Workplace Strategies for Mental Health

Compliments of Canada Life



Facilitator guide

Name, claim and reframe: **Personal stress tools**



Why are the resources created by Workplace Strategies for Mental Health free?

Since 2003, Canada Life has supported research and projects related to positive mental health in the workplace – including Workplace Strategies for Mental Health (Workplace Strategies).

Workplace Strategies develops free resources to foster positive mental health and protect psychological safety in the workplace. Through collaboration with experts from diverse places and professions, Workplace Strategies provides tools that are both evidence-based and user-friendly.

Thank you for the expert review by Dr. Catherine Munn and Kate Harri, MA, Psychologist Emeritus. Thank you to those who contributed to refining these resources, including: Patricia Smith, Ian Arnold, Suzanne Arnold, Robert Paiement, Caroline Workman, Francois Legault, Marge Hudson, Michelle Walker, Sherman Kong, Jennifer Dyck, Christine Hildebrand, Annastasia Lambert, Alexia Pasquin, Sarvia Cruz, Kristen Marischuk, Melissa Holt, Taryn Araujo, Andrea Sharp, Natalie Hayworth, Jennifer Schweighardt, Tanya Morose, John McCarthy, Nicholas Saucier, Angelina Nikkel, Trinelle Brown and the many participants in our pilot sessions.

Over the years, Workplace Strategies has developed high-quality resources including Guarding Minds at Work, Working through it, Supporting employee success, Psychologically safe leaders, Psychologically safe team assessment, Plan for resilience and many more.

All are available to anyone free of charge, at **clwsmh.com**, compliments of Canada Life.

Canada Life has long recognized that psychological health and safety impacts overall employee well-being and performance. They support many initiatives that align with their core values and benefit all Canadians, not just their clients, from coast to coast. These include education, health and wellness, community development and social services.

What other workshop topics are available?

There are a wide variety of workshop topics available. All of them are available at no cost and include a facilitator guide, participant handout and slide presentation. Some topics include:

- Implicit bias
- Resolving conflict
- Building resilience
- Team building activities
- Supportive task improvement
- Putting psychological health and safety on the agenda series

For a complete list of workshop resources go to clwsmh.com/materials.

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This resource isn't intended as a medical or mental health intervention. If you or someone you know is currently experiencing challenges, please reach out for support. You could reach out to your health care professional, your workplace wellness or employee assistance program.

Crisis lines in Canada: If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide or in a mental health crisis, call or text 9-8-8. To find mental health or community services in your area, call or text **2-1-1**. If you're in immediate danger or need urgent medical support, call **9-1-1**.

Introduction to the

Workshop series

Each of the Workplace Strategies for Mental Health workshop topics include at least 3 resources:

All of the following resources and more are available at **clwsmh.com/ncr**.

Facilitator guide

Read through this guide and the participant handout before beginning, to see where you might want to customize the workshop. The suggested wording is here to help. Modify it to meet your audience's needs and to suit your personal or organizational style.

If you have more than three hours for this workshop, you could spend more time talking about how to integrate these concepts at your workplace.

Slide presentation

You can also add slides related to your own organizational resources, procedures or strategies.

You can choose to use the slides in several ways:

- Project the slide presentations on a screen
- Present them through a webinar platform
- Use only the handouts

Participant handouts

The participant handouts are available to print or use digitally.

Facilitating team discussions

Facilitation tips for leaders is a guide that can help you increase your comfort level and effectiveness in managing participant responses and attitudes.

Facilitating this topic

Preparation

Before you begin, you may want to:

- Consider how you will keep the conversation focused on everyday stressors and away from mental illnesses or disorders. The purpose of the workshop is to build skills, not to address or "treat" mental illness or disorders.
  - → The content is meant to help build a skill to be practiced by everyone when they are well enough to do so,and is not intended to treat or respond to trauma.
  - → If participants bring up mental illness or trauma, listen compassionately and say that this session is not at the level of clinical or medical intervention, and it sounds like what the participant is sharing would most benefit from professional support.
  - → Explain that this skill is intended to become a habit that may lessen stress and strain for everyone.
  - → At the end of the workshop, you will have resources to share with those who need more.
- Update the slide containing resources near the end of the workshop to include any others relevant to your audience, including organizational, community and online resources that you know are credible and accessible.
- Review the many resources and tools on the **Name, claim and reframe webpage**. This includes the downloadable participant handout, the guided audio and links to additional resources that can help you understand this content better.
- Review **Managing trauma at work** to understand more about those who may be dealing with difficult stressors. While this session is not about responding to past or current trauma, it can help to mitigate some of the stress that comes from exposure to such incidents.
- Prepare examples and stories that are relevant to your audience to replace any in the Suggested Wording that are less relevant. Be careful to avoid examples or stories that may trigger a stress response in any participant or be construed as referring to a specific person in, or known to, the audience.
- Read **Explore your options** to understand the 4 As, which can be a next step in dealing with stressors, especially those that can't be avoided. While this is not included in this workshop, the 4 As are covered in the **Building resilience workshop**, which is also available for you to facilitate.
- Ensure that you have someone capable of supporting any participant who experiences distress during this workshop. This could be you if you're qualified, a representative from your Employee Assistance Provider (EAP) or a mental health professional. They could be available by phone or in-person. This workshop was created to minimize the potential for distress, but those who are currently experiencing mental health challenges may struggle.

Suggested materials

- **Projector or monitor** – for the slide presentation from a laptop or USB
- **Cables and adapters** – if necessary for projection
- **Remote control** – to control slides
- **Participant handout for each participant** – either digital or printed
- **Printable prompts** – this is an optional small booklet that you can print and leave with your participants for their use
- **Pens** – for any participants who have not brought one

Check out **virtual team discussions** in **Facilitation tips for leaders** for help facilitating this workshop online.



Your audience

This session is for any adults who would like to improve their ability to deal with life stressors. This can include employees, leaders or the general public.

We suggest breaking into small groups from time to time. The ideal number for the small groups is 3 – 5, to allow everyone an opportunity to speak. This can happen at tables if you're meeting in person, or in online breakout rooms if you're delivering the workshop by webinar. The total number of participants will be limited by the seating capacity if in-person, or by the participant limit of the online platform you choose to use.

Promoting this workshop

Use the following description to promote the workshop to potential participants. You can modify the wording to fit your audience as needed.

Mail

Reply all | Delete | Junk | Block | ···

Name, claim and reframe

Workshop series



Stress is inevitable. Ongoing doubt, anger or fear are not. The ability to **name** our stress, **claim** our power over it and **reframe** it in a way that allows us to let go of whatever holds us back is a skillset we all can learn and refine.

In this workshop you'll learn to:

- **Name your stress** – this sounds easier than it is. When we can identify how our stress is impacting our thoughts and emotions, we are no longer powerless.
- **Claim your power** – once you have named it, you can challenge the unhelpful or untrue thoughts and difficult emotions that stress is causing you.
- **Reframe it** – changing how we look at whatever has or is causing us stress can make it easier to move forward.

We can all benefit from learning this skill and sharing it with those we care about.

Please note: During the workshop you will work through an everyday stressor individually using the tools and techniques taught. This workshop is not meant to bring up significant stressors. If you are currently experiencing significant distress, seek out appropriate mental health support. The intention is to help you develop strategies to better process life stressors. Please prioritize your own well-being and psychological safety during this session and feel free to excuse yourself if you need to.

The 3-hour session will be facilitated by [**Enter the facilitator's name here**] and [**is free to attend or add your cost**].

Location: **Date:**

Start time: **End time:**

To register:

Workplace Strategies for Mental Health

canada life

How to use this guide

Throughout this facilitator guide, you'll see some or all the following with the corresponding slide:

X minutes: This is the estimated amount of time to spend on this slide if you want to keep within a 3-hour time frame, including two 15-minute breaks. Some slides may involve just a statement or two from you, while others engage the participants in discussion. Of course, if you have more time, you can ignore these guidelines.

Facilitator notes

This is a note to you, the facilitator, where we offer options or make suggestions. For example, discussing issues like conflicts or terminations may warrant more sensitivity. We may suggest alternative wording to help you stay focused on the topic at hand. This may also help you avoid getting pulled into challenges you can't solve in this time frame or setting.

Suggested wording

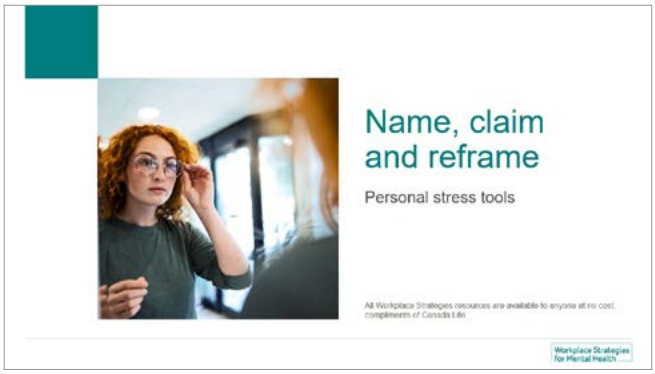
You can read this out loud as provided or personalize it for your style and audience.

Text in [**square brackets**] is a quick note to you about process. Don't read it aloud.

Transition

Most slides end with a sentence or two that helps you transition to the next slide. If there is no transition, just advance after you have finished the slide you are on.

Slide 1 3 minutes



Name, claim and reframe

Facilitator notes

There is approximately 2.5 hours of content delivery. With two 15-minute breaks, the session would be 3 hours in total. You decide when you want to take your breaks. We recommend a maximum of 90 minutes before a break.

We recommend you welcome people and begin right on time. Making the majority of participants wait for those who are late seems unfair.

To begin, introduce:

- Yourself, if there's anyone who may not know you
- Your experience with stress management, if any

If you are facilitating this virtually:

- Add a link to the participant handout in your chat feature so it is readily accessible to anyone who can't find their copy.
- You may ask participants to write into the chat where they are from, or to ask some other question at the very beginning, as a form of icebreaker and also to make sure they can use the chat function.
- Review all suggested wording and modify it for your virtual audience.

Suggested wording

Welcome. Thank you for joining me at this workshop today. My name is [**enter name**] and [**short introduction that also includes why you're credible to talk about stress management, including one of your own attempts to manage stress**].

Today we're going to learn how to manage stress in a way that allows you to go through life's ups and downs without staying stuck in a negative space.

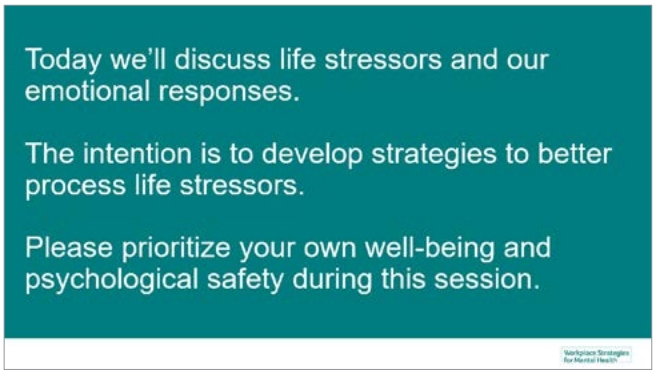
We acknowledge that organizations, leaders and teams have a responsibility to help everyone in a workplace to manage stress. But this session is not about their responsibility. This session is about making sure that we claim our own power and control over our personal stress responses.

Transition

Let's review a bit more about what we'll walk through today.

Notes

Slide 2 1 minute



Suggested wording

During the workshop you'll work through an everyday stressor individually using the tools and techniques taught. This workshop is not meant to bring up significant stressors. If you are currently experiencing significant distress, I encourage you to seek out appropriate mental health support.

