



Module 9: Manage Stress

Lifestyle Coach Guide



Module Overview

Managing stress can help prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. This module teaches participants how to reduce and deal with stress.

Participant Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will be able to identify:

- Some causes of stress
- The link between stress and type 2 diabetes
- Ways to reduce stress
- Healthy ways to manage stress

Things to Do

In addition to the Session Checklist, you will also want to do the following:

Before this session:

- Communicate with your participants via email, text message, app, or social media to prepare and motivate them for this upcoming session on managing stress. Here are some sample messages you can send to participants for this module:
 - 1 Week Prior: “We all experience stress in our lives sometimes. Join us for our next meeting as we talk about causes of stress and how to reduce stress. We will also try out a relaxation technique! Even though stress might be unavoidable, we can all find ways to manage it and feel better. See you soon!”
 - 1 to 2 Days Prior: “Come join us on [day of week] to discuss the importance of managing stress for your health. We’ll also be discussing tips and suggestions to help you manage stress. Don’t miss this important session.”
- Determine if you will pre-record the optional “Practice Relaxing” exercise. If so, be sure to test it in the web conferencing environment.

After this session:

- ❑ Communicate with your participants via email, text message, app, or social media to continue the conversation on stress reduction and management strategies. Here are some examples of messages to post:
 - “Share any online relaxation tool you have used, like apps, videos, or podcasts. Tell us what you think.”
 - “Have you tried a new stress-reduction technique? How did it go? Post it here!”
 - “Share any stress reduction or relaxation strategies you find with the group, even if you haven’t tried them yet. Someone in the group might want to give one a try!”

Session Content

The following content is designed to last for 60 minutes. Please allow about 10 extra minutes to receive weigh-in information and to consult with participants privately, if needed, at the start of each session.

Welcome and Review	Page 3	5 Min
Session Focus	Page 4	1 Min
Causes of Stress	Page 5	9 Min
Stress and Type 2 Diabetes	Page 7	15 Min
Ways To Reduce Stress	Page 9	5 Min
Healthy Ways to Manage Stress	Page 10	15 Min
Plan for Success	Page 13	5 Min
Summary and Closing	Page 14	5 Min

Welcome and Review



Time Estimate: 5 minutes
Method: Facilitated Discussion

SAY:

Welcome back, everyone! This is the [current session number] meeting of [name of program].

Today, we are going to talk about how to manage stress to support your health goals.

Before we start, let's spend a few minutes going over what we discussed last time. I will try to answer any questions you may have.

DO:

Briefly summarize previous session.

DISCUSS:

What questions do you have for me about what we talked about last time?

SAY:

Let's talk about how things went with the action plan you made last time.

DISCUSS:

What went well? What didn't go well?

SAY:

Now let's talk about how it went with the other things you tried at home.

DISCUSS:

What went well? What didn't go well?



Time Estimate: 1 minute
Method: Presentation

SAY:

Please look at “Session Focus” on page 1 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display “Session Focus” from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

SAY:

Managing stress can help you prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. Today, we will talk about:

- Some causes of stress
- The link between stress and type 2 diabetes
- Some ways to reduce stress
- Some healthy ways to manage stress

You’ll also get a chance to practice relaxing. Finally, you will make a new action plan.



Time Estimate: 9 minutes
Methods: Video Presentation,
Facilitated Discussion

In this part of the session, participants will learn about some common causes of stress. Then, they will reflect on what causes stress in their daily lives.

SAY:

We'll start by talking about some causes of stress. There are many things in our lives that can cause stress. Please look at "Causes of Stress" on page 2 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display "Causes of Stress" from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

DO:

Read (or have a volunteer read) Barbara's Story.

DISCUSS:

In what ways can you relate to Barbara's Story?

DO:

Share the following (if not mentioned by participants):

- Explain that change is often a cause of stress. Like Barbara, we all experience change in our lives, which can bring stress on.
- Explain the importance of trying to reframe how we think about change. Accept that change is not always bad and try putting a positive spin on it to help ease your fears about change.
- When a change first occurs, it can feel like you are losing something. Try reframing those initial thoughts. What could feel like a loss now could end up being a win later.

DISCUSS:

How has stress made you feel? How does it affect those around you?



For a virtual session, encourage participants to use a digital whiteboard or the group chat feature to type their answers. Or have them “raise their hand” in the web conferencing tool, if the option exists.

DO:

Share the following (if not mentioned by participants):

- I can be short or angry with others for small things.
- People don't enjoy being around me.
- I don't feel healthy.
- I feel like I never have enough time.
- I feel like I have too many responsibilities or things I need to get done now.
- I just don't feel happy.

DO:

Some participants might say that some stress is okay and that they work well under pressure. Acknowledge this. People react differently to stress. Explain, however, that stress can make us feel bad or engage in less healthy behaviors. Therefore, managing stress is important.

SAY:

Identifying the things that make you feel stressed can help you plan ways to manage those situations. Take a moment to write down two things that cause you stress on a regular basis. We'll come back to these later.



Time Estimate: 15 minutes
Methods: Presentation, Facilitated Discussion

This part of the session helps participants understand the relationship between stress and type 2 diabetes.

