

Workshop 1



5 minutes

- We all know what stress is, but do we really?
- How do you feel when you're waiting for a call from a friend and the phone never rings? Or how about the feeling you get before handing in an exam?
- What exactly is stress?

10 minutes

- Activity in teams of 6

You need to find an example of a stressor that you experience frequently, such as an event that makes you particularly angry, a situation that you find threatening, or an individual who stresses you out.

- Write down the stressor and place it in the pot
- The stressor will be different in each team
- Nevertheless, there is a STRESS RECIPE that is the same for everyone
- Stressor contains one or more of the ingredients (there are 4)
- The more ingredients you have, the more stressed you will be

NUTS:

- Novelty - e.g. Your first day of school in September, the first time you attend a school dance
- Threat to Ego - e.g. In gym class, there are 2 captains who select members of their team and you are one of the last to be chosen
- Unpredictability - e.g. You don't know the questions that will be on the math exam
- Sense of low control - e.g. You have a date, but you know that your parents have to discuss it between themselves before they allow you to go out

10 minutes

- Does your stressor contain any of the ingredients in the recipe?
(make a grid on the board, see manual p.8)
- Take the stressors out of the pot and discuss the 4 ingredients
- All the examples include at least one ingredient of the NUTS model

Workshop 1

(cont'd)



10 minutes

- To apply these concepts to your daily life, you will use your LOGBOOK
- You will have exercises to do in class and at home. To relieve your stress, there are spaces in the logbook to draw, write and doodle.
- At the end of the program, there will be an opportunity to share your work on the **Centre for Studies on Human Stress website**.

Examples:

- What parents should know about stress in teenagers
- The most important issues facing adolescents
- Express emotions on this topic
- Draw a picture that shows how you feel when you are stressed
- Use 'My Space' (in the logbook) or another sheet of paper
- Do not write your name on the logbook because it contains personal information
- Distribute the logbook and have students sign an honour code on pg.1 AND explain the importance of each other's privacy
- Bring the logbook to the next workshop

5 minutes

- Open your logbook to page 2 no.1
- Explain the exercise: write down the stressful events you experience and identify which of the NUTS elements the stressors include
- Next week, we will learn how to interpret our stress, how to better understand the stress we experience in our daily lives and how people react differently to stress.

Workshop 2



5 minutes

- Discuss the number of stressful events the students listed during the week

5 minutes

- Compile the list of stressful events (make a grid on the board, see manual p.8): the goal is to discover a common stressor amongst the group of teens
- In order to identify the common stressor, place a check mark next to each stressor that is mentioned more than once
- We are all different in the type of stressor we PERCEIVE
- We all face different stressors, but also common stressors

10 minutes

Workshop

- Use a common stressor that has been mentioned
- Who experienced this stressor?
- Why do you consider it a stressor?
- Which of the NUTS elements does it include?
- ***Before continuing, do a quick revision of the NUTS ingredients.*** Have students participate by raising their hands
 - ▶ ***Novelty***
 - ▶ ***Unpredictability***
 - ▶ ***Threat to Ego***
 - ▶ ***Sense of low control***
- Now, identify the NUTS elements that are involved in the common stressor
 1. What elements are involved in the stressor?
 2. Who thinks this is a situation where you have a low sense of control? Why?
 3. Threatening to one's ego/personality? Why?
 4. Unpredictable? Why?
 5. Novel? Why?
- Do people have different interpretations of this stressful situation?
- ***We all perceive situations and events differently***

Workshop 2

(cont'd)



15 minutes

- Activity: ACTION!
- Form teams of 2 to 4 students
- Each group has 5 minutes to put together a skit in which students portray facing a stressful situation
- The skit must contain at least 2 elements of the NUTS model
- The rest of the class will have to identify and explain what the ingredients are

5 minutes

- Distribute logbook p.5 and explain no.2
- Review the skits by giving examples of a possible physical response when a stressor occurs
- Explain the logbook: In each stressful situation, what is the stressor?
- New question: How do you know when you are stressed?
- Every time we are stressed, our body produces a 'physical stress response' and it is important to be aware of this physical stress response because it is the message our brain sends us that we are stressed. In the next exercise, you need to think about how your body reacts when you are stressed. What exactly do you feel?
- Next week, we will look at how your body responds when it is under stress