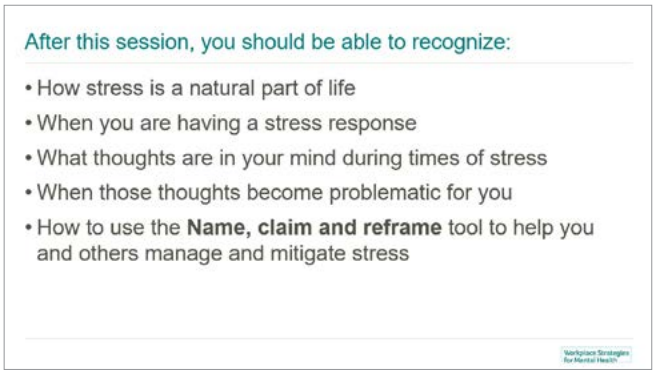
The intention of this session is to develop strategies to better process common life stressors. Once you learn to do this, the skillset may be helpful in more complex situations. Please prioritize your own well-being and psychological safety during this session and feel free to excuse yourself if you need to.

Transition

Now let's talk about what I hope you get out of today.

Notes

Slide 3 2 minutes



After this session, you should be able to recognize:

Suggested wording

Before we end this session, you should be able to recognize that stress is a natural, normal part of life. We'll never be able to avoid it completely, and if we learn to deal with it more effectively, we can face it head-on.

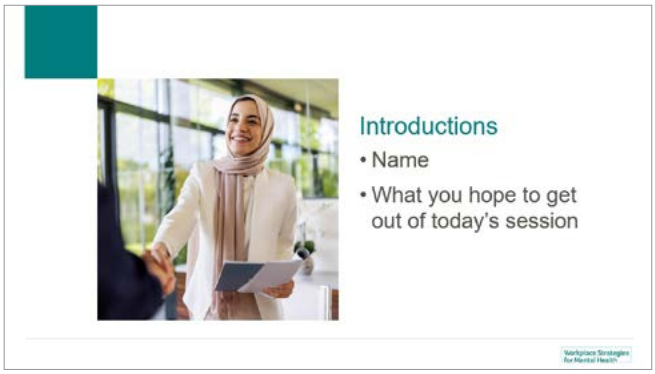
From this session, you'll be better able to recognize when you're actually having a stress response and what's going on in your mind at that time. You'll also be able to identify when your thoughts are interfering with the quality of your life and how to use the tool I'll introduce today to help with that.

Transition

We're going to start today with introductions.

Notes

Slide 4 15 minutes



Introductions

Facilitator notes

Introductions can be done as part of a large group if your time and number of participants allows for that. If not, consider breaking into small groups of 3-5 so everyone can participate and be heard. In a group of 20 or fewer, provide at least 10 minutes for introductions. If going with small groups, give 5 minutes for their discussion and 5 minutes for sharing with the larger group.

Suggested wording

[If using the large group approach] Please introduce yourself and share one thing you hope to get out of today. We've got about 30 seconds per person to share.

[If using the small group approach] In your group please introduce yourself and share one thing you hope to get out of today. Please assign a volunteer to record your ideas to share them with the larger group in 5 minutes.

[After 5 minutes]

Can we start with this group here? Can I have your volunteer share what your group hopes to get out of today?

For the rest of the groups, let us know if you agree with any points that have been shared and if you have any additional ones.

[**You need to decide how much can be covered in 5 minutes. If your group is too large, you could ask people to only tell you if they have something different from what has already been shared. This means you won't really know what matters to the majority, but it will give you a good overview.**]

Facilitator notes

When you receive the feedback, manage expectations. If someone wants to know how to diagnose a mental illness, for example, the suggested response if you have that knowledge might be "Diagnosis of a mental illness is out of scope for this session on managing stress, but you and I can talk about it at the break," or if you don't have the knowledge, you could say "That's out of scope for today, but I have some relevant resources that I'll share with you."

Suggested wording

[**After introductions**]

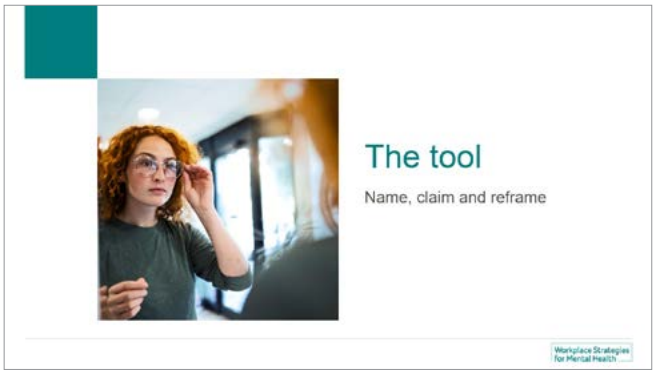
Thank you for taking the time to share. Today is meant to give you some practical strategies that will help you be more in control of how your thoughts affect your well-being.

Transition

Let me also be clear about what we're not doing today.

Notes

Slide 5 1 minute



The tool – Name, claim and reframe

Suggested wording

The tool that we're talking about is Name, claim and reframe. It's not intended to be used in the middle of a crisis, or to replace mental health treatment. It's a process to practice while you're well enough to make it a habit. This means it will be more likely you will be able to use it for more serious stressors.

I'm going to give you a bit of background information before you get to use it today.

Transition

Let's get started.

Notes

Slide 6 1 minute



Stress will happen

Suggested wording

We know that stress is normal and it will happen, and there's no way we can eliminate it from our lives. What we can do is choose how to respond to the stressors we' are faced with. This tool helps you learn to name the thoughts and reactions to the stressors. What we know is that these thoughts often get buried in the aftermath of stressful incidents.

You can learn to claim your power over thoughts that may be untrue, misleading or unhelpful. As Brené Brown says, you can claim the power to challenge the story you're telling yourself about your stressors.

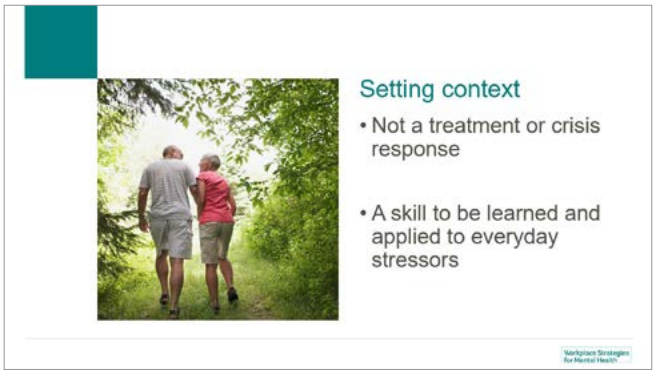
Even when you cannot change the stressor, you can reframe the story you tell yourself. This skill makes it easier to get through the stressor by being more objective and compassionate about the situation and your relationship to it.

Transition

This tool can do a lot of things to help you manage stress, but let's set the context.

Notes

Slide 7 1 minute



Setting context

Suggested wording

This is not meant to be used when you're in significant distress or dealing with a mental health crisis. In those cases, seek out credible mental health support. We'll talk about how to find that support later.

This is a skill set to be learned and practiced when you're well enough to perfect it. It can be used for everyday stressors at work and at home. Once this skill set becomes a habit you may not even need the tool to go through the process. You'll likely be able to use it simply as a thought process, and increasingly be able to use it in more and more difficult situations.

Transition

We know that stress is inevitable...

Notes

Slide 8 1 minute



Stress is inevitable

Suggested wording

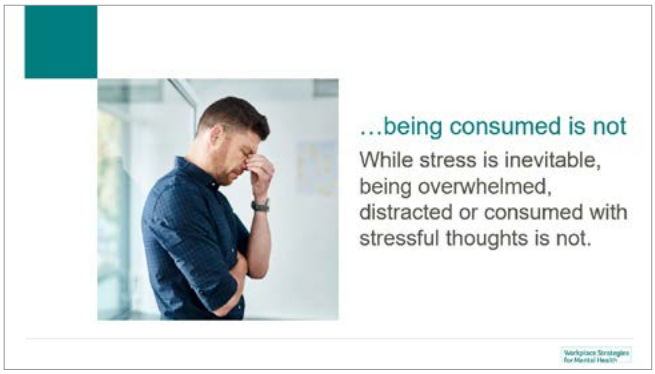
We all deal with demands, responsibilities and relationships that can cause us stress. Stress is inevitable.

Transition

But...

Notes

Slide 9 1 minute



Being consumed is not

Suggested wording

…Being consumed by stressful thoughts is not.

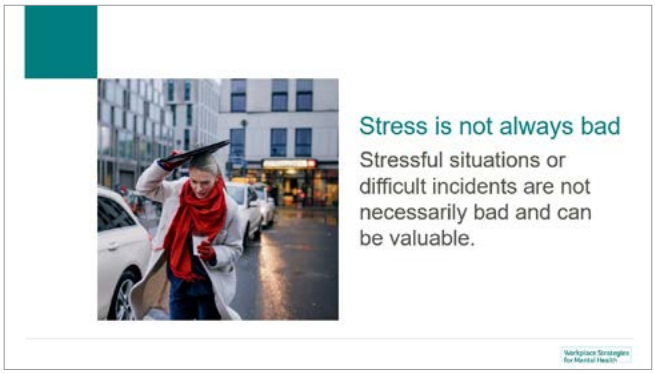
These should be moments in time that we face head-on, put into perspective and move forward from. They shouldn't be an ongoing or overwhelming state of mind.

Transition

In fact…

Notes

Slide 10 1 minute



Stress is not always bad

Suggested wording

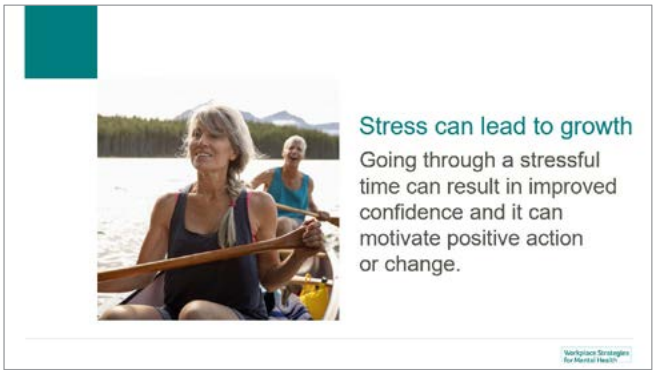
Stress is not necessarily a bad thing.

Transition

It can even be useful…

Notes

Slide 11 1 minute



It can lead to growth

Facilitator notes

Be aware that some people may have been through a very difficult trauma such as abuse, the loss of a loved one, being fired from their job, losing a home etc. The intention is not to minimize those very difficult situations or suggest they just think happy thoughts about them. Instead, if this should come up, you can point to situations like Nelson Mandela being imprisoned for over 25 years and turning that into a way to motivate unity in South Africa, or people who have lost loved ones to an accident and then begin to help others who are dealing with similar issues.

There is no need to bring this up if it's not discussed but be prepared in case it is. Also, remind participants this isn't intended to treat those who are coping with very significant traumas but rather to help them learn to deal with day-to-day stressors.

Suggested wording

Even though we're unlikely to welcome a stressful or difficult situation, you can all probably look back to something you went through as a child, like falling off a bike, that then resulted in your ability to ride the bike. It's more challenging to think about a relationship breakup and see how you grew as a person, but I bet that you do things differently now than when you were in that relationship.

