RECR 392 Activity Plan Template

Purpose: To become aware of what stress is, how it effects the body, and how manage your response to a stressful situation.

Objective (must be SMART- specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, timed): By the end of the intervention, the patient will show an increase in knowledge about the stress management and become familiar with the Diaphragmatic Breathing technique as judged by the recreation therapist.

Outcome (what do you expect the participants to “walk away with”?)

1. After the intervention, I expect the patient to walk away with knowledge of how to cope with daily stressors in their lives.
2. After the intervention, I expect the patient to be able engage in diaphragmatic breathing using the correct technique 75% of the time.

Number of Participants: One

Equipment/Supplies/Resources to Implement: None

* Introduction
  + My name is Carrie and welcome to my Stress Management Intervention! Today we are going to focus on stress management and how to cope with stress
  + The purpose of this intervention is to become more aware of how to cope with a stressful situation by developing healthy coping strategies.
  + By the end of the program, I hope you become more familiar with what stress is, how it effects the body, and how to cope with stress in a healthy way.

Icebreaker

* Name: Stressed? Let’s talk about it!
* Step-by-step instructions
  + Before we dive into the main activity, I would like for us to begin with this short little warm up activity called “Stressed? Let’s talk about it!”
  + In order for you to be able to manage stressful situations, one must know what stress is.
  + **Ask question** “In your own words, what is stress to you?”
  + Stress is different for everyone. By definition, stress is a feeling of emotional or physical tension. It can come from an event that makes you feel nervous or angry.
  + **Ask question** “Can you think of an event of when you were stressed? How did your body react?”
  + In most cases, our bodies react to stress by an elevated heart rate, sweaty palms, headaches, and in some cases, upset stomach.
  + **Ask question** “What do you think can happen if we are not able to manage our stress response?”
  + If we are unable to manage stressful situations, stress can lead to increased anxiety, cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, obesity, and gastrointestinal problems.
  + However, stress in small doses can be a good thing!
  + **Ask question** “Can you think of a healthy form of stress”
    - Wedding, homework assignment, driving in traffic to get to work.
  + In some cases, stress can motivate us and push us to achieving our goals.
  + **Ask question** “Have you ever had an experience where you think stress pushed you to achieve your goal?”
  + Alright, now that you are more familiar with what stress is and how it affects the body, we are going to transition into our main activity.

Citation: 5 Things You Should Know About Stress. (n.d.). Retrieved July 9, 2020, from https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/stress/index.shtml

Main Activity

* Name: Don’t Stress, Just Breathe
* Step-by-Step instructions
  + There are many healthy ways to manage a stressful situation: aromatherapy, practice yoga, make time for leisure activities, taking a walk, express gratitude, and focusing on breathing.
  + Breathing plays a huge role in how we are able to manage stressful situations. It is a filter that dictates how our body is going to respond.
  + **Ask the question** “Have you ever heard the phrase “Count to 10?”
  + This is another way of stepping back from the stressful situation and becoming more aware of how you are responding to the situation.
  + “Take a deep breath in through your nose and slowly exhale through your mouth.”
  + Great Job! You just practiced a technique called Diaphragmatic Breathing!
  + Diaphragmatic Breathing is a meditation technique that can be used in stressful situations to better manage stressful situations by breathing deep from the diaphragm rather than just using the chest. It is a way to relax and reduce anxiety.
  + **Explain the steps** To perform this exercise while sitting in a chair:

1. Sit comfortably, with your knees bent and your shoulders, head and neck relaxed.
2. Place one hand on your upper chest and the other just below your rib cage. This will allow you to feel your diaphragm move as you breathe.
3. Breathe in slowly through your nose so that your stomach moves out against your hand. The hand on your chest should remain as still as possible.
4. Tighten your stomach muscles, letting them fall inward as you exhale slowly. The hand on your upper chest must remain as still as possible.

* Just like many other things in life, diaphragmatic breathing takes practice. Even if you don’t do it correctly the first time, the important thing is to not give up trying. The smallest doses of meditation can still greatly impact the body’s ability to cope with stress and decrease the harmful effects off stress on the body such as cardiovascular disease and anxiety.
* **Ask question** “Can you tell me when you might practice diaphragmatic breathing?”
* Before we wrap up, I would like to give you the opportunity to ask any questions relating to stress, how to manage a stressful situation, or how diaphragmatic breathing can impact your ability to cope with a stressful event.
* Thank you so much for coming to my Stress Management Intervention today and I hope you are more familiar with what stress is and how to respond to it!

Citation: Diaphragmatic Breathing Exercises & Techniques. (n.d.). Retrieved July 9, 2020, from https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/9445-diaphragmatic-breathing