

Stress Management and Self-Care for Adult Learners

Topic area: Education (innovative instruction technique)

Presentation format: Workshop

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Adult learners are bombarded with personal, professional, and educational stressors. Many come to the classroom using coping methods that may be unhealthy and counter-productive. Educators often struggle with students who are sleepy, distracted, or inattentive. In this 90-minute experiential workshop, participants will have the opportunity to sample a variety of relaxation and self-care techniques that will assist them and their students to deal with the tension and stress that often accompany formal education.

At Brigham Young University College of Nursing, students learn about the detrimental health effects of stress, including high blood pressure, decreased immune function, increased chronic illness, and relationship difficulties, to name a few. They also understand how stress can affect their own ability to concentrate and learn. It is important for caregivers to take care of themselves in order to care for others. Therefore, we offer a four-hour hands-on workshop for our students to learn stress management techniques that they can apply to themselves and to those they care for.

The response from students has been very overwhelmingly positive:

“I loved the stress management clinic. It is important to take time out for yourself to relax and get proper perspective on things. The techniques are simple and can be used in everyday life, even in class or on the job. The things I learned have helped me to fall asleep easier and get more rest at night. Everything we learned was useful and fun. All of us who participated would like to do it again.”

“The Stress Management clinical was my favorite clinical of the whole semester because it taught me skills I can use throughout my life. I can use the yoga or positive imagery to help me be a more calm and effective nurse, but I can also use those skills to be a more peaceful and well-rounded human being. There have been several times since the clinical when I've felt overwhelmed with big decisions in my life and I've sat down and tried to meditate and deep breathe. When I've remembered to do that, it's made a big difference in the way I feel about myself and about dealing with difficult situations.”

During this 90-minute workshop, participants will learn the value of stress management in their professional and personal lives. They will practice several modalities to manage stress, such as guided imagery, music, art, connection with others, laughter, living in the present, progressive relaxation and positive affirmations.