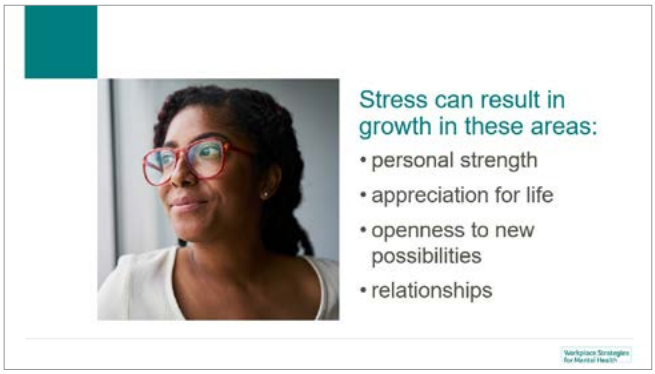
Changing jobs or trying to learn something new could also be stressful, but you often will end up in a better situation.

Transition

When we go through an extremely difficult situation and we're able to learn from it, this is called post-traumatic growth.

Notes

Slide 12 2 minutes



Stress can result in growth

Facilitator notes

Psychology Today defines post-traumatic growth as “The positive psychological change that some individuals experience after a life crisis or traumatic event. Post-traumatic growth doesn’t deny deep distress, but rather posits that adversity can unintentionally yield changes in understanding oneself, others, and the world. Post-traumatic growth can, in fact, co-exist with post-traumatic stress disorder.”

If you’re not familiar with this concept, we recommend you spend some time familiarizing yourself with it before facilitating this workshop, as it is the basis for claiming and reframing.

In the suggested wording, there are examples for four of the possibilities for growth and learning. If you have examples that are personal to you that you’re comfortable sharing, they may have a greater impact than reading the examples shown.

Psychology Today. (n.d.). Post-traumatic growth. Retrieved April 12, 2023, from **https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/basics/post-traumatic-growth**

Suggested wording

Just think of someone who has a life-threatening diagnosis like cancer, and how many can learn to appreciate life and those around them in a completely different way. The stressor is what has caused them to reframe their perspective.

It’s fairly easy for us to look back to years ago and understand what we eventually gained or learned from difficult situations. What we’re hoping to do today is to make it easier for you to do that in the moment of a difficult situation, by helping you to see what you might be able to learn or how you might be able to grow from what you’re going through.

It's a choice to reframe a stressful situation as a potential opportunity for growth and development. It can be as simple as asking the question "What might I learn from this?" In some cases what you might learn is to never do that again or to stay away from a certain person. Whatever you do, it's still learning.

An example of developing personal strength from a stressor could be quitting smoking or drinking. There's no doubt that these are usually very difficult things to do, and people often remark that they can do hard things after they've been through a major stressor successfully.

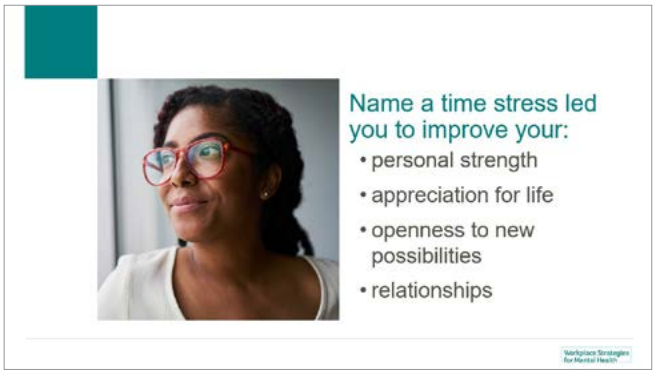
When we lose someone close to us, grief is a natural response, and stress is part of that. Over time, however, we may gain a new appreciation for life by focusing on what we learned or gained from the life of the person we lost, or when we decide to live our life in a way that honours that person.

Transition

Now in your small groups, I am going to ask you to name a time that stress led to your own growth or development.

Notes

Slide 13 12 minutes



Name a time stress led you to improve

Facilitator notes

Form groups of 3 - 5 so everyone can participate and be heard in the small group activities. Give 10 minutes for the group discussion. (Time may change based on the number of people.)

We're not asking for participants to record their answers for these questions.

Suggested wording

In your small group, I want you each to share a time that was stressful for you but led to an increase in your personal strength, a renewed appreciation for life, more openness to new possibilities and adventures or to better, richer relationships. Please share only what you're comfortable sharing. It can be anything from learning to drive, to losing a job. This is only to share in your small group; you won't be asked to share this with the larger group. Just notice with the examples people share how many ways we can learn and grow from everyday stressors. You've got 10 minutes to discuss this, and then I'll bring you back to the larger group.

[After 10 minutes.]

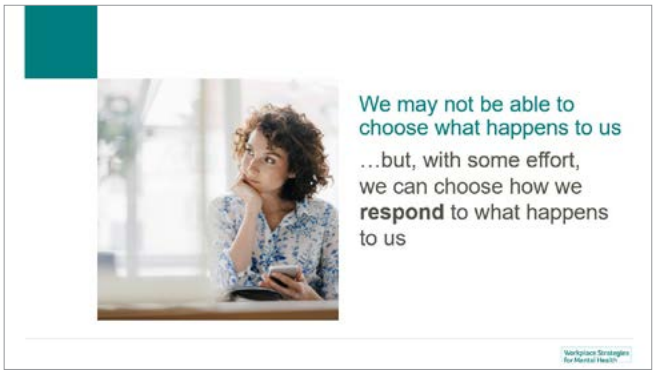
The time is up. I hope you heard some amazing stories of how we can learn and grow from stress.

Transition

We can’t always choose the stressors that we will experience.

Notes

Slide 14 1 minute



We may not be able to choose what happens to us

Suggested wording

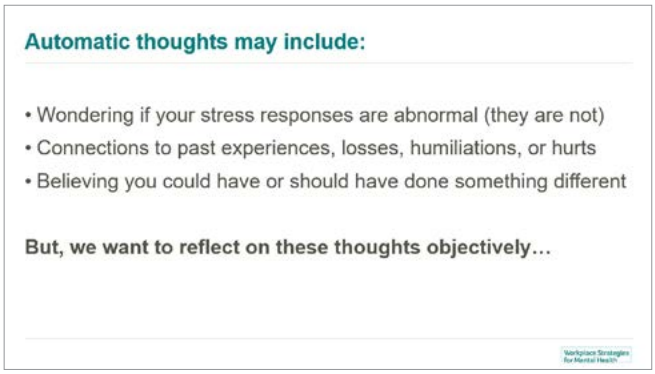
Life happens. This will include things we welcome, and things we don't. Even though we're not always able to choose all of what will happen, if we can learn some of these skills, we're better able to choose how we'll respond and move forward.

Transition

Even when you've learned these skills and can put them into practice, you can still expect that some experiences will be stressful or difficult.

Notes

Slide 15 1 minute



Automatic thoughts

Suggested wording

How we think and react to stressful experiences is often involuntary or automatic. Automatic thoughts might include questioning if our responses are normal. You'll learn that the stress response itself is often involuntary, and making it normal, given the circumstances.

You may also connect your current stress to past experiences, which can amplify the emotions and reactions. For instance, if your boss says, "You just don't understand," and this was a phrase that your siblings would say to exclude you from important conversations when you were young, the hurt you felt as a child may be layered on top of your current reaction to your boss's words.

You also may tell yourself that you could have or should have done something different in the situation. Whether you could have done something different in the moment is dependent on your stress response. Since stress responses are often involuntary, it may be true that you were not capable of doing anything other than what you did in the moment. This doesn't mean that you won't regret what happened, but it should mean that you can put it in perspective and move forward.

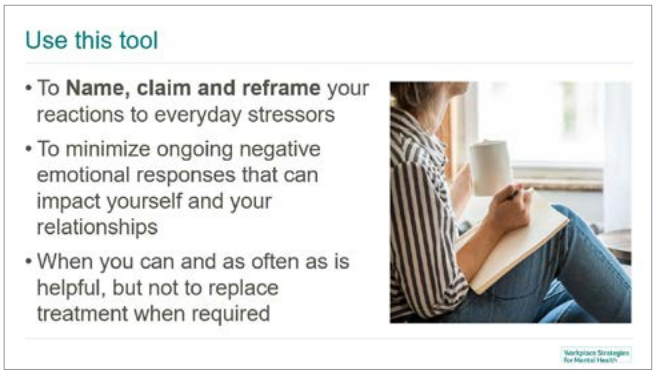
By practicing Name, claim and reframe, you also may have more control over actions during a stress response in the future.

Transition

Although these thoughts may be automatic, it can help to Name, claim and reframe.

Notes

Slide 16 1 minute



Use this tool

Suggested wording

This tool can help you think objectively about your automatic thoughts rather than being victim to the repetitive, negative emotions that might come from them. To Name, claim and reframe won't eliminate your stressors, but it can help you to minimize the negative impact stress can have on you and those around you.

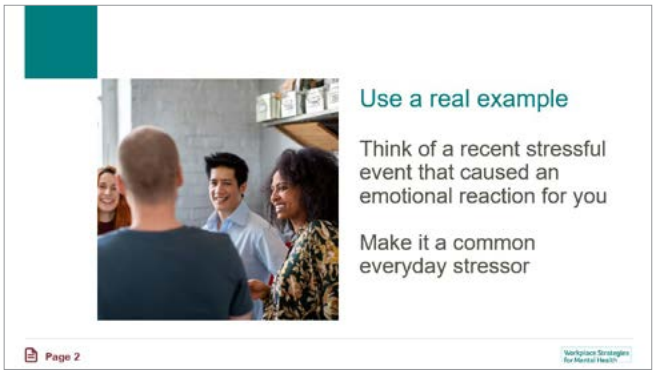
You can use this tool as often as you want for a wide range of stressors. But if you find that it isn't enough to help you move beyond coping with life to enjoying life, it may be time to reach out for help.

Transition

For the rest of the workshop, we're going to begin applying the tool to a real-life stressor.

Notes

Slide 17 5 minutes



Use a real example

Facilitator notes

Make sure that all of your participants have either a digital or printed handout as you're beginning the process of having them complete it.

Suggested wording

To make this as realistic as possible, think of a recent event that caused you to have an emotional reaction that could have included feeling nervous, angry or overwhelmed. Use an everyday event – for example, you had a flat tire, you missed the train, you made mistake at work, a deadline is fast approaching for work, or you have an exam to study for. You won't be asked to share the situation with anyone else. In fact, I'd like to ask you to keep your written responses private, so you can feel safe, being as honest as possible with yourself.

[**If your meeting is in-person**] I'd also like to ask you to shield your writing so that others can't accidently read it. Of course, you can share anything you want after this session is over, but I ask that you respect this process while you're part of this session.

There's space on page 2 of your handout to write a brief description of the experience you're going to use to try out this tool. I'll give you a couple of minutes. You don't need to write out the entire incident, you just need enough words that you'll remember the example you're choosing to use.

Remember to choose an experience where you felt stressed, but not something that is too difficult or overwhelming for you to deal with today.

[Watch and wait until only one or two people are still writing or when the 2 minutes are up.]

Transition

Now we'll launch into the process. Whenever I ask you to write your response to one of the questions, it will be related to the experience you just wrote about.

Notes

Slide 18 1 minute



Step 1: Name

Suggested wording

The first step – to **name** – is to be able to recognize when you're having, or have had, a stress response. We will discuss what those are.

It's also being able to name the thoughts and emotions you were experiencing during and after your stress response.

Transition

Let's begin with understanding **why** being able to identify our thoughts during times of stress can be so important.

Notes

Slide 19 1 minute



What can happen with our thoughts?

Suggested wording

In times of stress or crisis, we can make a decision, come to a conclusion or make an assumption about ourselves, our safety, or the world.

