

Learning Objectives

- To understand the term stress and be able to describe how level of demand, control and support affect how much stress a person feels (knowledge).
- To practice using tools to managing stress and explore options (skills).
- To understand that other people experience feelings differently, and to appreciate how stress is the result of differing reactions to situations (attitudes/values).

Total Time
45 mins
+15mins
extension
activities

Teacher's Notes

This lesson provides a number of stress management tools, if you would like students to practice all the tools, or if you wish to leave more time for discussion, it is advisable to split the exercises over two lessons.

Ground rules: Please read the ground rules statement out at the beginning of the lesson.

Resources

Photocopies for each student:

- Worksheet 1: Character Descriptions
- Worksheet 2: Exploring options and action planning grid
- Worksheet 3: Instructions for counsellors and characters
- Worksheet 4: Examples of open questions and the circles of control (for extension option 1)
- Worksheet 5: Relaxation techniques to practice at home
- [optional] Flipchart paper and pens, Post-it Notes, bags or boxes to represent 'Demand'.

Introduction

Explain: Today's lesson is about stress management. Read out the ground rules:

"In this lesson we will be covering some sensitive issues. You may be affected personally by the topic that we are discussing today, or you may know someone else who is. Please be respectful and thoughtful of others, and treat the subject responsibly. If you would like to talk to someone after the lesson, you can go to... (please either give the contact person in the school, for example a school counsellor, or an outside number, for example Samaritans).

Thoughtstorm- what is stress?

Draw this stress model on the board, without labelling the boxes. Thoughtstorm these questions with students, filling in their answers in the relevant boxes. When they've got something in each reveal the labels: Demand, Control, Support.

Time
10 mins

**What puts you under pressure?**

Demand: This refers to the level of challenge or difficulty. A little bit of challenge is good, it helps us to strive to be better, and helps us grow. However, where a challenge is very great, or there is a very difficult situation that we are facing, it can be a major contributor to stress.

Examples of demand: Exams, moving house, bullying, pressure to look or act a certain way.

What helps when you're under pressure?

Control: When things are 'out of our control' we are likely to experience more stress. For example, a teacher may give you some homework. You may not be able to control what homework you are given, but you should have some control over when you tackle it and how.

Examples of control: solving the problem, positive thinking, choosing not to react to bullying.

