

Are you  
"under"  
STRESS?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### STRESS SYMPTOMS

*When I'm under stress when I... (✓)*

- ☐ Cry more than usual
- ☐ Can't sleep
- ☐ Eat more than usual
- ☐ Am irritable
- ☐ Resort to the use of alcohol/drugs
- ☐ Have "physical complaints"

- ☐ Have difficulty concentrating/focusing
- ☐ Sleep more than usual
- ☐ Don't feel like eating
- ☐ Am on the move all the time—fidgety
- ☐ Become overly sensitive
- ☐ Don't feel like doing anything
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

### STRESS REDUCERS

*When I see these "symptoms," I will... (✓ and be specific)*

- ☐ Go for a walk \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ mins.
- ☐ Read a good book \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ mins.
- ☐ Go shopping at \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ mins.
- ☐ Exercise \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ mins.
- ☐ Listen to music on the \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Watch my favorite T.V. program(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Use relaxation techniques \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Take some time for myself by \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Do something I'm skilled at \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ mins.
- ☐ Talk to my friend, therapist, doctor, someone else named \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Say "No" to \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Confront the situation by \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Limit certain behaviors \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Prioritize my responsibilities # 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- # 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- # 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

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STRESS?

I. PURPOSE:

To increase awareness of stress symptoms and reducers, promoting effective management of stress.

II. GENERAL COMMENTS:

People are often unaware of their stress symptoms. An active approach to stress management includes recognizing stress symptoms and pairing them with specific stress reducers. In this manner, one can develop new coping skill patterns.

III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

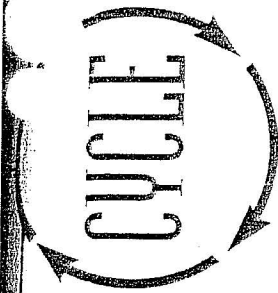
- A. 1. Explain that stress symptoms "creep up" slowly and often with no "announcement."
  - 2. Instruct group members to complete handout.
  - 3. Divide group into subgroups of three to share responses.
  - 4. After a specified time, encourage group members to reconvene and process the benefits of coping with stress.
- B. 1. Distribute handouts to group members and give them 60 seconds to look at the handout, remembering as much as they can.
  - 2. After the handouts are turned over, encourage group members to recall as much as they can as someone writes on the chalkboard under two categories: symptoms and coping skills.
  - 3. Complete the chalkboard list by referring to handout and facilitate discussion encouraging group members to add to list.
  - 4. Instruct group members to complete handout for homework assignment.
  - 5. Process benefits of coping with stress.



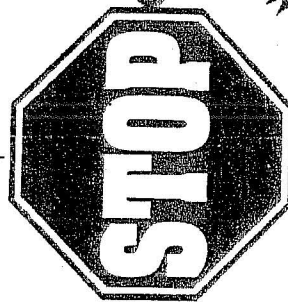
The

Break those negative coping habits by stopping and thinking. Follow the path to a brighter future by using positive coping skills.

# Stress



BREAK  
THE  
NEGATIVE  
CYCLE BY  
LEARNING TO



AND  
THINK!

Identify your  
WARNING  
Signs!

1.

2.

STRESS  
SYMPTOMS

3.

4.

Identify  
your  
stresses!

1.

2.

STRESS

3.

4.

PAST NEGATIVE COPING

1.

2.

3.

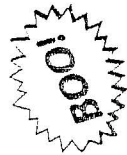
FUTURE POSITIVE COPING

1.

2.

3.

4.





# The STRESS CYCLE

## I. PURPOSE:

- To identify one's stressors as well as the personal stress symptoms that occur.
- To increase awareness of negative coping habits and the options of positive coping skills.

## II. GENERAL COMMENTS:

Effective stress management has many components. First is identifying the stressors. Next is recognizing the personal stress symptoms or the "warning signs" that our bodies give us telling us it's time to relax. Then, we cope in a negative or positive way. Negative coping skills can become bad habits, e.g., drinking alcohol --- whereas positive coping skills can literally be our lifesavers, e.g., exercise. This handout emphasizes breaking negative coping patterns and learning positive coping skills. THE STRESS MANAGEMENT CONTRACT (page 57), may be used in conjunction with this handout.

## III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

- A.
  - 1. Define "stressors".
  - 2. Brainstorm with group different everyday stressors, marking on chalkboard.
  - 3. Define "stress symptoms" (warning signs) and how they are our body's way of telling us that we need to relax.
  - 4. Distribute handouts and ask group members to complete.
  - 5. Ask for volunteers to disclose some personal warning signs, and how these symptoms affect them mentally, emotionally, physically or spiritually.
  - 6. Elicit disclosure of some negative coping examples, pointing out how repetition of negative coping leads to habits, i.e., someone might have a drinking problem. When stress symptoms become active, the first thought is to have a drink to relax. Every time this person drinks, it reinforces this negative habit.
  - 7. Problem solve positive coping skills and discuss as a group.
  - 8. Process benefits of importance of recognizing warning signs of stress and coping in a positive way.
- B.
  - 1. Facilitate discussion of identifying stressors as the first step of a stress management plan.
  - 2. Distribute handouts and ask group members to complete the cycle through the past negative coping sections, leaving the future positive coping section blank.
  - 3. Divide group into pairs. Ask partners to exchange handouts and to try to fill in the future positive coping list for their partner.
  - 4. When completed, ask them to share ideas.
  - 5. Process activity by recognizing the importance of STOPPING and THINKING when a stress symptom appears, to break negative coping habits.