These thoughts tend to be automatic and can be fleeting. In fact, we might forget them immediately, or they could get buried as we continue our day-to-day routine. The problem with this is if they're difficult or negative thoughts that create fear or anxiety and we don't remember where they came from or what they were, they can have an adverse impact on our quality of life.

Transition

Let me take you through an example of how we might transfer our thoughts.

Notes

Slide 20 2 minutes



How do we transfer thoughts?

Facilitator notes

Although you can see all of the bullet points on the slide above, it is recommended that you show one bullet point at a time in your presentation as you read through the suggested wording. The animation in your presentation was originally set to do this, but your software application may not support it.

Suggested wording

One example might be if you were explaining a process to a group of people and one of them asks "How do you know this will work?"

It really is simply a question, until and unless we assign some meaning to it. If I take it at face value, I would point to the work of David Burns, Daniel Siegel and Brene Brown and the many research projects that have been done with this work and provide you with an answer to your question. In this scenario, I'm simply acknowledging you want to know the evidence behind what I'm explaining.

But, if my automatic or involuntary thought about the question was, "You don't believe that I know what I'm talking about" I have now assigned meaning related to an assumption I made of your motive in asking the question.

This can morph into a thought that goes beyond the initial topic. I could conclude that this is how you think about me all the time. I might then have the thought, "They think I'm an idiot."

I might generalize this thought to other people by saying to myself, "They all think I'm an idiot because nobody has stood up for me."

This disturbing thought can then transfer something even broader such as thinking "I've never had respect from this group".

This in turn could lead to making a wrong conclusion and thinking, "Maybe they're right and I don't deserve respect".

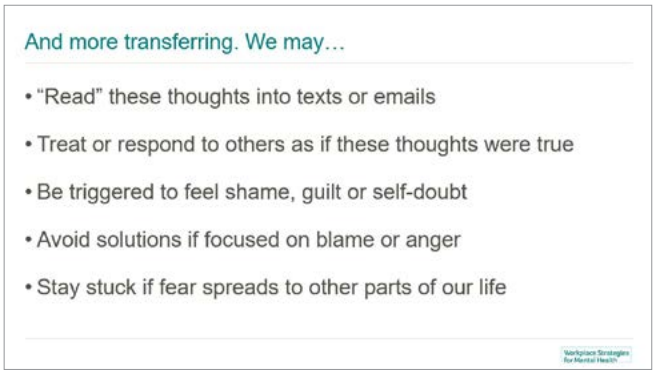
When we follow this transferring of thought, it may seem ridiculous – from a simple question to feeling like a failure –yet this automatic process is very common. It's only when we can identify and challenge the transferring of thoughts that we're able to manage them effectively.

Transition

We can take this even further.

Notes

Slide 21 1 minute



And more transferring

Facilitator notes

Although you can see all of the bullet points on the slide above, it is recommended that you show one bullet point at a time in your presentation as you read through the suggested wording. The animation in your presentation was originally set to do this, but your software application may not support it.

Suggested wording

We can take this transferring of thoughts even further. Someone could feel criticized by their boss at work and then begin to believe every text or email from anyone at work contains veiled criticism.

For example, someone writing, "I wonder if you could help me" could be interpreted as "you probably can't or won't help" rather than the polite way of asking that was intended.

Another example is where someone says, "How are you doing?" and this is interpreted as implying you're a mess.

In both of these examples, the interpretation was not correct, but it was based on transferring the thought about the boss being critical to all other communication.

When we believe these transferred thoughts are true, we begin to act as if they were. This means that we can become sad or angry, or we might be defensive or withdrawn, we may start to feel shame, guilt or self-doubt . All of this can take us away from looking at solutions or ways to move forward because we get wrapped up in the blame or anger around the situation. This keeps us stuck and can even spread to other parts of our life that had nothing to do with the original situation.

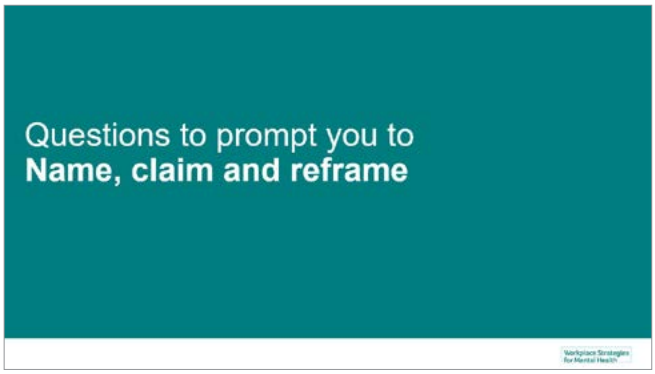
You can see why it's so important that we learn to process whatever we're going through intentionally and not just reacting to it. This allows us to move beyond it in a healthy way.

Transition

This is the objective of Name, claim and reframe.

Notes

Slide 22 1 minute



Questions to prompt you

Suggested wording

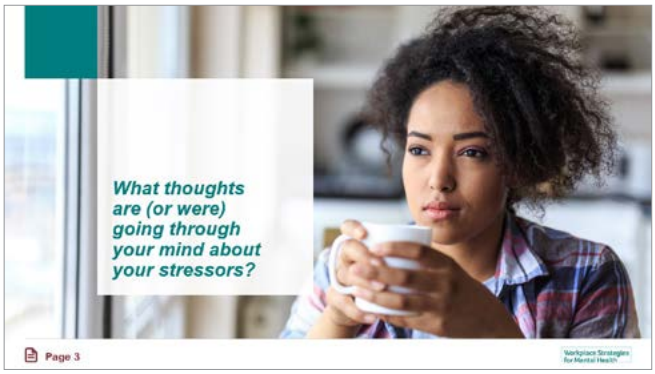
Name, claim and reframe consists of questions to prompt you through the process that you're going to learn today. I'll help you understand why we're asking the question, and then you'll get the chance to privately answer it in your handout.

Transition

We'll start with the first question and remember: you're thinking about the incident you recorded earlier.

Notes

Slide 23 7 minutes



What thoughts are (or were) going through your mind about your stressors?

Facilitator notes

Make sure that all of your participants have either a digital or printed handout as you're beginning the process of having them complete it.

Suggested wording

The first question is: "What thoughts are (or were) going through your mind about your stressors?"

Ideally, you'd be answering this question as close to the moment you have them as possible, to avoid making assumptions, drawing inaccurate conclusions or transferring those thoughts. In fact, as you get good at this, you'll be able to mentally make note of your thoughts as they happen.

Based on what you've learned today, answer this question as specifically as possible considering it's in hindsight. Include any thoughts that generated emotions like blame, anger, shame, self-doubt, fear or guilt.

On page 3 of your handout, I'll give you 4 minutes to write out your answer to this question. Please signal when you're done by [depending on whether you're in person or online, they can signal by putting their pen down, turning their camera back on or some other method].

As I said before, you won't be asked to share this.

[**Watch and wait until only one or two people are still writing or after 4 minutes.**]

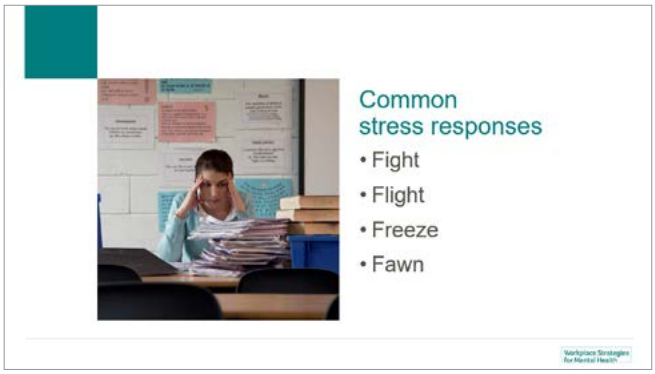
Please continue if you aren't done yet.

Transition

We'll move forward to talk about common stress responses.

Notes

Slide 24 1 minute



Common stress responses

Suggested wording

Most of you will have heard about the “fight, flight or freeze” stress responses. Some of you may not have heard of “fawn”, but I’ll explain each of them. A stress response is an involuntary reaction of the body and mind to something that can overwhelm our physical or psychological systems. The Name, claim and reframe process can help you to better manage when a stress response happens.

Some days we can effectively manage many stressors at once. Other times, a seemingly minor stressor can trigger a fight, flight, freeze or fawn response. The extent to which we can tolerate stress can change at any time.

When you’re stressed and overwhelmed, this may reduce your level of tolerance. You may have a flight or fight reaction, where what you say or do may be more aggressive or impulsive than normal. Or you might have a freeze reaction, where you’re unable to respond in the way you normally would, or shut down.

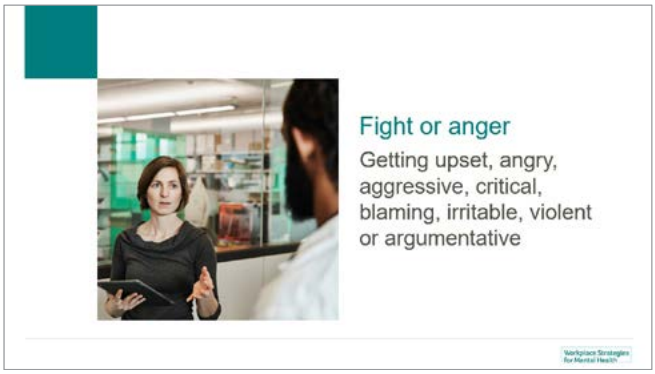
We don’t consciously choose how our nervous system will react to stressors. These natural reactions may make it more challenging to manage thoughts, emotions, and body sensations in the moment.

Transition

The first is the fight response.

Notes

Slide 25 1 minute



Fight or anger

Suggested wording

You may see the fight response as being physically aggressive, but the fight response can also show up as anger, being critical or judgmental of others, feeling defensive or argumentative or even feeling irritable. This doesn't just mean cranky, it could also mean that you feel noises are too loud, lights are too bright, or that anything touching your skin can cause rashes or hives. It could be your body reacting to the stress. It could be a heightened state of activation in your nervous system.

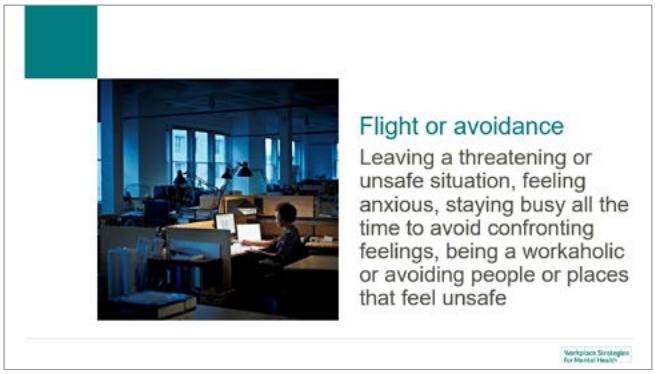
Some thoughts fueled by a fight response might be to blame someone, including yourself, for what happened, even when this may not be completely true.

Transition

Next is the flight response.

Notes

Slide 26 1 minute



Flight or avoidance

Suggested wording

In addition to fleeing a situation or avoiding a person, place or thing that reminds you of the situation, some people continue this within this stress response by being busy all the time as an attempt to avoid feeling unsafe.

Some examples are those who work all the time, play video games or binge watch television as a way to avoid dealing with stress, fear or anxiety.

