.
- =
- = C. Debrief:
- = • *What did you think about using a video?*
- = • *What did you like about it? How did it feel?*
- = • *If you were going to use a video, when and how would you do it?*
- =
- =

IV. Next Steps



- Plan for the Week
- Tracking (Self-Monitoring)
- What to Expect Next Week
- Ideas for Group Session #9 Taste-It!

~ 20 minutes

- = **1. Action Plan for the Week**
- = --Activities for stressful situations
- = --Physical activity
- = --Participant choice
- =
- = **2. Tracking (Self-Monitoring):**
- = The recommended tracking for the week is:
- = a. Write down all the food you eat and drink every day.
- = b. Calculate the calories from the foods you eat and drink, total, and summarize for at least 3 days.
- = c. Keep track of servings of fruits and vegetables each day.
- = d. Write down the minutes of exercise above your normal routine.
- =
- = **3. What to expect next week**
- = • Food preparation
- = • Modifying dinner
- =
- = **4. Ideas for the Group Session #9 Taste-it!**
- = Give the group an opportunity to provide ideas for the next Taste-It at Group Session #9. The leader may want to provide a short list of ideas for Group Session #9 and get feedback and reactions.

Depending on your time and the group dynamics, the leader may wish to have a longer discussion to solicit ideas from the group members and give them an opportunity to bond and build mutual support and trust.

Stressed Out?



What stresses you out?

- Worries about money
- Your job
- Worries about your children or family
- Problems in your marriage
- A sick family member or friend

Other things that stress me out are:

What happens when I am stressed out?

I get headaches

I have a bad temper

I worry all the time

I can't sleep

I feel tired all the time

I feel down and sad

I want to eat constantly

I don't want to eat at all

My stomach is upset

I just want to be alone and avoid everyone

I start to nag everyone around me

I drink or smoke more

I want to just watch TV

I don't want to exercise

I cannot get anything done

Keep Stress Away

- Practice saying NO. Try to only say Yes to things that are important to you.



- Manage your time by staying organized and planning ahead

- Share some of the work load with others

- Set goals you can reach one step at a time



- Think about the things that are stressful and plan how to handle them or work around them

- Reach out to people for help or just to talk



- Try not to get upset about things that do not matter as much

- Think about the good things in your life

- Go for a walk or get your body moving



Relaxation Exercise

This exercise will help you feel more relaxed. Begin with all muscles of the hands and arms. Tense muscles and hold for a count of 10. Relax all at once and allow the muscles to continue relaxing. Notice the difference between the feelings of tension and the feelings of relaxation. Allow the relaxation response to continue for a count of 10. Allow the muscles to relax more each time you exhale. Repeat the procedure with the same muscle group. Follow the same directions for each of the muscle groups.

Muscle Groups

Hands and Arms Make a tight fist and tense your bicep muscle

Face Close your eyes tightly, wrinkle your nose and make an exaggerated smile

Neck Bend your chin forward while pulling back with your head

Chest, Shoulders and Back Take a deep breath while arching your back and extending your chest

Thigh Bend toes forward away from your head while tensing thigh muscles

Calves and Feet Bend toes backwards toward head and tense calf muscles



My Action Plan for the Week

GOAL #1: Eat more fruit and vegetables

3 ways to more fruit and vegetables
1.
2.
3.

GOAL #2: 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on 5 days of the week

Day	Activity	Minutes
Sunday		
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
	TOTAL	

GOAL #3: Keep track of all food/drinks and physical activity in the Food and Fitness Diary every day

Things that may get in my way	How I can make sure they don't
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

GOAL #4: My other goal is:

What I need to do to reach this goal:

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Next Week: Bring in your favorite dinner recipe and we will adapt it to make a healthier version.