

Lesson(s) in a Bag – Stress Management

## Lesson 1 – A Case for Meditation

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzR62JJCMBQ>

Discussion Questions:

- Has anyone ever practiced meditation or something similar? If so, what did you learn from it?
- Meditation is one form of mindfulness, what are some other activities that get you present in the moment? (Ex: Sports/Exercise, Playing an Instrument, Creating Art)
- What are some reasons that it might be difficult to take those 10 minutes per day for mindfulness?
- How might you overcome these barriers? (Ex: Scheduling, Communicating with Friends and Loved Ones, Working Ahead, Doing More Exciting Mindfulness)
- What can happen if you do not take enough time to be mindful/relax?

## Lesson 2 – Progressive Muscle Relaxation Activity

Progressive Muscle Relaxation is an approach to mindfulness which encourages participants to focus on different parts of their body one at a time to actively relax that part of the body, eventually finding the entire body relaxed. **Informed Consent:** Some participants may be turned off by or feel uncomfortable with this activity. If this is the case, an alternative mindfulness lesson may be more helpful.

Script: <https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/progressive-muscle-relaxation-script.pdf>

### Discussion Questions

- What did you like about this activity? What did you not like, if anything?
- How can you incorporate this into your everyday life?

## Lesson 3 – Identifying Stress

Oftentimes, it can be extremely difficult to identify when life is becoming more stressful, especially if symptoms present physically rather than mentally. Use this list and the following discussion questions to help participants identify how they feel stress, then encourage them to engage more in things they enjoy (see other activities) if they appear to be overly stressed.

Worksheet: <https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/symptoms-of-stress.pdf>

Discussion Questions:

- How does stress present itself to you?
- Are there any items on the list that you identified with that surprised you?
- How can you identify stress before it becomes too overwhelming?
- When you start to feel overwhelmed, what are some activities you like to engage in to relax or recharge?

## Lesson 4 – Quick Coping Techniques/Cards

Sometimes we are unable to avoid challenging or uncomfortable situations or life circumstances. On the attached worksheet are several easy coping techniques that can be engaged with in times of stress.

After discussing the techniques, share with participants and encourage them to print out activities they connect with, then place them in accessible areas in their lives such as a purse or on their refrigerator.

Worksheet: <https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/worry-coping-cards.pdf>

Discussion Questions:

- Where do you see these types of techniques in your life already?
- Which techniques would be easiest for you to implement into your life?
- At what moments in your life would these activities be most useful?