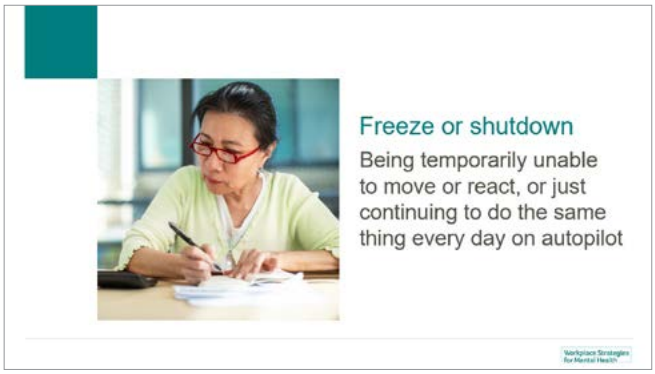
Some thoughts fueled by a flight response might be that “the world is not safe” or “I’m weak” or “I can’t deal with this right now”. You can imagine how transferring these thoughts to the rest of your life could have a widespread negative impact.

Transition

Next is the freeze response.

Notes

Slide 27 1 minute



Freeze or shutdown

Suggested wording

The freeze response isn't just about temporarily being unable to move or react. That can happen in the middle of an unexpected or stressful situation, but it can also mean going on autopilot. It's where we just continue to do the same thing even when it no longer serves us, and in fact can prevent us from moving forward. This can include shutting down from taking any risks or trying anything new.

Some thoughts fueled by a freeze response might be "just keep your head down" or "try not to draw attention to yourself" or "I just can't do it" (with "it "being almost anything at all). You can imagine that as an ongoing stress response, this can prevent you from interacting with others, taking risks or trying new things.

Transition

Next is the fawn response.

Notes

Slide 28 2 minutes



Fawn

Suggested wording

Fawn is a lesser-known stress response. It's where we focus on pleasing others to avoid conflict or to improve our own feelings of safety or belonging. It can be where we go along with what others are doing or asking us to do, even when it violates our integrity or makes us feel uncomfortable.

While this can happen in the moment of a stressful situation, this stress response is much more likely one that has been ongoing for months or years after the original incident.

Some thoughts fueled by a fawn response might be "avoid conflict at all cost" or "I don't want to say or do the wrong thing" or "I need to anticipate what people need, in order to avoid being rejected or abandoned". This stress response is not unusual for people who have suffered trauma as children. The reason for this is that a child is usually unable to see a situation from someone else's point of view. They believe that everything is about them, and they are the cause of anything bad that happens to them.

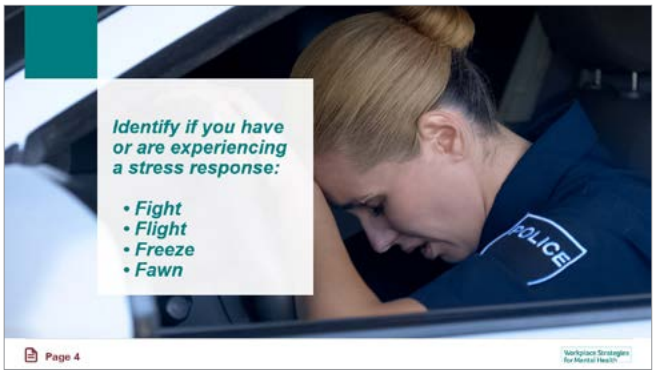
You can imagine how these thoughts can lead to burnout and resentment if they continue into adulthood. While the Name, claim and reframe process can't resolve past traumas, it can help you deal with stressors going forward.

Transition

These responses are often involuntary, so the intention is not to stop having a stress response.

Notes

Slide 29 6 minutes



Identify if you experienced a stress response:

Suggested wording

The next question on page 4 of your handout is asking you to identify the stress response you believe you had or are having related to your example, and to briefly describe how this might have impacted your thoughts or actions. Not every stressful incident will result in a stress response. The reason you were asked to come up with an example where you did have an emotional response is you're more likely to also have had a stress response.

I'll give you 3 minutes. Please signal when you're done by **[depending on whether you're in person or online, they can signal by putting their pen down, turning their camera back on or some other method].**

As I said before, you won't be asked to share this.

[**Watch and wait until only one or two people are still writing or after 3 minutes.**]

Please continue if you aren't done yet.

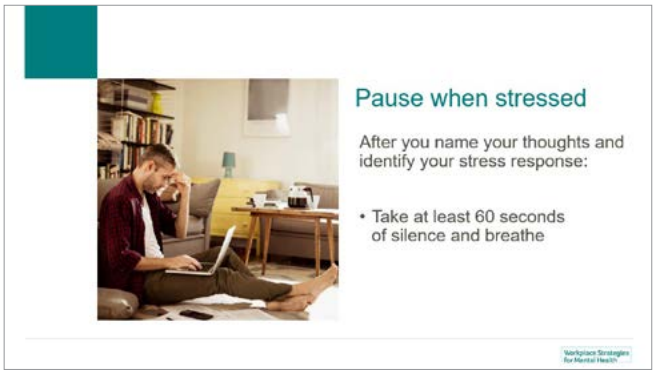
The two questions you've answered so far about your thoughts and your stress response are best considered in the moment of a stressful incident. There are two reasons for this: one is that the thoughts can be fleeting or immediately transferred to other thoughts. The other reason is that recognizing a stress response can help you better manage your behaviours and words.

Transition

Once you've answered these two questions, it can be helpful to pause.

Notes

Slide 30 3 minutes



Pause when stressed

Suggested wording

Some people go through one stressful situation after another. This could be if you're a parent of a sick child, if you're living pay cheque to pay cheque or if you work in a demanding job. It's not unusual for us to have circular thinking about stress where we believe we're powerless against it. So then we're stressed about our lack of power, and we keep going in circles as the stress continues to build.

You may not be able to take an hour to sit and meditate or relax, but you can pause long enough to reset and make better decisions. This usually doesn't require extended amounts of time.

In fact, one approach is to simply set a timer on your phone for 60 seconds. Just close your eyes, breathe and do nothing other than be aware of the sensations of your body for 60 seconds. You'll find that your nervous system begins to calm down.

If you can't do it right away, do it when you can. If you have no other option, do this when you go to the washroom.

[**If you feel it's appropriate, you can try this with all the participants, asking them to close their eyes and just breathe for 60 seconds**]

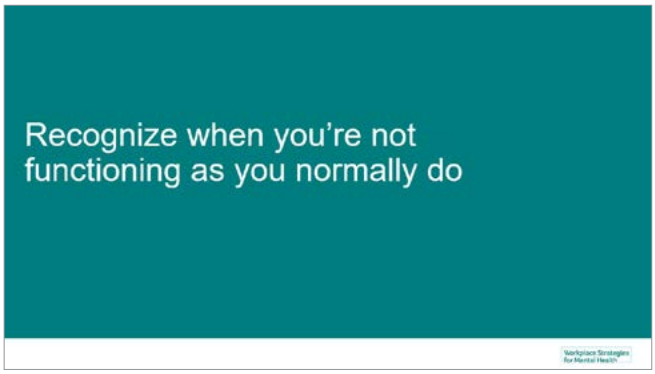
The intention is for you to eventually recognize the thoughts that you're having, as well as any stress response, in the moment they're happening. For the rest of the Name, claim and reframe process, it can be very helpful to take a moment to pause when it is safe to do so.

Transition

In the case of ongoing stress, it's not unusual for us to fail to recognize the extent to which it's affecting us.

Notes

Slide 31 1 minute



Recognize when you're not functioning as you normally do

Suggested wording

While the stress response in the moment is often involuntary, living in a fight, flight, freeze or fawn state doesn't have to be.

The intention is to recognize when your response is not normal functioning for you. This is especially true when it's days or weeks after a stressful experience. It's no longer happening to you, yet it's as if you're still living in the stress response.

Transition

Most of us are so busy getting through the day that we may ignore or miss the fact that we're not functioning as we normally would.

Notes

Slide 32 4 minutes



The stress continuum

Suggested wording

This stress continuum is a great check to help you consider how you're functioning at any given moment. None of us will fit neatly into a single column or category, and sometimes we can go from one column to the next in the same day. Take a look on page 5 of your handout and see which one best describes where you are right now. You won't have to share this with anyone. It's just a good check on your current state.

[**Watch for when people have finished reading and look up. When the majority of people are done, move on.**]

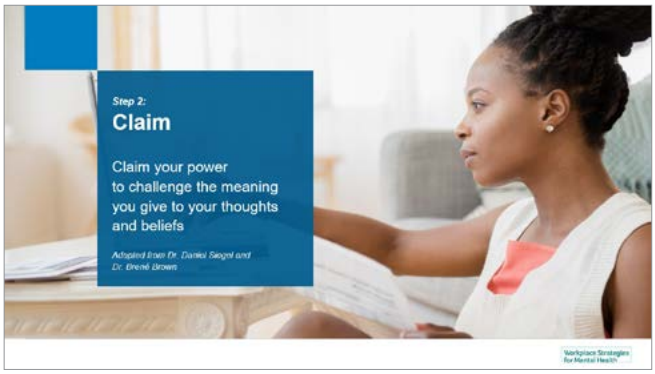
It's normal for us to move back and forth in the first three columns, hopefully with most of your time spent in the first two. When you recognize that you're in the 3rd or 4th column, it may be time to reach out for help. We'll be talking about that at the end of this session.

Transition

If we take a moment to pause when we're stressed, we're much more likely to reflect on what we're thinking and feeling, rather than just pushing through or reacting.

Notes

Slide 33 1 minute



Step 2: Claim

Suggested wording

The next step is Claim. This is where you claim the power to change the meaning that you give to your thoughts and beliefs, especially those that arise from a stress response. The reason we want to challenge them is because they're often untrue or exaggerated. Brene Brown explains this by asking the question, "What is the story you are telling yourself?" to explore how we assign meaning to our thoughts and beliefs that may or may not be accurate.

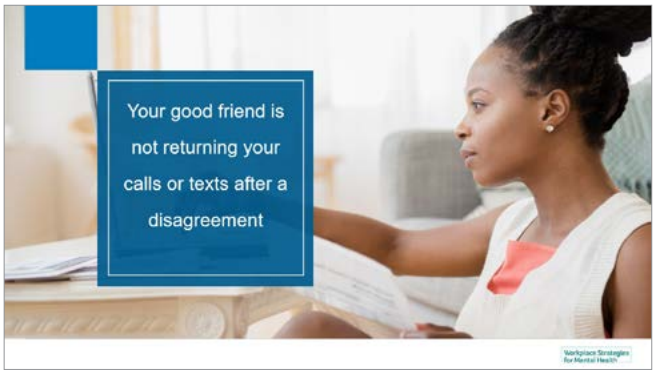
As we considered in the first step, Name, when we allow these thoughts to be transferred in such a way that they impact how we feel, think or act, it can be problematic for us and those around us.

Transition

Lets try an example.

Notes

Slide 34 1 minute



Your good friend is not returning your calls

Suggested wording

First, picture your closest friend. Now imagine you got into an intense disagreement about politics or religion over the phone. After you hung up, you called back to apologize for being so intense, but they didn't answer. You tried texting a few times and they never responded.

Now consider what might be going through your mind about why they didn't respond. Consider the very worst thoughts that might come up about yourself, your friend or your future relationship.