Workshop 3



5 minutes

- Take out your logbook
- Check the number of stressors reported by the teens and their responses
- How many stress ingredients?
- How did your body react to the different stresses?
- On the board, make note of the physical reactions they experienced

10 minutes

- I will explain to you how your body responds when faced with a stressful situation
- Pulse at rest
- 20 push-ups (wall or floor) or 20 jumping jacks
- Are you breathing well? Are you sweating? Are your muscles tight?
- What happens to your pulse after exercising? (it goes faster)
- Your body reacts exactly the same way after a stressful situation
- During exercise, you accumulate and use energy
- During stress, the body also accumulates energy = **energy mobilization**

10 minutes

- Let's go back in time
- Bogong tribe hunters, mammoth; it prepares your body so you have 2 choices: fight or flee
- When you are stressed, your body is your best friend because it gathers the strength to survive
- Look at your logbook for other signs of stress
- Listen to your body: being aware of how your body reacts can help you recognize that you are stressed

5 minutes

- Where does the energy go? Problem of today's stress...
- Your body reacts to survive
- Today's stressors are not a danger to our survival because we can fight or run away from the stressors that are written on the board
- What do we do with the energy?

Workshop 3

(cont'd)



10 minutes

- Examples of athletes after the mobilization of energy (sprinter, weightlifter, soccer player, etc.)
- Each person has their unique way of getting rid of their energy, just as our PERCEPTION is different from one another. ***The way we REACT to stress is different.***
- How do you get rid of the energy that has built up after a stressful situation? (e.g. crying, yelling, getting angry, exercising, etc.)
- Coping strategies (focusing on emotions and explaining them)
- ***Do good around you:*** kindness chain, class challenge
- ***Laugh:*** comics, jokes, a funny person is popular because humour relaxes us etc.
- ***Move :*** get rid of the energy accumulated by practicing a sport
- ***Step on the breaks :*** (abdominal breathing) The goal here is to stretch your belly as much as possible when you inhale air into your body. This stops your body's stress response because the air that enters your belly stretches a muscle called the diaphragm. When stretched enough, this muscle activates a system that stops the stress response. It's that simple!
- ***Sing:*** Sing and hold the note a little longer than necessary. This also leads to the stretching of your diaphragm and helps to halt the stress response.
- ***Pray:*** The monotonous voice that we use, without realizing it, when we pray also leads to the stretching of the diaphragm and a decrease in the stress response!
- ***Listen to music:*** the brain synchronizes breathing with music and this reduces your stress response.
- The strategies are in your logbook on page 8
- Next week, we'll look at an even more effective way to reduce stress: NUTS

Workshop 4



10 minutes

- Take out your logbook
- How many stressors?
- Ingredients
- How did your body react?
- How did you get rid of your energy?
- The chain of good deeds
- On the board, note down the stressors + NUTS + strategies for getting rid of the mobilized energy
- Important message from Workshop 4:
WE CANNOT ELIMINATE STRESS
- Everyone interprets stress differently = ***everyone must find their own solution to adapt to it***

10 minutes

- Breaking down the problem (cognition-based strategy: uses your intelligence)
- Tools
- ▶ ***Novelty***
- ▶ ***Unpredictability***
- ▶ ***Threat to Ego***
- ▶ ***Sense of low control***
- Identify the stress ingredients and neutralize them
- Use the students' situations (if they have them)
- Let's try:
- What ingredients?
- Tom is arguing with his best friend
- Your teacher hands out a test. You forgot it was today and you did not study.
- You have a little brother or sister who is going to start elementary school. He/she does not want to play video games with you anymore because he/she is so stressed.
- How do we neutralize these stressors?

