

## **Tug O' War & More**

(Understanding and Developing a Stress Management Program)

**Purpose:** 1. To help students gain a greater conceptual understanding for the term Stress and 2. Provide students with information & strategies for dealing with stress.

**Materials:** Access to you tube video, computer projector and 12-14 inch piece of string/twine/nylon cord for everyone. (Connect to link below.)

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VixRenzXHqg&safety\\_mode=true&persist\\_safety\\_mode=1&safe=active](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VixRenzXHqg&safety_mode=true&persist_safety_mode=1&safe=active)

Student Materials: paper & pencil

**Time:** 25 minutes.

**Key Concepts:** Stress seen as a rope created by the opposing forces working against one another and Stress Management (learning to implement interventions (tying knots.)

**Introduce/reintroduce:** Make sure the kids know who you are. For new students, take a minute or two and determine if they had counseling at their former school. Let them know what you're all about(=) You may need to talk about grade point average & graduation information (just enough to keep the Principal happy;)

### **Part 1:**

Tell: Students to take out/have ready a piece of paper & pencil.

Announce: We're going to watch the first half of a 5 minute video so please no talking during the video and save your questions and comments until that time. Don't accidentally give your best answers to the people setting next to you!

### **Part 2:**

Play: First half of Video

STOP/Pause Video: Half way through at the "Knot so fast" sign.

Gather: Responses/guesses as to what the first half of the video might be about.

### **Part 3:**

Explain: The second part of the video is exactly like the first half however they will need to pay attention to the captions being applied to many of the pictures to help them understand what the video is really about.

Play: Second half of Video. (You may have to read aloud the captions to improve student attention.)

Gather: Student responses on the video.

State: The video is about Stress Management and a big reason why people go see mental health professionals.

Direct: (For fun) Students to write the name they always wanted to have at the top of their paper. That is, any name other than their own, a nick name or a wished for name at the top of their paper. Some examples might include: Rock Stone, Harry Potter, Cleopatra, or Princess. Students should also number their papers 1 through 5 (skipping a line between each number) as if they were preparing to take a spelling test.

Have: Students write in their answers for the following five questions.

1. Provide a dictionary definition of the word Stress (w/o using the dictionary.)
2. Provide a sample or give an example of a Stressful situation.
3. Are Stress symptoms mostly Mental, Emotional or Physical (or combination.)
4. Have you ever been around someone who's Stress Stressed you out?
5. Write out one way you manage your Stress. (Chips and Chocolate don't count! Just kidding!)

Call: On several students to share their fictitious names and all five responses. Highlight the importance of appropriate and helpful ways to deal with stress.

Review: Video in terms of the five questions asked.

1. Stress Definition: Growing feeling/sense of uneasiness & discomfort. Seen by the tightness in the rope.
2. Example of Stress: Time and Resources (opposing forces) working against you.
3. Symptoms of Stress: Mental, Emotional & Physical.
4. Stress can be contagious!
5. \*Stress management should involve healthy mental, emotional & physical components. Healthy stress management helps us meet timelines, get to school on time, turn our projects in on time, finish chores by the time they're due, step up our sport performances and overall, helps us feel "Super" (Superman reference!)

\*FYI:

Physical symptoms (tension, fatigue, sleep & appetite disturbance.)

Mental symptoms (racing thoughts, poor concentration & memory.)

Emotional symptoms (anger, frustration, sadness, worry & self harm.)

**Part 4**

Facilitate: A discussion on Stress and how it might feel and how it might feel (be perceived) differently by different people. (Frazzled, Snapped, Stretched, Pulled Apart)

Report: People feeling stressed will often do what they usually do...just more of it. For example, people who smoke will smoke more, people who drink will drink more and people who use drugs will use them more.

Ask: How are you going to keep it together (demonstrate with your two hands & fingers interlocked) how you're going to handle the stress when you're being pulled apart?

Reflect: In the video that they witnessed knots being placed in the rope. At first just one knot following the "Stress Face" and then two knots and then 3,4, and 5 knots. The knots represent the interventions, strategies, or skills used to manage stress. That is, to keep the rope from breaking!

State: I'm going to encourage each of you to create a daily stress management program for yourself.

Direct: Students to turn their paper over and number it 1 thru 3.

Tell: Students to write "Stress Management Program" across the top of their paper.

Ask: Students to fill in:

#1. A Positive Physical strategy to deal with stress (exercise, bike ride, walk, sports, etc.)

#2. A Positive Mental strategy to deal with stress (reading, crosswords, math problems, word search, meditation, etc.)

#3. A Positive Emotional strategy to deal with stress (music, art, poetry, letter writing, laughter, understanding the Word, etc.)

Explain: To students interventions often have crossover effects. For example, running for one person might also have an emotional and mental value or component to it.

Call: On students to stand and give their three answers.

Encourage: Guide & Support: As needed.

Distribute: A rope strand to each student.

Ask: Students to put three knots in their rope to represent the three stress management strategies to be done as part of their daily stress management program.

Demonstrate: With your own rope: one knot for exercise, another knot for good nutrition, another knot for music appreciation and perhaps another knot for mental exercises such as word search, crosswords or reading the Word.

Direct: Students to attach their Stress management rope to their backpack as a reminder of the activity!

Summarize: Stress management is a huge issue for lots of people and a primary reason why people get into counseling to learn how to manage their stress.

State: Learning to manage your stress may not solve the Tug O' War you're having but it will help you from creating new battles.