**Coping with Stress and Anxiety in a Changing World**

**Video Companion Worksheet and Group Discussion Guide**

*Taking the Escalator* – ***VIDEO LINK***

Stress and anxiety are part of life, especially when things feel uncertain or outside our control. Although this video was originally recorded during the COVID-19 pandemic, the coping skills and lessons discussed can help us deal with everyday challenges at any time.

After watching the video, use the following questions to review what you learned and consider how these ideas apply to your own life.

**Part 1: Let's Talk About It**

**1. Stress and Resilience**

The video describes resilience as the ability to "bounce back" from life's challenges, much like a rubber band or spring.

- What does being resilient mean to you?
- Can you think of a difficult situation you eventually bounced back from? What helped?
- What makes it harder to bounce back when life gets stressful?

**2. The Garden Illustration**

In the video, an overgrown lawn is used to explain how people sometimes cover up problems instead of dealing with their underlying causes. Cutting down the weeds may make things look better temporarily, but the weeds can grow back.

- What are some ways people temporarily cover up stress, anxiety, or other problems?
- Why is it sometimes easier to avoid a problem than address it?
- What might it mean to "get to the roots" of a problem in your own life?

**3. The Power of Perspective**

The video tells the story of two workers digging ditches. One sees himself as digging a miserable hole. The other sees himself as helping build a hospital. Same job, different perspective.

- How can the way we look at a situation affect how we feel?
- What is the difference between finding a positive perspective and pretending a problem doesn't exist?
- Can you think of something stressful in your life that you might be able to look at differently?

**4. Choosing Your Battles**

Not every problem, disagreement, or frustrating situation deserves the same amount of our time and energy.

- How do you decide when something is worth getting upset about?
- Have you ever spent too much energy on something that wasn't worth it?
- What is one situation where stepping back might be healthier than continuing to fight?



**5. Support and Asking for Help**

The video emphasizes the importance of having supportive people in our lives and recognizing when professional help may be useful.

- What makes someone a good source of support?
- Why do some people find it difficult to ask for help?
- How can you recognize when stress or anxiety has become more than you can comfortably manage on your own?

**Part 2: Coping Skills Review**

The video offers several practical strategies for managing stress and anxiety. Review the list below.

**Check the skills you already use. Check one or two you would like to practice more often.**

**Self-Care and Healthy Routines**

- ☐ Regular physical activity
- ☐ Healthy sleep habits
- ☐ Breathing and grounding techniques
- ☐ Taking short "two-minute vacations" to mentally recharge
- ☐ Balancing time helping others with time for yourself

**Managing Your Environment**

- ☐ Limiting negative news and social media
- ☐ Taking breaks from phones and other electronics
- ☐ Setting healthy boundaries
- ☐ Making your surroundings more comfortable
- ☐ Staying connected with supportive people

**Managing Your Thoughts**

- ☐ Reframing negative thoughts in a more realistic or helpful way
- ☐ Practicing encouraging self-talk
- ☐ Taking time to appreciate what is going well
- ☐ Recognizing when you are imagining the worst

**Managing Everyday Challenges**

- ☐ Choosing which battles are worth your energy
- ☐ Communicating respectfully and assertively
- ☐ Accepting that you cannot control everything
- ☐ Making time for things that give your life meaning and purpose

**Part 3: My Takeaways**

Learning about stress management is helpful, but putting what we learn into practice is what makes a difference. Take a moment to reflect on the video and think about what you can use in your everyday life. You don't need to make big changes to start seeing progress.

**One practical idea from the video that stood out to me:**

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**One coping skill I already use that I want to keep practicing:**

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**One coping skill I would like to try or use more often:**

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**One small change I can make this week to better manage stress:**

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**Key Points to Remember**

**Take Care of Yourself**
Healthy routines and small breaks can make a difference.

**Watch Your Perspective**
How you look at a situation can influence how you handle it.

**Choose Your Battles**
Not everything deserves your time and energy.

**Stay Connected**
Support from others is a strength, not a weakness.

**Practice Your Skills**
Coping gets easier when healthy habits become part of everyday life.

**Final Thought** - You cannot always change what is happening around you, but you can work on how you respond. Managing stress does not mean never feeling anxious, upset, or overwhelmed. It means developing the skills, habits, and support needed to handle life's challenges and keep moving forward.

**Remember: You don't have to change everything at once. Even one small positive change can be a step toward greater coping and resilience.**