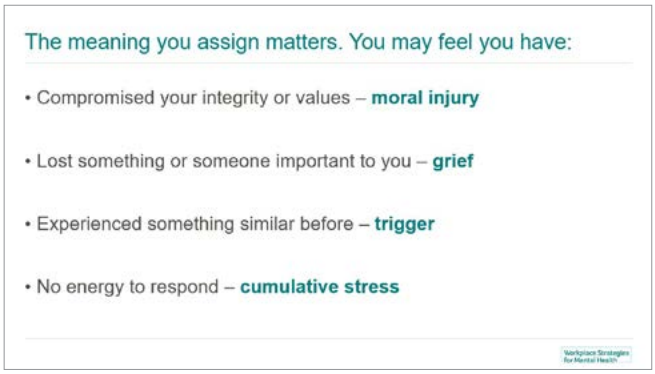
[**Give people at least 30 seconds of silence to consider their answer.**]

Transition

Now let's look at some of the ways we might assign meaning to this situation.

Notes

Slide 35 4 minutes



The meaning you assign matters

Facilitator notes

You should be about half-way through the session or 1.5 hours in. This might be a good time to take a break.

Be sensitive to suggesting people are wrong in the way they think or respond. Help bring forward the idea that stress responses are involuntary and impact what would be our regular thought processes.

Suggested wording

When we go through a difficult situation, we usually assign meaning to that situation.

For example, if the meaning you assign to your friend not returning your call is that in the heat of the disagreement, you said something that completely went against your own values and they may now judge you as lacking integrity, this could be described as a moral injury that arose from the meaning you assigned to the discussion. In this example, you're also making assumptions about how your friend is feeling about you.

Another example of moral injury is a soldier returning home after deployment and being questioned about why they did or didn't do something, and feeling accused of causing harm. Even if they simply followed orders, they begin to doubt whether they did the right things. This can also result in moral injury.

You may also have catastrophized your friend not returning your call as the end of the relationship. The meaning we assign when we lose something or someone important to us can result in feelings of grief. This is more likely when we feel that what we lost was unfairly taken from us. This can apply to the loss of a job, relationship, limb or someone we care about. On the other hand, if we were happy for the severance we received, glad to be out of a difficult relationship or grateful that a loved one is no longer suffering, our loss or grief can be different.

A trigger can happen when we consciously or unconsciously connect what is happening now to something that has happened before, or something that you've feared would happen. For example, if another important relationship in your life ended with a similar disagreement or argument, this experience can be amplified by the memories or emotions of the earlier experience.

Another example of a trigger is a first responder who is trained to manage traumatic incidences but is overwhelmed when a victim reminds them of their own loved one. This could lead them to personalize a situation to their own life circumstances or relationships, even when it's not related. The meaning that may be assigned is that their loved ones are not safe, and therefore the incident becomes an ongoing negative emotional experience.

The fourth example is when your energy is so depleted by other stressors in your life, the meaning you assign to your friend not returning your calls is that your entire life is falling apart and you can't cope anymore. The situation itself may not be serious, but you have assigned this meaning because of your current state of stress or exhaustion.

Another example would be if someone asks you to do something which would normally be a mundane task, like getting them a drink from the fridge, mowing the lawn or changing a lightbulb, and you lash out because you are feeling exhausted or overwhelmed. If you're already feeling overwhelmed, you may feel like adding this one small task might be too much for you to handle. This isn't about the specific ask; it's a buildup of your stress and your reaction to thinking about adding one more stressor to your day. The meaning you assign to the request is that your life is out of control and overwhelming. If the meaning you assigned to this was "this is a simple ask and I can say yes or no" you're less likely to have a stressful reaction.

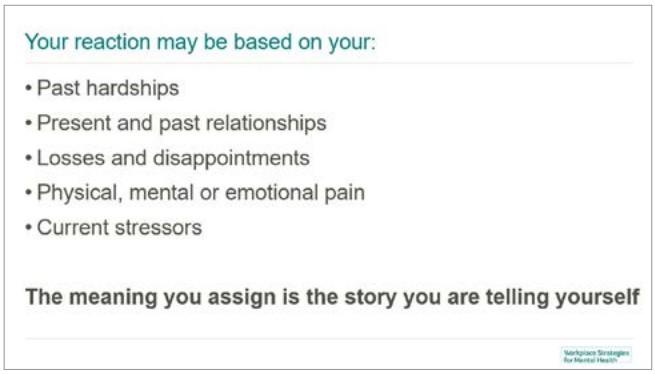
The example we used of your friend not returning you calls or texts could be explained because their phone ran out of power, they forgot it somewhere, they've been in meetings, they had a medical emergency or maybe they were taking a pause before responding because they value the relationship. In all of these cases, the other possible meanings we reviewed would be incorrect, and acting on those assumptions could cause further stress to us or damage the relationship.

Transition

There are many reasons why the meanings assigned are unique to us.

Notes

Slide 36 2 minutes



Your reaction may be based on

Suggested wording

Your reaction can be influenced by a lot of things. For example:

- Difficulties and hardships that you've experienced in your life, especially those that may be similar to what you're experiencing now.
- Your relationships, both current and those from a long time ago, can impact not only how you react in the moment, but how you deal with the ongoing stress.
- The losses and disappointments you've had in your life can impact your thoughts and reactions to your current stressors.
- Any physical, mental or emotional pain that you're dealing with can do the same.
- And of course, whatever stressors you're currently dealing with in your life, including at work, can influence your reactions and your thoughts.

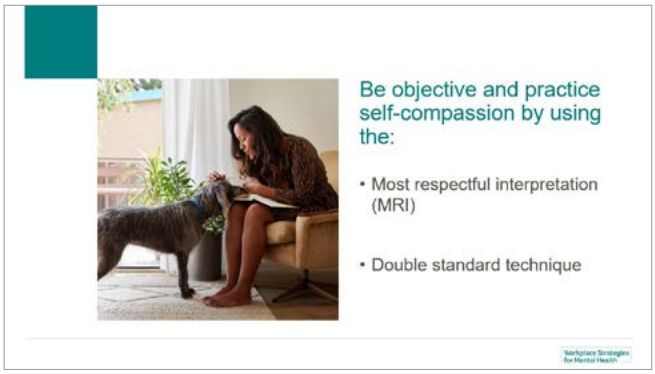
All of this will influence the meaning you assign to any stressful incident or situation. What is important to understand is the meaning you assign is not necessarily factual or helpful. It really is the story you're telling yourself about this. We can challenge our thoughts about the story we are telling ourselves by asking: Does this thought help or harm me? What we hope to do with Name, claim and reframe, is gently and effectively challenge that story so the meaning we assign is more objective and better supports our own well-being.

Transition

Let's look at a couple of techniques that will help you do this.

Notes

Slide 37 3 minutes



Be objective and practice self-compassion

Suggested wording

It's difficult to move forward when we're beating ourselves up about what we could've or should've done in a situation.

When we can be objective about our intention as well as the intention of others, we can be more compassionate. For example, if we made a mistake, had an accident, or miscalculated, that's quite different from believing that we're a failure, a screw-up or an idiot.

When we can look at another person who has hurt us and understand they were trying to meet a need, fill a void or avoid pain, we can be less angry than if we believed that their behaviour was only about us. There is a saying that "hurt people, hurt people". Being curious about the hurt the other person might be experiencing doesn't condone or excuse what they did, but it may help us to adjust the story we're telling ourselves.

Another example would be if somebody failed to show up at a meeting you both had planned. You may feel this is a sign of disrespect and feel angry at this lack of consideration. You may, however, later learn the person was injured and unable to make the meeting or to let you know. By pausing before we allow our assumptions about others to dictate our reaction, we can consider the most respectful interpretation of the behaviour. You can do this by thinking about why you might act or behave in a similar manner. Even when the behaviour is completely out of character for you, it's possible to imagine a stress response that might drive you to react this way or in a similar way.

In most cases, we act out for our own reasons, but the people around us are likely to be affected, even though it may not be about them at all. One way to help shift our thinking is the Double standard technique. Author Dr. David Burns says to ask what our advice to someone we care about might be if they had the same experience that was stressing us out. Most of us will find we would be much more helpful and compassionate towards others than we are to ourselves or those we're angry with.

By considering what you'd say to someone else, you're actually practicing a form of self-compassion.

Transition

Now let's give this a try.

Notes

Slide 38 12 minutes



What might be the most respectful interpretation

Facilitator notes

For this activity, you'll use your breakout groups again, but in the interest of time, you won't take up answers.

Suggested wording

In your groups, I'd like you to consider what might be a most respectful interpretation of each of these three behaviours. In each case, think of what might be your initial response of an assumption or judgment, then consider alternative reasons that might be driving these behaviours. Treat each of these as separate instances with different people:

- The first is when someone is blaming you for their mistake.
- The next is when someone you're talking to is slurring their words.
- The last one is when you know someone is lying to you about being busy when you ask them for help or to go for a coffee.

I'll give you 8 minutes to have this discussion and then bring you back to the larger group. You don't have to take notes and you won't be asked to share.

[**After 8 minutes**]

Many of you will have discovered different interpretations, but for each of these examples, I want to share with you one potential reality.

Let's start with the first scenario: someone blaming you for their mistake. There is the possibility that it actually was your mistake, and you're just not aware of it. By being curious about why and how they thought you had done something wrong, you leave room to learn and grow, while still taking steps to correct any misconceptions.

If you immediately react defensively, you risk feeling foolish if you find out they are, in fact, correct.

For the second scenario: I'm sure many of you recognize slurring words doesn't just happen because of alcohol, but could also be related to a medical condition like a stroke or a diabetic reaction. Being curious rather than judgmental about the cause could mean the difference between life and death.

Next: When someone lies about anything, they may feel if they told us the truth, we'd judge them, reject them or that somehow it would not be safe for them to be honest. Being curious about why they don't feel safe with us could open up the possibility of improving the relationship, rather than reacting with anger or resentment, creating even more distance.

Transition

Now I want you to apply the most respectful interpretation to the stressful situation you're using as an example for today's session.

Notes

Slide 39 5 minutes



If you were applying the most respectful interpretation, why might you or others respond as you did?

Suggested wording

The first question asks, “If you were applying the most respectful interpretation, why might you or others respond as you did?”

The intention is to think in a compassionate way about why you or someone else reacted in the way they did in relation to your example.

It’s about giving yourself and others the benefit of the doubt by recognizing you may have been having a stress response, filling a void, reacting with fear, meeting a need or avoiding pain.

You have 4 minutes to fill in your answer on page 6 of your handout. Remember to keep your responses private.

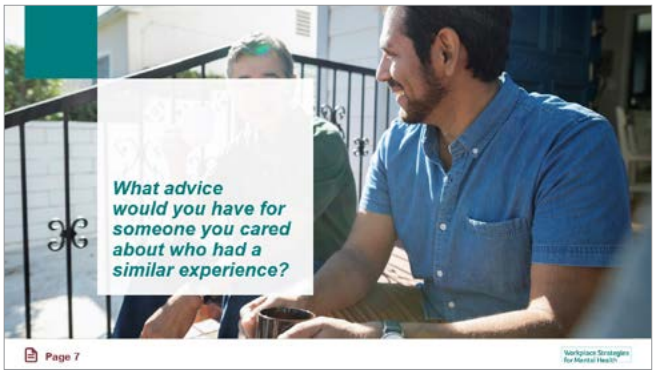
[**After 4 minutes.**]

Transition

Next please flip to page 7 of your handout.

Notes

Slide 40 5 minutes



What advice would you have for someone you cared about who had a similar experience?

Suggested wording

The next question is related to the Double standard technique we discussed earlier. It's asking you what advice you'd have for someone who had a similar experience on your own.

When you answer this question, I want you to be as caring, compassionate and supportive as you possibly can.

You have 4 minutes to fill in your answer on page 7 of your handout. Remember to keep your responses private.

