



## Stress

### Section Summary

- Stress is a response to challenging life demands such as those related to responsibilities, family, or changes in one's circumstances.
    - Stress can also occur in response to a traumatic event.
  - Stress is something that everyone experiences, and it is a normal response to difficult life or day-to-day challenges.
  - Experiencing *more* stressful life events may be associated with the progression of mild cognitive impairment.
  - Additionally, individuals with dementia may experience additional stressors due to their condition (e.g., memory impairment, challenges with activities of daily living).
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## Activities

### Activity One: Meditation

- Lead the group through a 5 minute guided meditation session.
- You can find a meditation script to use in this guide's "Additional Resources" section.
  - You may also find a script online or you can find a 5 minute guided meditation video on YouTube (TIP: Try searching for one that is specifically aimed at stress reduction/management).

### Activity Two: Healthy vs Harmful Stress Reducers

- As a group use a virtual or IRL white board to create a list of healthy and harmful stress reducing habits.
  - Ex. Healthy - Meditating, Harmful - Binge drinking.

## Discussion Questions

- Of the listed stress reducing practices can you think of any you might enjoy?
- Of the listed stress reducing practices which have you tried?
  - What has worked well for you?
  - What didn't work so well for you?

# Additional Resources

## Guided Meditation Script

Start by lying or sitting in a comfortable position with your arms at your side, palms facing downwards.

Once you are comfortable, gently close your eyes, and begin focussing on your breathing. Notice how the air enters and leaves your body. Feel how your stomach rises on the inhale and falls on the exhale.

Begin to slow down your breath and feel how your body is heavy on the surface on which you are lying or sitting.

The only thing that matters in this moment is your breath. Anytime your mind wanders, that's okay, simply notice the thought and then return your awareness, back to your breath. And as you breathe softly and slowly, feel yourself letting go.

Continue to focus on your breathing and allow yourself to enter into a state of deep peace and relaxation. (Long Pause)

As your breath continues to soften and deepen, begin to sense the glow of a soft blue light, beginning to float down over the top of your head, flowing over your face, bringing deep relaxation as the soft blue light continues to flow down your neck. (pause)  
Into your shoulders. (pause) And your arms. (pause)

Everywhere the soft blue light touches, your body experiences a release. As you enter into relaxation and you feel the soft blue light continue now down your chest. (pause)  
Your back. (pause) Your torso. (pause)

Feel yourself sinking into this wave of peace and relaxation as the blue light continues down through your hips. (pause) Your thighs. (pause) Your knees. (pause) Your calves. (pause)  
And all the way down into the soles of your feet so that your entire being is illuminated in soft blue light. (pause)

And you feel every cell within you relaxing and letting go.

Take this peaceful feeling with you as you slowly begin to wiggle your fingers and your toes, and wake up your body. And whenever you're ready, slowly open your eyes and bring yourself back into the room around you.