**M****O****T****T****O****GAME**

*I can cope, picturing these Wellness Mottos.*

"HASTE MAKETH WASTE."	"A watched pot never boils."	<i>"Time flies when you're having fun."</i>	"An apple a day keeps the doctor away."	"Busy hands are happy hands."
"One day at a time."	"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy."	"Just say NO."	"DON'T BURN THE CANDLE AT BOTH ENDS."	"Never put off til tomorrow what you can do today."
<i>"Don't count your chickens before they hatch."</i>	"Live and learn."	"STICKS AND STONES MAY BREAK MY BONES BUT NAMES WILL NEVER HURT ME."	<i>"That's what friends are for."</i>	"All for one and one for all."
"Better late than never."	"THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE ARE FREE."	"No one is an island."	"Don't cry over spilt milk."	"To err is human. To forgive divine."
"A friend in need is a friend indeed."	"You're never too old to learn."	"A penny saved is a penny earned."	"Procrastination is the thief of time."	<i>"Two heads are better than one."</i>
"You can't unscramble eggs."	"MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK."	"Take time to smell the roses."	"EARLY TO BED, EARLY TO RISE..."	"Don't sweat the small stuff."
"IF IT WORKS, DON'T FIX IT."	<i>"Look before you leap."</i>	"Honesty is the best policy."	"First things first."	<i>"To thine own self be true."</i>





## TYPE PAGE.

1. Photocopy one handout and cut into 36 cards.

2. Divide group into 2 teams, A & B.

3. Instruct one member from team A to choose a card and draw the motto on a chalkboard in front of his team. The other team is to draw pictures on a chalkboard in front of team A. Award a correct response by team B thirty seconds to guess, and award them 1 point if correct.

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4. List possible Wellness Topics:

- Assertiveness
- Leisure
- Life Balance
- Money Management
- Nutrition
- Self-Esteem
- Sleep
- Stress Management
- Support Systems
- Time Management
- Values

Instruct team with correct response to choose which Wellness Topic the motto fits into, and give one bonus point per "correct" guess.

5. Proceed with turn-taking between teams.

6. Play *lightning round* by instructing each team to choose one member to draw the clues. Allow 4 minutes for team A to guess as many mottos as possible. Proceed with team B.

7. At the end of each round, the other team may guess any unguessed mottos and receive the point.

8. Process favorite/meaningful mottos, encouraging group members to adopt mottos to assist them with coping.

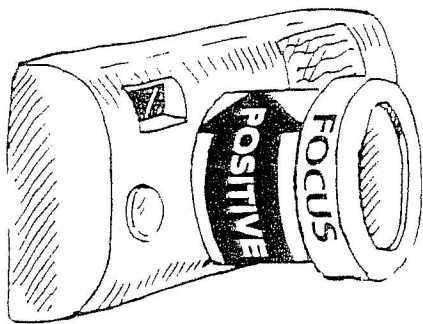
B. 1. Revise "Motto Game" into "Motto Bingo" cards by covering 2 horizontal rows, leaving twenty-five mottos (5 across and 5 down), and photocopy as many as needed.

2. Distribute cards.

3. Play "Motto Bingo".

4. Process by asking group members to choose their favorite motto and explain how it assists them with coping.





# POSITIVE

# FOCUS

Picture these images to  
help you focus on a  
POSITIVE MENTAL ATTITUDE!

Picture a time or situation when  
you felt proud of yourself.

Picture one positive  
thing you do well.

Picture one of your roles  
or responsibilities in which  
you feel positive.

Picture one positive way you stay  
healthy or take care of your body.

Picture one positive characteristic  
you like best about yourself.

Picture one positive way you  
communicate or relate to others.

Picture one positive way  
you stay young at heart.

Picture one positive way  
you cope with stress.

Picture one way you can help  
yourself stay positive.



# Focus

## I. PURPOSE:

To increase coping skills by developing a positive focus.

## II. GENERAL COMMENTS:

A positive mental focus helps insulate us from negativity. When we focus on positives regarding our personality, activities, image, etc., we reflect this positive persona onto ourselves and others.

## III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

- A.
  1. Discuss the benefits of a positive focus and how it correlates with self-esteem.
  2. Encourage individuals to complete the handout.
  3. Ask group members to share their three favorite ones.
  4. Process the benefits of this activity with the group.
- B.
  1. Discuss the benefits of a positive focus and how it correlates with self-esteem.
  2. Encourage individuals to complete the handout and put their names at the top of the page.
  3. Collect all handouts and redistribute, making sure group members do not get their own papers.
  4. Ask each group member to take turns reading aloud the papers they were given, without identifying whose paper it is.
  5. Encourage the others to guess the author of each paper; when s/he is correctly identified, ask her/him to state how it felt to complete the handout and have it shared with others.
  6. Continue until all group members have shared.
  7. Process benefits of a positive focus.