[**After 4 minutes.**]

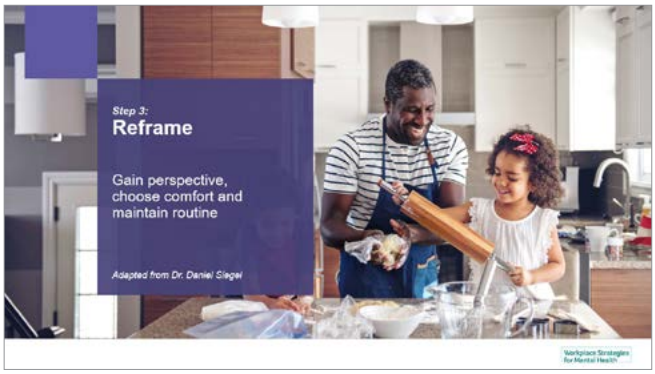
We've claimed our power to challenge the meaning we gave to this incident by considering the story we're telling ourselves and using techniques like the most respectful interpretation and the double standard, to be more objective and to practice self-compassion.

Transition

Now we're going to look at step 3, which is Reframing.

Notes

Slide 41 1 minute



Step 3: Reframe

Suggested wording

Reframing begins as you're reconsidering the story you're telling yourself. It may or may not include changing that story. But it always includes coming back to a place of emotional, psychological and physical well-being. This can happen by choosing activities and actions that bring you comfort and allow you to maintain your day-to-day routine.

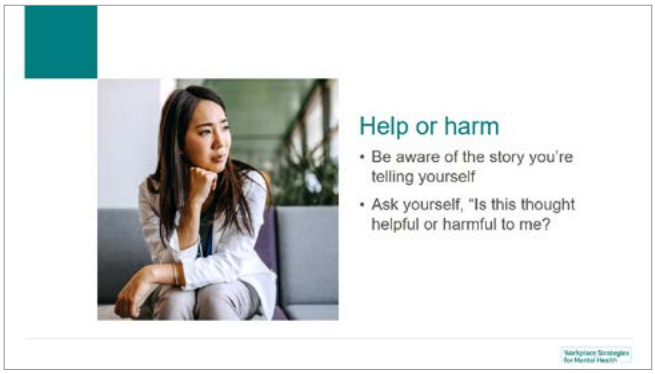
The goal here is to reframe from a stressful experience to one that allows you to move forward in the healthiest way possible for you. It means to become unstuck and to see the potential for going beyond emotional turmoil to a resilient approach to dealing with what life throws at you.

Transition

To do this effectively, it helps to know a few things before you become overwhelmed or blindsided by stressors.

Notes

Slide 42 1 minute



Help or harm

Suggested wording

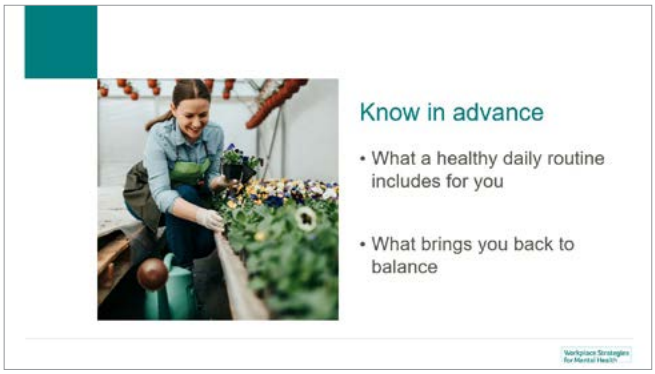
A helpful technique is to be aware of the story you're telling yourself about any given situation, especially in times of distress. The thoughts that make up that story can be helpful to you if they motivate positive actions, keep you safe, or help you make sense of what you are experiencing. They can be harmful if they trigger unnecessary fear or anger or provoke words or actions that you will regret. Asking yourself, "Is this thought helpful or harmful to me?" is a simple approach to help reframe your automatic and involuntary thoughts.

Transition

To help us manage stressors, we need to know what brings us comfort.

Notes

Slide 43 1 minute



Know in advance

Suggested wording

When you identify what a healthy daily routine includes for you, you're also more likely to notice when these things are absent.

For example, you would want to know what a healthy amount of sleep is for you, what foods are the best fuel for you, the movement that keeps your body and mind energized and the type and frequency of social connection that allows you to enjoy life.

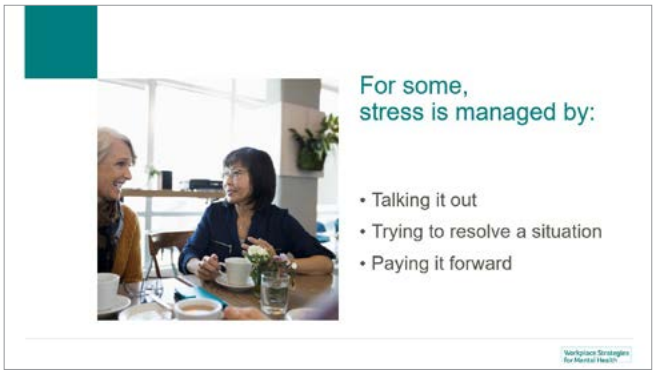
It's also important to know what can take your stress levels down and bring you back to a place of balance. For some people, that could include things like gardening, art, live music, being in nature or meditation.

Transition

Each of us is unique.

Notes

Slide 44 1 minute



For some, stress is managed by…

Suggested wording

For some, stress is managed by talking about the situation with someone you trust. This could be a friend, a family member, a colleague or a therapist. By taking the repetitive or negative thoughts out of your head and verbalizing them, you can often reduce the power they hold over you, and also do a better job of challenging and reframing them.

Another approach is to try to think objectively about what you can do to resolve the situation so it's not an ongoing or overwhelming stressor.

Paying it forward or making a positive difference in some other situation, is another approach to consider when whatever happened is in the past and you no longer have an ability to make that situation right.

Transition

And now it's your turn to think about what might work best for you.

Notes

Slide 45 6 minutes



What works for you?

Suggested wording

For the next 2 questions, I'll be giving you time to answer on pages 8 and 9 of your handout.

The first question is, "What is important in a healthy daily routine for you?" The second is, "What coping strategies could be helpful now?"

You'll have 5 minutes to record your responses to these 2 questions.

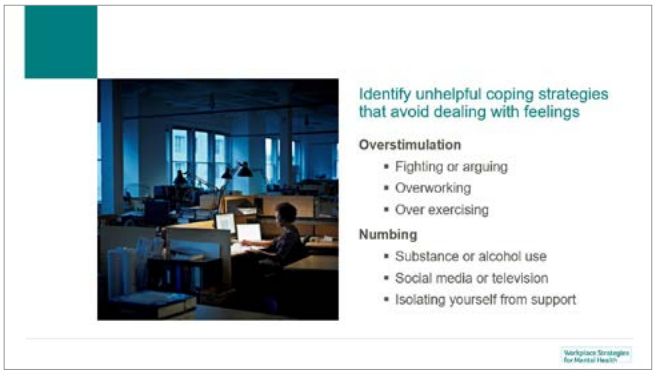
[**After 5 minutes**]

Transition

Now we're going to consider some coping strategies that may not always be healthy or helpful for you.

Notes

Slide 46 2 minutes



Identify unhelpful coping strategies that avoid dealing with feelings

Suggested wording

One of the ways to help you identify unhelpful coping strategies is to consider how they might distract you from dealing with your feelings by overstimulating or numbing you. We can distract ourselves by being angry, outraged or argumentative. We can distract ourselves by working or working out as often as possible. We can also distract ourselves by consuming substances like alcohol, drugs or unhealthy food. We can distract ourselves by binge-watching television or endlessly scrolling through social media. And we can distract ourselves by refusing to connect with those we know would support us.

It's possible doing these things for a brief time can actually help you manage in the moment, but if continued, they could interfere with moving forward in a healthy way. Watching television for 5 hours one evening is unlikely to cause long-term problems, but if you're doing it every night it could be a red flag that you're avoiding, indicating you need to deal with your stress in a different way.

This is particularly true when your coping strategy negatively affects your mental or physical health, your work or your relationships.

Transition

Just as we did with healthy coping strategies, we want to identify those that are unhelpful in advance of being overwhelmed by stress.

Notes

Slide 47 6 minutes



Which unhelpful habits or strategies will you try to avoid, especially those you may have used in the past when under stress?

Suggested wording

Consider what strategies might actually make things worse for you. For example, some people know when they're stressed, they might consume more sweets or alcohol. They realize the long-term effect is not helpful.

On page 10 of your handout, record some coping strategies you're likely to use you know could be problematic for you over time. You have 5 minutes.

[**After 5 minutes.**]

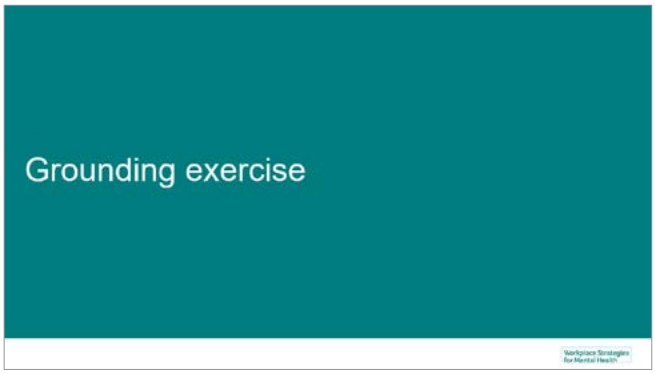
Any coping strategy could be unhelpful when used to avoid resolving or addressing the issue. Only you know what will work best for you. Identifying what you know is not helpful to you helps you better recognize when you need to make a change.

Transition

You have now responded to each of the questions that make up the Name, claim and reframe process. Let's now walk through a grounding exercise that you can use any time you may be feeling overwhelmed or experiencing a stressor.

Notes

Slide 48 2 minutes



Grounding

Suggested wording

It's normal to be uncomfortable when thinking about our stressors. We're now going to do what is called a "grounding" exercise. This can be used whenever you want to turn your attention away from stressors and focus on the present moment instead.

[**Speaking in a calm tone**]

- To begin, please sit or stand, whichever is more comfortable for the next few minutes.
- Plant your feet firmly on the ground if possible.
- Place your hands gently on your legs.
- Close your eyes if this feels safe. If not, just soften and hold your gaze.
- Take a slow, deep breath in for the count of 5. [**Pause for 5 seconds**]
- Exhale slowly out for the count of 8. [**Pause for 8 seconds**]
- Repeat another slow, deep breath this way.
- Now relax your breathing as normal.
- In your mind, focus on the areas of your body where you feel tension.
- As you continue to breathe normally, focus on relaxing each spot until you feel the tension lessen. [**Pause for 10 seconds**]
- Next, focus only on your hands. [**Pause for 5 seconds**]
- Take a slow deep breath in and let it all the way out.
- Now switch your focus to the most obvious sound in the room and just listen. [**Pause for 5 seconds**]
- Take a slow deep breath in and let it all the way out.

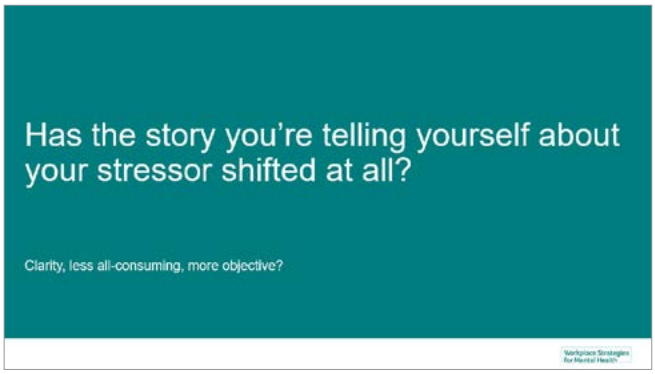
- Notice what you can smell around you. [**Pause for 5 seconds**]
- Take a slow deep breath in and let it all the way out.
- Now open your eyes and appreciate how you were able to calm your mind and relax your body using this simple exercise. All you did was breathe deeply, stay still and move your attention to what you can feel, hear, and smell. You "grounded" your attention in the present moment.
- Use this anytime you want to return to a place of balance.

