

Activity Plan



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BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES: STRESS

NAME OF THE ACTIVITY: MANAGEMENT & MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY

OVERVIEW

THIS ACTIVITY IS FOR EQUIPPING PARTICIPANTS WITH INDIVIDUAL/GROUP STRESS-MANAGEMENT TOOLS WHILE FOSTERING OPEN DIALOGUE TO REDUCE MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA IN COMMUNITIES.

OBJECTIVES:

- TEACH PRACTICAL COPING STRATEGIES FOR STRESS AND ANXIETY.
- ENCOURAGE OPEN DISCUSSIONS TO BREAK MENTAL HEALTH STIGMAS.
- DEVELOP ACTIONABLE PLANS FOR STRESS PREVENTION AT PERSONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL LEVELS.
- BUILD A SENSE OF SOLIDARITY THROUGH SHARED EXPERIENCES AND COMMITMENTS.

COMPLEXITY AND TIME:

LEVEL: MODERATE (BLENDS PERSONAL REFLECTION WITH GROUP PROBLEM-SOLVING).

ADAPTATIONS:

SIMPLER: FOCUS ON 1-2 STRATEGIES.

DEEPER: ADD ROLE-PLAYING FOR STIGMA SCENARIOS.

TOTAL: 90 MINUTES (FLEXIBLE TO 60-120 MIN).

OPENING: 15 MIN.

ACTIVITIES: 60 MIN.

CLOSING: 15 MIN.

GROUP SIZE:

IDEAL: 10-25 PARTICIPANTS (SMALL GROUPS OF 4-5).

LARGE GROUPS: USE DIGITAL TOOLS (E.G., BREAKOUT ROOMS, POLLS).

TARGET GROUP:

YOUTH, EDUCATORS, WORKPLACE TEAMS, OR COMMUNITY GROUPS.

NONE; ADAPTABLE FOR ALL STRESS LEVELS.

RESOURCES:

FACILITATORS: 1-2 (FOR LARGE GROUPS).

SPACE: FLEXIBLE SEATING FOR CIRCLES/SMALL GROUPS.

SOURCES USED

EVIDENCE-BASED THERAPIES - CBT, DBT, ACT, MINDFULNESS, PSYCHODYNAMIC, AND SOLUTION-FOCUSED TECHNIQUES.

REPUTABLE GUIDELINES - APA, NIMH, WHO, AND PEER-REVIEWED RESEARCH.

THEMES ADDRESSED:

INDIVIDUAL STRESS MANAGEMENT.

MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA REDUCTION.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SYSTEMS.

MATERIALS:

BASIC: STICKY NOTES, 5 MARKERS, 10 FLIP CHARTS,

DIGITAL: POLLING TOOLS (MENTIMETER), SHARED DOC FOR "STRESS MAPS."

OPTIONAL: STRESS BALLS, CALMING MUSIC FOR RELAXATION EXERCISES.

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INSTRUCTIONS

1. OPENING (15 MIN) – "CIRCLE OF JOY + SOLIDARITY"

GOAL: ESTABLISH SAFETY, CONNECTION, AND SHARED PURPOSE.

A. ICEBREAKER: CIRCLE OF JOY (10 MIN)

INSTRUCTIONS:

FORM A CIRCLE (OR VIRTUAL EQUIVALENT).

FACILITATOR MODELS: SHARE ONE SMALL JOY FROM YOUR WEEK + ONE WORD FOR HOW YOU WANT TO FEEL TODAY (E.G., "MY JOY WAS DRINKING TEA IN THE SUN; I WANT TO FEEL 'LIGHT' TODAY.").

PARTICIPANTS RESPOND: EACH PERSON SHARES IN 20 SECONDS MAX.

FACILITATOR SCRIPT:

"WE' LL GO AROUND THE CIRCLE—SHARE ONE SMALL THING THAT BROUGHT YOU JOY THIS WEEK, PLUS ONE WORD FOR HOW YOU' D LIKE TO FEEL TODAY. NO NEED TO EXPLAIN—JUST CELEBRATE THE MOMENT!"

B. GROUP AGREEMENTS (5 MIN)

INSTRUCTIONS:

ASK: "WHAT RULES WILL HELP US FEEL SAFE DISCUSSING STRESS AND MENTAL HEALTH?"

WRITE RESPONSES ON A POSTER (E.G., "LISTEN WITHOUT JUDGMENT," "WHAT' S SAID HERE STAYS HERE").

HAVE EVERYONE SIGNAL AGREEMENT (THUMBS UP, VIRTUAL).

