



Stress management and coping skills

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Schedule

- ▶ What is stress, why does it matter
- ▶ What are coping skills
- ▶ Deep Breathing
- ▶ Music Therapy
- ▶ Meditation
- ▶ Laughter

Desired Feelings



Or This....



Or Even This...



But actually feel like this



Or this....



Or this...



Or this...



What does stress do?

Short Term

- No Harm
- Part of our natural adaptive responses
- Makes us react and respond quicker
- Improves eye sight, strength, increases HR, respiratory rate, circulation, conserves nutrients from kidneys and breaks down products to make quick energy in the liver.
- Can keep us safe in various situations
- With positive reinforcement can help us reach goals, adapt to changes, face challenges and gain confidence

What does stress do?

Long Term/Chronic

- Pushes cortisol, steroid production
- Diverts critical energy and nutrients.
 - Too muscles, heart, circulatory system
 - From gut, lymphatics, immune system
- Increases many inflammatory markers: WBC's, cytokines,
- Disrupts healthy circulation to brain, digestive and detox organs including the lymphatics, liver kidneys.
- *Chronically reduces cell receptors responsiveness to cortisol and other important regulatory hormones/compounds

Recognizing, Naming, Addressing and Supporting

Recognize kids emotions are many times a cry for help !!!

- ▶ Toddlers-Yelling, tantrums, hitting, kicking, biting.....
- ▶ Children-fighting, aggression, irritability, isolation
- ▶ Adolescent-aggression, frustration, irritability, crying, sarcasm, isolation

Help them recognize and name their feelings

- ▶ Younger Children-I can see you are not happy, or you are sad, or you are mad, or you are frustrated
- ▶ Adolescents-I can see you are overwhelmed, stressed, nervous, worried etc.
 - ▶ Give them time to respond once naming an act or behavior

Prepare them through **Education**, **Support** and **Love**

- Remind them that emotions are healthy and normal, even the negative ones
- Educated them on ways to prepare for experiences with big emotional potentials
- Love them and support them through their wins and times of forgetfulness
 - Remember with good support, even a negative experience can be an emotional victory!!!

What are Coping Skills

- Skills including thoughts and behaviors used to manage internal and external stressful situations.
- Include several different types:
 - Adaptive cognitive-appraisal focused
 - Adaptive behavioral-Problem focused
 - Emotional focused
 - Occupational focused

Lets Talk Solutions !!!!

Deep Breathing



Deep Breathing

Toddler

- Blowing bubbles-Helps to regulate breathing to successfully blow bubbles
- Pinwheel-Figure out what speed works best and is most fun for them
- DIY Crafts with crepe paper and or ribbons- Create the craft then practice moving the crepe paper and ribbons.
- Animal Breathing
 - Whale Breath-Sit criss-cross and tall, breath deep, then tilt the head up and using hands or not blow out of blowhole.
 - Snake Breath-Breath in deep, pause briefly, then breath out slowly while making a hissing sound as long as you can
 - Bumblebee breath-Breath in pretending you are smelling a beautiful flower. As you breath out make a humming/bee sound. Try different lengths and pitches.
 - This will also help a lot to support Vagal tone which supports our response to stress.
- Explosion Breaths-In a standing position, breath in as you crouch down slowly. Then jump up spreading your arms and legs as your breath out.

Deep Breathing

Older Child

- Use a stuffed animal- Have child lie on their back, placed the stuffed animal on their stomach and have them slowly lift the animal with their bellies, hold them high then let them slowly go down.
- Hoberman Sphere Breathing-[Hoberman Sphere Breathing \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HobermanSphereBreathing)
- DIY Crafts with crepe paper and or ribbons- Create the craft then practice moving the crepe paper and ribbons.
- Floating Ball Toy-**Make with the class**
- Deep Breathing using shapes-See Handout-Triangle Breathing, Start Breathing, 6 sided breathing
- Volcano Breaths-Pretend hands and arms are like Lava flowing from a volcano. Start with palms together in front of chest. Keeping hands together as you breath in raise hands straight up. Separate hands and slowly move them down to your sides then back together in front of your chest as you exhale.
- Nostril Breathing-Blocking one nostril breathe in for 5 seconds, then blocking the other nostril breathe out for 5 seconds

