

## Stress and Ways to Relieve It

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**Intention:** To continue to develop students' vocabulary and listening and speaking skills while at the same time raising their awareness of the nature of stress, its sources, its impact, and some ways to reduce it. This lesson can be done within the larger context of a unit on emotions.

**Intended Population:** Advanced beginners (ESOL)

### Materials:

- Markers
- Newsprint
- Images from magazines or web showing people in distress or stressed out

### Preparation:

- Review vocabulary for emotions.
- Introduce new vocabulary based on students' questions or to expand what students already know.

### Implementation:

1. Hand out several photographs cut from magazines that show people with looks of stress on their faces. Ask students how they think the people are feeling. (Write student responses on board.)
2. If "stress" is not mentioned, write it on the board. Ask if students recognize word. Discuss its meaning.
3. Create a chart on the board with the following headings: "What Causes Stress", "What is the Impact of Stress", and "How Can We Relieve Stress." Review the meaning of "cause," "impact," and "relieve" (see chart below for student handout).
4. Conduct a brainstorm with students on each topic. Be prepared to offer examples.
5. During the discussion on ways to relieve stress, add deep breathing to the list, if it isn't already there and say that you are going to try it together. Ask students to sit comfortably in their chairs with their feet flat on the floor with their hands either palms up or down on their thighs and their eyes closed. Then quietly lead a few minutes of deep breathing, finishing with a few moments of silence.
6. Ask students how it felt to breathe deeply. Say that each day at the start of class you will lead deep breathing, but that if anyone does not like it or is not comfortable to speak to you about it.
7. After the class is over, copy the chart, take it home, and type it up for distribution and review during the next class meeting.
8. In each of the three or four subsequent lessons add another "de-stressor," like the worry bowl, brain gym (and explain about the two sides of the brain), or stretching exercises (including the song "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes"), until you've developed a routine that launches every class meeting.

## STRESS

| What causes stress? | What is the impact of stress? | How can we relieve stress? |
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