Transition

We've walked through all of the Name, Claim and Reframe principles.

Notes

Slide 49 1 minute



Has your story shifted?

Suggested wording

You don't need to write this down; just consider whether the story you were telling yourself about the stressful incident you used as an example has shifted at all.

- Are you more clear about how the stress response affected you in the moment, or since?
- Are you able to challenge any harsh criticism that you had for yourself or others?
- Are you able to consider healthier ways to deal with this stress and move forward?

This is the intention of name, claim and reframe. Unfortunately, you can't avoid stress. But the tools I will share with you may be able to help you move forward in a healthier way.

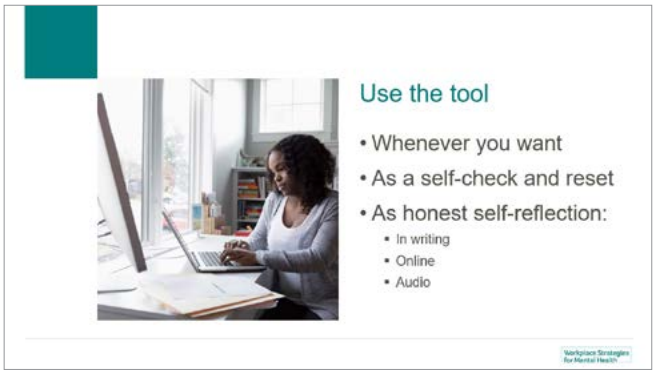
Workplace Strategies for Mental Health offers additional tools like their Plan for resilience. This resource includes ways to deal with stressors that you can't avoid. This could be a next step for you in your stress management journey.

Transition

Name, claim and reframe is an effective tool.

Notes

Slide 50 1 minute



Use the tool

Suggested wording

You can use the tool whenever you want as a form of self-reflection and to help you reframe and reset. In the beginning, you may want to write out your answers, as evidence suggests this is the most effective approach.

Eventually you can use a fillable form online or even listen to the recorded audio to guide you through the process. This means you could put a headset on and reflect on your answers to the questions, either while writing them out or just thinking them through.

All of these formats for the tool are available on **workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com**, and the QR code and link are on the second-to-last last page of your handout.

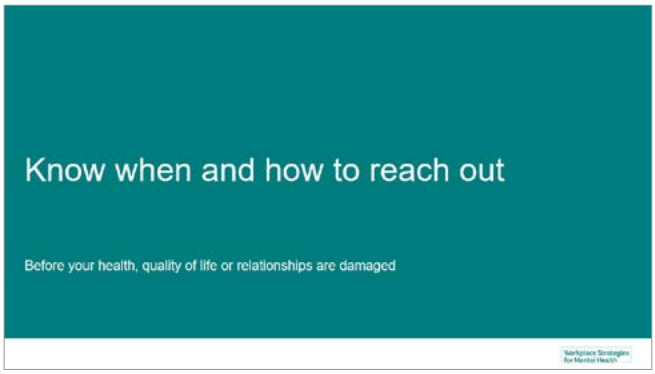
Ultimately, you may not need any of this when the process of naming, claiming and reframing becomes a habit that's automatic for you.

Transition

Name, claim and reframe can also help you recognize when you can benefit from additional help and support.

Notes

Slide 51 1 minute



Know when and how to reach out

Suggested wording

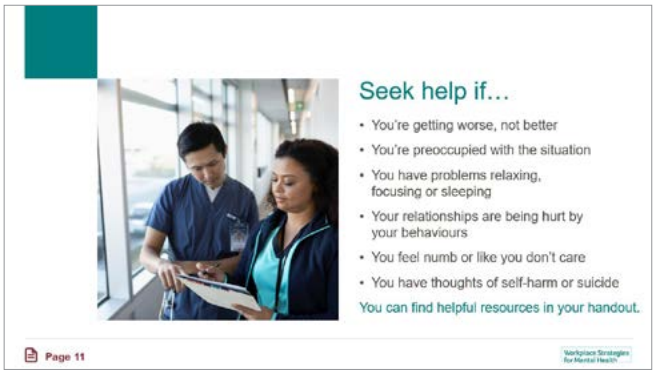
You want to know when and how to reach out before the stress starts to adversely impact your health, your quality of life or your relationships.

Transition

In addition to the stress continuum shared earlier, think about seeking help if…

Notes

Slide 52 1 minute



Seek help if…

Suggested wording

… you feel stress is interfering with your quality of life.

While we must deal with stress in the moment, if you're getting worse rather than better, if you can't stop thinking about the situation, if it's interfering with your focus or sleep, or if you know that your relationships are being damaged, these are all indicators that you may need to reach out to prevent more damage.

If you're feeling numb or like you don't care or if you have thoughts of self-harm, it's even more critical to reach out. If you're not sure where to start, there are some resources available in your handout. The key is to reach out rather than staying in this level of distress alone.

Transition

Also, it's important to think critically about who you choose to reach out to.

Notes

Slide 53 1 minute



Choose someone to support you

Suggested wording

There are many people you can turn to for help but be sure to think about their capacity to be supportive of you.

If it's a work-related issue and your leader or co-worker understands what you experienced, they may be a good choice.

If someone you trust is also trained to provide mental health support, such as a peer supporter, your family doctor or spiritual advisor, they may be a good choice.

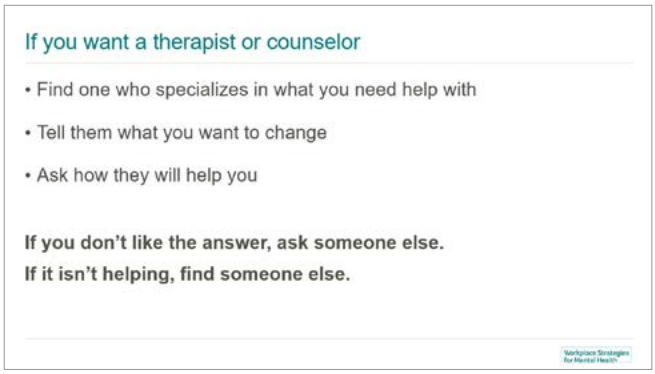
If you have a close friend or family member who won't be traumatized by your experience and won't minimize or exaggerate what you're going through, talking to them might be helpful.

Transition

It really is about being objective about who can support you well. If you did reach out and they're not helpful, reach out to someone else.

Notes

Slide 54 1 minute



If you want a therapist or counselor

Suggested wording

In some cases, a professional counselor or therapist is the best person to reach out to. These professionals are all unique human beings with unique tools and approaches. Not all of them will be the right fit for you. Some you will connect with, and some you will not. Some will have what you need to move forward, and some will not.

Treat finding the right person like you would if you were interviewing someone for a job. Tell them what you want to change. This requires you to know what you want to be different. Is it that you want to be able to sleep better, to not feel anxious when you drive, or to deal with your anger? The more specific you can be, the better. Then ask the counselor or therapist how they will help you to do that. If their answer makes sense to you, and you feel they'll be able to help, then schedule an initial meeting. If, on the other hand, you feel their answer is not at all helpful or supportive, try to find someone else to interview .

Today, there are therapists available by email, video chat or even text. You can consider group therapy or individual sessions. It's great if you have benefits that provide coverage for therapy sessions, but even if you don't, there are many services now available at low cost or no cost. Some of those resources are listed in your handout.

Transition

So let’s recap.

Notes

Slide 55 1 minute or more if you allow questions



Stress will happen

Suggested wording

We all know stress will happen.

The point of Name, claim and reframe is that you can better choose how to respond.

If we can **name** how we are reacting or responding to it, we are then able to **claim** our power to challenge the story we're telling ourselves, so we can **reframe** our perspective with the intention of improving the situation and/or moving forward from it.

Now you have the tool to use whenever it is helpful for you.

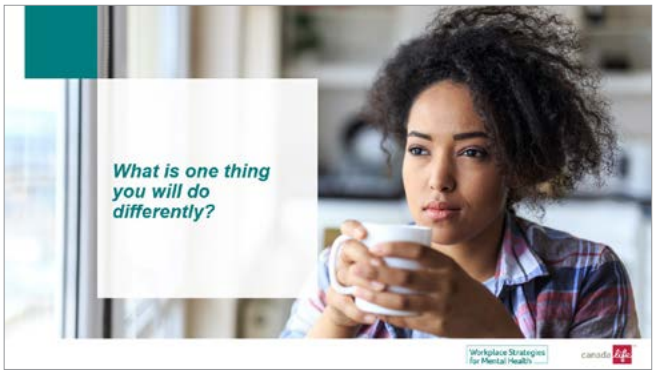
[You may want to invite questions if you have time, or you can move forward to the next slide.]

Transition

Now I want you to write down one thing that you'll do differently as a result of attending this session today.

Notes

Slide 56 8 minutes



What will you do differently?

Suggested wording

Think about what you learned today, related to the Name, claim and reframe tool, or the things you've learned about yourself, or something you've picked up from someone else in our session. Write down at least one thing that you'll do differently going forward.

I'll give you a minute to do that in the last Notes box in your handout, on page 85. Then I'll ask each of you to share one thing with the rest of the group.

[**After 1 minute decide who you want to start with and systematically give everyone an opportunity to share. Be sure to congratulate people on making that commitment and recognize those who show they have insight into what was learned.**]

Transition

Thank you very much for sharing. I do hope that this is the beginning of an easier way for you to manage stress in your life.

Notes

Slide 57 1 minute



More information and resources

Facilitator notes

Starting on page 98 of this facilitator guide, there are additional resources that are for you and leaders in organizations. These are different from those offered to your participants.

Suggested wording

workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com has more information and tools that may be helpful for you. Everything on this website is available at no cost in both English and French.

Thank you for being here today.

Notes

Workplace Strategies for Mental Health



Workplace Strategies for Mental Health resources are:

- For all employers, people leaders and employees
- Available in English and French
- Evidence- or practice-based
- Available to anyone at no cost

Examples of the resources available at **clwsmh.com/materials** include:

Burnout response for leaders

Identify employee burnout, recognize workplace factors and take proactive steps for prevention. These strategies can help protect overachievers and those recovering from burnout.

Communicating with emotional employees

These strategies can help you have supportive conversations with employees and avoid triggering negative reactions.

Employee mental health issues

When employees have mental illnesses, effective accommodation can help them stay productive at work. Learn to leverage resources, manage co-worker reactions and support a successful return to work after leave.

Employee stress prevention process

Understand how chronic mental stress is defined and how to recognize hazards. This tool provides strategies for reducing risk to protect both employers and employees.

Employee workload stress

When employees struggle with workload stress, it's important to focus on alleviating the stress rather than just reducing the quantity of work – especially when they're only working the hours for which they're paid.

Protecting the mental health of isolated workers

Learn strategies you can put in place to help protect the mental health of isolated workers.

Resilience for teams

Learn why resilience is a workplace issue and how to address it. You will see evidence for building team resilience and actionable resources to start.

Trauma in organizations

Help prepare leaders and employees to respond to traumatic incidents at work. Planning ahead can help reduce negative mental health effects.

We’d love to hear how you used this free resource!

Contact us through social media or at **clwsmh.com**



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