Deep Breathing

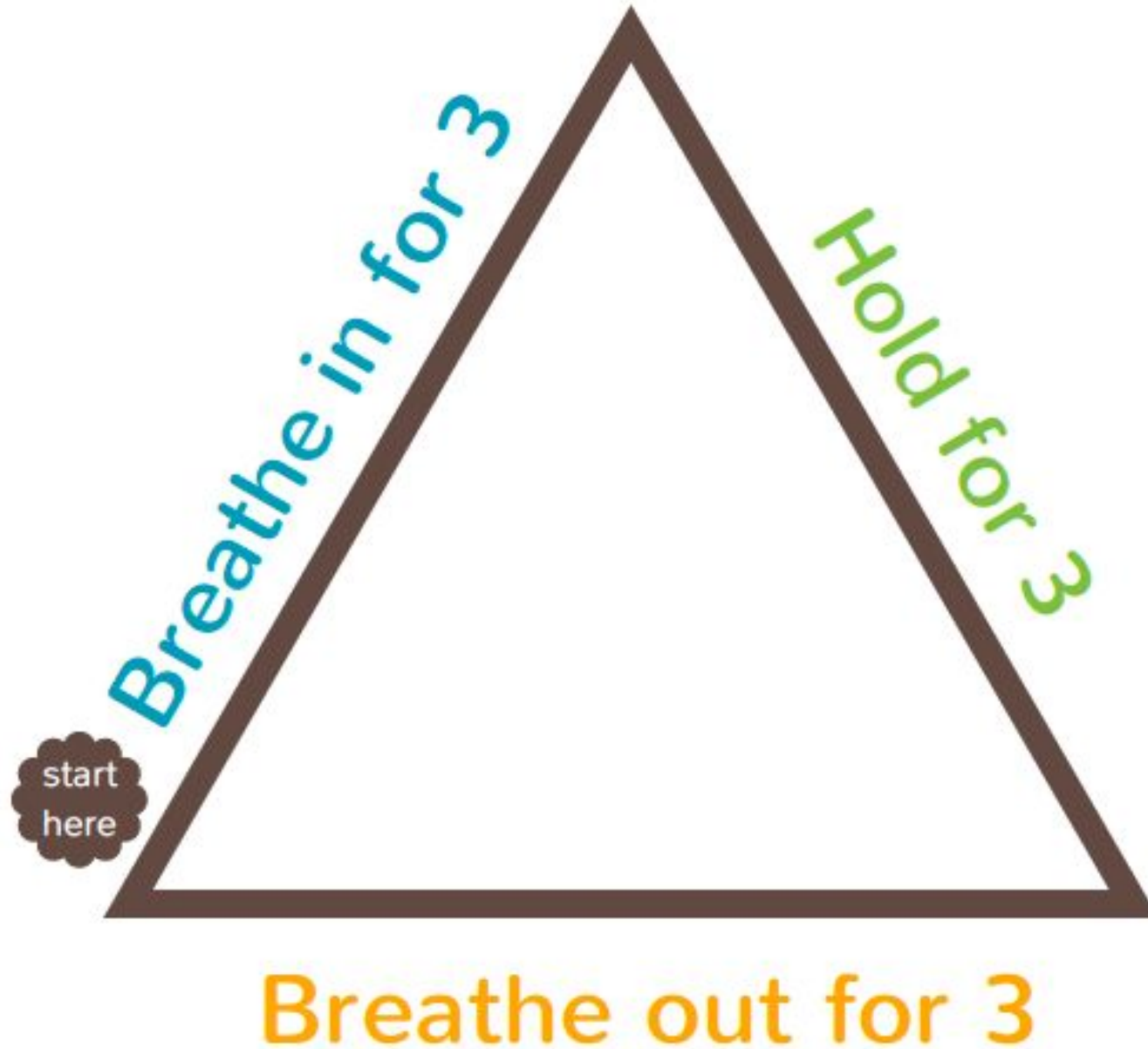
Adolescent

- 4-7-8 Breathing-Breath in for 4 seconds, hold your breath for 7 seconds, breath out through pursed lips for 8 seconds.
- Nostril Breathing-Blocking one nostril breathe in for 5 seconds, then blocking the other nostril breathe out for 5 seconds
- Bumblebee breath-Breathe in deeply and slowly for 4-5 seconds. As you breath out make a humming/bee sound. Try different lengths and pitches.
 - This will also help a lot to support Vagal tone which supports our response to stress.
- Deep breathing with Body Scanning- Sit in a comfortable position with good posture, close your eyes. As you breath in slowly and deeply mentally scan your body starting from your toes moving upward until you get to the top of your head. Check for tension, discomfort anywhere -neck, shoulders, chest or legs. As you exhale try and focus on those tense areas and try to relax one at a time.

STAR BREATHING



Triangle Breathing



Music Therapy





COPING SKILLS USING MUSIC

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WHAT IS THERAPEUTIC MUSIC VS MUSIC THERAPY?

Music is...

"an acoustic event involving specific combinations of sound moving over time."