KEY AGREEMENTS TO SUGGEST IF NEEDED:

CONFIDENTIALITY

USE "I" STATEMENTS (E.G., "I FEEL..." VS. "YOU SHOULD...")

STEP UP, STEP BACK (BALANCE SHARING)

2. MAIN ACTIVITY (60 MIN)

ACTIVITY 1: STRESS-MANAGEMENT STATIONS (30 MIN)

SETUP:

4 STATIONS (MARK POSTERS WITH STRATEGY NAMES):

BREATHING/RELAXATION (E.G., 4-7-8 BREATHING)

TIME MANAGEMENT (E.G., EISENHOWER MATRIX)

POSITIVE REFRAMING (E.G., TURNING "I' M FAILING" → "I' M LEARNING")

SUPPORT SYSTEMS (E.G., MAPPING ALLIES)

INSTRUCTIONS:

DIVIDE INTO SMALL GROUPS (4-5 PEOPLE).

10 MIN/STATION:

LEARN THE STRATEGY (5 MIN).

DISCUSS: "HOW COULD THIS TOOL REDUCE STIGMA?" (5 MIN). (EXAMPLE: "ASKING FOR HELP WITH TIME MANAGEMENT NORMALIZES STRUGGLE.")

ROTATE UNTIL ALL GROUPS VISIT 2 STATIONS (ADJUST TIME IF NEEDED).

FACILITATOR SCRIPT:

"AT EACH STATION, YOU' LL FIND A STRATEGY AND A DISCUSSION QUESTION. THINK: HOW DOES THIS COMBAT THE IDEA THAT STRESS IS 'WEAKNESS?'"

ACTIVITY 2: ACTION PLANS (30 MIN)

A. "FUTURE ME" LETTERS (10 MIN)

INSTRUCTIONS:

PROMPT: *"WRITE A LETTER TO YOURSELF 3 MONTHS FROM NOW. INCLUDE:

HOW YOU' LL USE TODAY' S STRATEGIES.

HOW YOU' LL SUPPORT OTHERS' MENTAL HEALTH."*

PROVIDE ENVELOPES TO ADDRESS/POST LATER (OPTIONAL).

FACILITATOR SCRIPT:

"IMAGINE YOUR FUTURE SELF THRIVING. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE? WHAT SUPPORT WILL YOU OFFER OTHERS?"

B. "STRESS-TO-SUPPORT" MAPS (20 MIN)

INSTRUCTIONS:

SMALL GROUPS BRAINSTORM:

STRESSORS IN THEIR ENVIRONMENT (E.G., "LAST-MINUTE DEADLINES").

SOLUTIONS (E.G., "WEEKLY PLANNING SESSIONS").

SKETCH ON POSTERS WITH ARROWS (STRESSORS → SOLUTIONS).

FACILITATOR SCRIPT:

"NOW, THINK BIGGER. HOW CAN WE CHANGE SYSTEMS TO PREVENT STRESS? BE SPECIFIC!"

3. CLOSING (15 MIN) – EVALUATION

ASK PARTICIPANTS HOW USEFUL THE INFORMATION AND METHODS WERE USED AND GIVE THEM SPACE TO SHARE THEIR REFLECTION.

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DEBRIEFING AND EVALUATION:

QUESTIONS:

"WHAT STRATEGY FELT MOST RELEVANT TO YOUR LIFE?"

"HOW CAN WE KEEP THIS CONVERSATION GOING BEYOND TODAY?"

FEEDBACK TOOL: ANONYMOUS POLL (E.G., MENTIMETER) WITH RATINGS ON:

CONFIDENCE IN USING STRATEGIES (1-5 SCALE).

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT.

TIPS FOR FACILITATOR

- STIGMA SENSITIVITY: AVOID LABELING (E.G., "STRESS" INSTEAD OF "MENTAL ILLNESS").
- TIME MANAGEMENT: USE VISIBLE TIMERS FOR ACTIVITIES.
- INCLUSION: OFFER MULTIPLE WAYS TO PARTICIPATE (SPOKEN, WRITTEN, DIGITAL).
- ENERGY: MATCH THE GROUP'S TONE—SERIOUS DISCUSSIONS MAY NEED LIGHT BREAKS

FOLLOW UP

- 30-DAY CHECK-IN: EMAIL PARTICIPANTS TO SHARE PROGRESS ON THEIR PLEDGES.
- PEER SUPPORT GROUPS: HELP ORGANIZE MONTHLY MEETUPS TO PRACTICE STRATEGIES.
- ADVOCACY: COMPILE ORGANIZATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS INTO A REPORT FOR LEADERSHIP.