

Take Five

This lesson gives students a working definition of stress and allows them to distinguish between negative and positive stress. It also gives students an opportunity to identify five practical stress-relieving strategies they can use when they find themselves in stressful situations. The aim is to give students real-time self-care strategies so they can minimize bad stress and maximize self-respect.

Caring Sub-Concept(s)

Compassion, Kindness

Lesson Timeframe

25-30 minutes

Required Materials

- White or colored paper - ideally cardstock - for students to trace their hands
- Markers

Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.



DESIGNATED BY CASEL
AS A RECOMMENDED PROGRAM
FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING.
See last page for details.

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Compare/contrast good and bad stress.
- Identify strategies to help manage stress and improve self-respect.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

In the first unit we talked about the importance of self-respect as a building block for respect within our world. This unit our focus is on Caring, which incorporates compassion, helpfulness, gratitude, and empathy. Caring is defined as feeling and showing concern for yourself and others. With this definition in mind, try to evaluate how you care for yourself.

Self Care is a vital tool to ensure we have time to reboot. It is not selfish to provide time each day to just focus on YOU. What do you do just for you each day? If the answer is difficult to identify, brainstorm some ideas on how you can care for yourself daily. If you've already started this process, attempt to expand or deepen your self care to include long term goals (such as working out or taking a fun class). If you don't care for you, how can you expect to provide solid care for others?

Tips for Diverse Learners

- Be sensitive to students who suffer from medically-diagnosed stress disorders or depression; we are not talking about that level of stress in this lesson, but it may trigger students to share their experiences.
- Allow students with limited language or writing capabilities to draw pictures of their "Take Five" strategies.



Share

3-5 minutes

Welcome to the Caring Unit! Who remembers the subject of our last unit?

Invite student responses.

Correct! It was respect. Respect is very important, not only in our classroom, but in life! When we show respect, we are showing and demonstrating kindness. Can someone share the four areas we show respect?

Invite student response. Answers should include: self, others, things, or places.

Good! We are expected to offer respect and kindness to ourselves, to others, to things, and to places. A large part of what makes us capable of showing respect to ourselves and to others is our ability to care. Caring is defined as feeling and showing concern for others. In this unit, we'll talk about how we care - or show feeling and concern - for ourselves and for others. Let's begin with ourselves.

Something that can make us forget to treat ourselves with care is stress. Can someone share their definition of stress?

Invite student responses

*Good! Stress to me is _____. I feel stressed when _____
(offer personal definition and example).*

Turn to your neighbor now and share one thing that makes you feel stressed.



Inspire

5 minutes

Watch this 1-minute video about what stress is and how we can manage it:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ypbyD28vDg>



Empower

10-15 minutes

Because our first job should be to respect and care for ourselves, we need to be on the lookout for things that make us feel worried, anxious, or upset. The things that make us forget to treat ourselves with the respect and kindness we deserve. These are the types of stress that can be bad for us. Some stress - like the excitement or adrenaline we feel when we are going to compete in a game or play an instrument at a recital or take a test or perform in a play - can be really good for us. But even that type of stress and excitement needs to be managed or we'll start feeling overwhelmed by it. Knowing how to manage all forms of stress is important for our self-care and self-respect!

So, now you are going to identify five things that you can do to help manage or relieve your stress. It's called "Take Five" and you are going to write these strategies on an outline of your hand. The trick will be that we can use only one or two words for your stress-reliever so they can fit on your hand and so they are easy to remember. Before you can do this, you might first think about some of the things that bring stress in your life.

Here is an example:

Stressor: I feel anxious when I have to go to another person's house.

Stress-Reliever: Breathe!

What I will do on my hand outline is write BREATHE on one of the fingers or my thumb (do this as an example).

What are some other one-word stress relievers that you can think of?

Examples could include:

- Exercise
- Move
- Sing
- Squeeze
- Pray
- Talk
- Dance
- Relax (this is okay, but isn't very specific)
- Count

Ok! Take this piece of paper (handout paper or, better, cardstock) and trace one of your hands. Do not cut it out just yet. Write all of your stress-relieving strategies first; remember, use only five and put one on each finger and your thumb.

When you are done, you can color or decorate your hand. Ultimately, we will cut these out. I want you to put them in your locker/cubby space, inside your journal/notebook, or tape it to your desk (this may not be practical if students switch rooms) to remind yourself of what you can do when you need to "Take 5" and de-stress.



Reflect

5 minutes

Invite students to share their strategies by showing their hands. Show your own example first and display it where they can see it.

Give students one minute to place their hand cut-out in a spot where they might need stress-management strategies the most.



Extension Ideas

- Invite parents to make a Family Take 5 to post at home for the household to help manage stress.
- Have students work on a classroom “handbook” on self-care, self-respect, and stress management. It could serve as a future “weekly feature” where you highlight one new stress management technique each week and encourage students to use it that week when they feel overwhelmed. Or, lead students collectively in a stress-management activity before a big test or project.
- Have students make (either in school or at home) stress balls: <https://copingskillsforkids.com/blog/homemade-stress-balls>



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PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL
AND EMOTIONAL
LEARNING.

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning ([CASEL](https://casel.org/)) has been reviewing evidence-based SEL programs since 2003. Kindness in the Classroom® meets CASEL’s SElect Program and is included in the [CASEL Guide to Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs](https://casel.org/guide/effective-social-and-emotional-learning-programs/).

Kindness in the Classroom® met or exceeded all of CASEL’s criteria for high-quality SEL programming. Kindness in the Classroom® received CASEL’s highest designation for high-quality SEL programming.

<https://casel.org/guide/kindness-in-the-classroom/>