-Barbara Crowe

Therapeutic Music is...

the prescriptive use of music to promote well-being or support health outcomes

Music Therapy is...

the clinical & evidence-based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional who has completed an approved music therapy program
-www.musictherapy.org



TEACH HOW TO IDENTIFY AND UNDERSTAND EMOTIONS

- Use Diane Alber Spot Emotion Books to teach emotions and strategies when feeling each emotion
- Create songs to help remember strategies
- Use songs to check in with child about their mood



REGULATE EMOTIONS THROUGH RHYTHMS AND MELODIES

Music can help us regulate our emotions. In music therapy there is a term called "The Iso-Principle." This principle describes how you can use music to get from one emotion to another. If you are feeling sad, you don't want to just turn happy music on. Your body will better adapt to the changing emotions if you start with sad music and then slowly move into happy music. Often when I am sad, I listen to breakup songs and it makes me feel better. Then I listen to happy songs once I'm feeling better. This happens because sad or melancholy music stimulates the release of comforting hormones such as prolactin. If you want to get certain songs to listen to when you're feeling a certain emotion you can make playlists for each emotion. If you need ideas for songs, let me know.



CREATE PERSONAL RETREATS THROUGH MUSICAL BREAKS

Throughout the day you can create personal retreats through music. If you play an instrument you can stop and play that instrument for a few minutes. When I'm feeling stressed, playing the piano or guitar helps me relax. Even if you don't play an instrument you can still improvise on it. If you are worried about how to improvise on the piano just start with one finger and play one note at a time. You can then move to one finger on each hand to one hand and then two hands. If you want it to sound really good just play the black keys. You can play in whatever pattern you want and it will sound great because it's a pentatonic scale.

Sit and listen to music, have a dance party, participate in yoga, or do progressive muscle relaxation with music! Engaging in songwriting is another strategy. An easy way to start songwriting is to do fill-in-the-blank. These templates can be found online. They take a song and then take out some words for you to put in your own. You can also write a parody, or you can write a brand-new song.



FACILITATE COMMUNICATION

Music can be an effective bridge to connect with others. When a person is frustrated or has another emotion that makes it difficult to communicate verbally, communicating through drumming can be effective. Grab a couple of drums and have a conversation using the drums. Take turns drumming back and forth. Match your child's energy.



AID IN TRANSITIONING

Switching between different tasks or roles can be particularly challenging for neurodivergent individuals. Using music as a transition signal can help signal the brain that it's time to shift gears. Whether it's a brief instrumental interlude or a favorite song that signifies a change in activity, these musical cues can smoothen the process and reduce feelings of overwhelm.





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Next Up Meditation



Meditation

- ▶ A self-regulation practice that focuses on training attention and awareness to bring mental, physical and emotional processes under greater voluntary control.
- ▶ Types
 - ▶ Guided
 - ▶ Visualization
 - ▶ Mantra
 - ▶ Focused
 - ▶ Mindfulness
 - ▶ Yoga
 - ▶ Art
 - ▶ Breathing
 - ▶ Spiritual

Meditation/Mindfulness

Toddlers and Small Children

- ▶ Five Senses Exercise-Sit down with your child and pick something fun like raisins, crackers etc.
- ▶ Progressive Muscle Relaxation-Sit down and work with your children tightening and relaxing muscle groups from their faces down to their toes
- ▶ Kid Friendly Yoga
- ▶ Walking on Thin Ice, or Follow the Announcer/Leader or Balloon toss
- ▶ Bucket of senses
- ▶ Breathing buddies-Take their favorite stuffed animal and have them breathe deep with them on their bellies
- ▶ Guided meditation-Headspace, Calm and smiling mind Great Options
- ▶ ART -Draw, color or paint how you feel

Meditation for Children

Adolescents

- ▶ Deep Breathing
- ▶ Grounding Exercises-Savor a scent, pick up/items and touch near you, put hands in water, moving them, walking on grass barefoot, think about the feeling
- ▶ Journaling
- ▶ Guided meditation
- ▶ Affirmations or Mantras- I am enough, Every day is a fresh start, I am capable of so much, I am determined to succeed
- ▶ Mindfulness apps- Headspace or Calm for teens
- ▶ ART -Draw, color or paint how you feel

Lastly, Laughter !!!

- ▶ The power of laughter is real
- ▶ Try to bring it into the family dynamic daily
- ▶ Jokes, tickling, talking about light or fun topics
- ▶ Learn to laugh about your own trials and hardships

Protein bar recipe for "Whey Delicious Snack Bars"

*2/3 cup honey

*1/2 cup sesame butter

*1/2 cup almond butter

*1 tablespoon coconut oil

*2 tablespoons ground golden/brown flax

*1-2 teaspoons vanilla extract

*1/2 tsp salt

*1 cup rolled oats

*1/2 cup pumpkin seeds

*1/4 cup sunflower seeds

*Flax/chia meal 3 tablespoons

*3 tablespoons vegetable or whey protein powder, can also use collagen powder

*2 cups puffed rice

*Stevia sweetened chocolate chips-1/4 cup

*Slowly simmer honey until it begins to thicken or turns a darker rich color, add sesame, almond butter and coconut oil, let cook low for 5 min while stirring. Add all other ingredients, mix well then lay /press firmly into a dish about 1.5-2inches thick sprinkle chocolate chips on top, let cool in the fridge and eat once firm. Wrap and keep cool.