



Title: Stress and Coping

Grade: 8

Career Development Model:

Self-Awareness

Nebraska Career Readiness Standards:

- Contributes to employer & community success
- Uses critical thinking
- Utilizes technology
- Manages personal career development
- Attends to personal & financial wellbeing

Objective:

- Students will identify the sources of stress in their lives.
- Students will identify the ways that they can cope with stress.
- Students will increase college and career readiness by expanding their strategies to cope with stress in school and work.

Materials and Supplies Needed:

- Butcher paper
- Markers

Class Instructions:

1. Explain to students that stress is the physical and emotional reactions that they experience during events or circumstances that cause us tension by making us feel frustrated, confused, nervous, scared or angry.
2. Label five sheets of butcher paper with the headings: Self, School, Parents, Friends and Life. Create a T-chart on each sheet with the left side labeled Stress and the right side labeled Coping Strategies.
3. Have students in small groups rotate carousel style around to each sheet, filling in Stressors and Coping Strategies that either they have experienced or think others may commonly experience.
4. Once students have been to each sheet, use these sheets to facilitate a class

discussion about sources of stress and coping. Be sure to include the following:

- a. How did it feel to be stressed (physically, mentally and emotionally)?
- b. How did this stress affect other aspects of their lives?
- c. Do they experience any of the same stressors that others in the class experience?
- d. If they do experience the same stressors, do they use the same coping strategies? Why or why not do they think this is?

5. Stress and Career Discussion. Using effective coping strategies is important throughout life!

- a. Do you imagine there is stress for people in their work life?
- b. Do you think it is the same or different from stressors identified in this class activity?
- c. How might different types of career choices have different kinds of stress associated with them?

6. Closure: Stress is always going to be present in life. Different careers have different kinds of stress. Knowing yourself and how you cope with stress is another factor to think about in choosing a career.

Tips on keeping it real

- Sharing information about oneself, or self-disclosure, is a tool borrowed from career counseling. It is a very useful tool to help students realize that confusion regarding how to make decisions with one's life is not unusual.
- Give an example of a stressful event (academic or in the workplace) you have experienced. Share how you felt during this stressful event and how it might have affected other areas of your life.
(It may be difficult, but try to make your example genuine and also student friendly.)
- Share how you alleviated the stress and to what level you felt you were successful in using stress management strategies.
(E.g. "I make myself spend two or more hours working before taking a break for a movie, book, sports, etc.")
- Share some examples of things you do to manage stress and/or some ways you might be helpful to use stress management techniques more often personally.
(E.g., I like to listen to music in the car on the way home from work to relax. I also use deep breathing before I have to give a presentation or go into a stressful meeting. I could use positive thinking more often in addition before I give presentations.)

Credits/Sources:

Making my
FUTURE
WORK

“Making my Future Work: A College and Career Readiness Program”, U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences.

<https://www.csuohio.edu/cehs/mmfw/making-my-future-work-0>