Workshop 4

(cont'd)



10 minutes

- The **usual** common stressor: my mother demands that ***I clean my room***
- **N** = None
- **U** = I never know when it will happen
- **T** = I feel she is accusing me of...
- **S** = I feel like I have no choice
- You must breakdown the problem (NUTS)
- The best way to live with this stress is to ***reconstruct your stress***
- **Novelty:** none
- To reduce **Unpredictability:** establish a schedule with your mother
- To reduce **Threat to ego:** speak to your mother about your stress
- To increase the **Sense of control:** make a schedule that gives you the choice of days to clean your room
- Your body will stop producing the stress response if you ***neutralize the ingredients***

10 minutes

- If the plan does not work out as well as expected, then it requires a ***PLAN B*** to keep it under control
- Example: you have a failing grade in math, therefore...
- **PLAN A:** you spend your lunch hours at the library but it does not work
- **PLAN B:** you ask your teach for extra help, but they are not always available
- **PLAN C:** you ask another student, tutor, etc.
- **Important: *To stop the stress response,*** your body needs an EXIT DOOR
- Next week, we will discuss stressors, ingredients and strategies

Workshop 5



5 minutes

- Take out your logbook
- How many stressors in the last week?
- Ingredients = How did your body react? How did you spend your energy?
- What ingredients did you target and how did you neutralize them?
- The last two workshops: emotion-focused strategies and problem-focused strategies
- However, there is a secret weapon, probably the best one for coping with stress: **social support**

5 minutes

- A very good way to cope with a stressful situation: **seek social support**
- Talk to a friend about what is stressing you out
- Ask your parents for advice
- Don't isolate yourself as seeking social support is often a positive experience

10 minutes

- **Verbal speech test = demonstrate the positive effect of social support**
- Ask for a volunteer to step outside of the classroom
- 4-minute presentation on the following topic: 'Why do dolphins jump out of the water?'
- How stressful is the exercise? (1 = not at all stressful; 10 = very stressful)
- Ask for 3 volunteers to step outside the classroom
- 4-minute presentation on the following topic: 'What is math? Cats? Lions?'
- How stressful is the exercise? (1 = not at all stressful; 10 = very stressful)
- Being in a group = increased social support = decreased stress

5 minutes

- **Social Support Tree** (p.14)
- Write down the names of people who provide you with social support when you need it
- One name per leaf. If you are missing leaves, you can draw them in.

Workshop 5

(cont'd)



10 minutes

- **The line experiment** (social support can become social pressure and create stress)
- Make a guess and see how their friends can help them
- Take a sheet of paper
- Which line matches the target the most?
- How stressful is it to make the decision? (Between 1 and 10)

- **15 volunteers:** we will form a line and 3 groups: A, B and C. Your friends can help
- On your sheet, indicate which group
- Stressful or uncomfortable
- Hand in your sheets; stress of divergent vs non divergent.

- Social support can become social pressure

Example:

You have a group of friends who are always there for you. One day, they tell you to try smoking a cigarette and if you don't you will no longer be part of the group = social pressure.

- **IF YOU ARE UNDER SOCIAL PRESSURE**, you need to look to other people for social support
- It is not realistic to change friends, but you can find a healthier friendship network
- p.14 et 15: Place a circle around those who make you feel social pressure. The tree can help you recognize the people who give you social support vs social pressure. When things get really bad, turn to the people who's names you have written on the leaves that are not circled. These are the people who offer you social support, without putting social pressure on you!
- **Next week:**
Teach your parents about the NUTS model and show them how to deal with their stress (emotional and support) .
- You can now use your logbook to ***breakdown your stress and control it.***

Workshop 5

(cont'd)



- www.humanstress.ca for a complete review
- You can download the iSMART mobile application if you would like to have a chronic stress detector on hand. You instruct iSMART how many times a day you want the app to call you. At the agreed upon times, the app will ask you to tell it, on a scale of 1 to 19, how stressed you are feeling. When the app detects a chronic stress pattern (e.g. you always rate very high at a certain time of day or week), the app will call you to inform you of the presence of chronic stress and offer you tips on how to manage it. The iSMART application is only available on iPhone.
- If you would like to share something with us, do not hesitate!