SAY:

Barbara’s story helps us talk about how stress is a regular part of our daily lives. We have also begun to talk about how stress affects us. Now, let’s talk about how it impacts our health.

DISCUSS:

How do you think unmanaged stress can impact a person’s health?

DO:

Share the following (if not mentioned by participants):

- Gives you headaches
- Causes weight gain
- Causes you to be tired
- Increases muscle tension and pain
- Causes stomach upset

SAY:

Now let’s look at the link between stress and type 2 diabetes. Please look at “Stress and Type 2 Diabetes” on page 3 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display “Stress and Type 2 Diabetes” from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

SAY:

Feeling stressed can:

- Cause changes in your blood sugar levels, which increases your risk of getting type 2 diabetes.
- Cause you to act in unhealthy ways.

DO:

Read (or have a volunteer read) the second part of Barbara's story.

ASK:

What stressors does Barbara experience, and what do they cause?

ANSWER:

Work, homework, cooking and housekeeping stress cause unhealthy eating and drinking and lack of activity.

DISCUSS:

Can you name some other unhealthy actions or feelings and the stress that causes them?

What physical symptoms, like an upset stomach, can be caused by stress?



For a virtual session, encourage participants to use a digital whiteboard or the group chat feature to type their answers. Or have them “raise their hand” in the web conferencing tool, if the option exists.

DO:

As needed, refer participants to the stress-related lists in the Participant Guide on page 4.



Time Estimate: 5 minutes
Methods: Presentation, Facilitated Discussion

In this part of the session, participants discuss tips to make their life less stressful.

SAY:

Unfortunately, there's no surefire way to prevent stress. You may lose your job, get married, have a child, or just need to pay a bill on time. But there are ways to make your life less stressful. Please look at "Ways to Reduce Stress" on page 5 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display "Ways To Reduce Stress" from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

DO:

Review the list and discuss briefly.

DISCUSS:

Earlier you wrote down two things that cause you stress. Can I have a volunteer share how their personal stress might be reduced with one of the strategies in our "Ways to Reduce Stress" list?

What small step can you take to start reducing your stress?



For a virtual session, encourage participants to type their responses in the chat window or "raise their hand" in the web conferencing tool.

DO:

Encourage participants to share their stresses and how they might begin to manage them. Answer any questions that come up.



Time Estimate: 15 minutes
Methods: Presentation, Facilitated Discussion

Participants are presented with ideas for managing stress. They will practice a relaxation technique as a group.

SAY:

We've talked about how to make your life less stressful. But, as we've discussed, there's no surefire way to prevent stress. So, it's important to know how to manage it.

Please look at "Healthy Ways to Manage Stress" on page 6 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display the "Healthy Ways To Manage Stress" in the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

DO:

Review concepts listed in "Healthy Ways To Manage Stress." Discuss briefly. Encourage participants to connect their experiences to Barbara's.

Practice Relaxing (optional) (10 minutes)

NOTE:

You likely won't have time to do all these techniques. So, start with the option you think would work best for your group. It's better to do one well than do all of them poorly.



In a virtual session, you may not be able to simultaneously speak and play music. Instead, you can record yourself talking through this exercise with background music and then play the recording during this session.

SAY:

Your Participant Guide lists some ways to relax. Let's practice one of those methods right now.

DO:

Lower the lights. Put on soothing music. Ask participants to close their eyes. If space permits, walk around the room as you talk.



For a virtual session, instruct participants to find a comfortable position in a chair just as you would in the in-person setting. If you have prerecorded the exercise, play it now.

SAY:

Let's start by sitting up straight and tall and breathing deeply. Place one hand just below your ribs. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth.

As you breathe in, relax your stomach muscles.

As you breathe out, tighten the muscles and imagine using them to push the air out.

Stay focused on the way your hand raises and lowers.

DO:

Give participants a few minutes to practice breathing deeply. Answer questions as needed.

SAY:

Now let's meditate. Focus on something simple that you find calming. It could be an image or a sound.

Don't worry if other thoughts get in the way. Just go back to your image or sound.

DO:

Give participants a few minutes. Answer questions as needed.

DISCUSS:

What did you think of these ways to relax? Did you find any of them helpful?

SAY:

Keep in mind: It may take time to see results. Relaxing takes practice. Try to practice for at least 10 minutes a day. Think about how you can create a new routine that supports this practice.

DISCUSS:

What ideas for relaxation activities do you want to try? What cultural activities help you feel relaxed?

DO:

Listen to the responses. Responses may include, but are not limited to: beading, drawing, painting, carving, sculpting, sewing, and crafting.



Time Estimate: 5 minutes

SAY:

Please look at your Action Plan Journal. Let's spend the next few minutes making a new action plan.

Keep in mind what worked and what didn't work well for you since our last session. Are there any changes that you want to make to your new routines? Are you ready for a new routine?

Also, keep in mind what we discussed today about managing stress.

As you try out and practice your new routine, make sure to add in the following to make it automatic:

- Make your new routine easy and the old one harder to follow.
- Build in a healthy reward.
- Create times to repeat and practice your new routines.

If you are ready to add another routine, complete these 3 steps:

1. Identify what current routine needs to change or stop.
2. Plan a new routine that helps you make a positive change that will stick.
3. List cues or hints for when to use your new routine.

DO:

Give participants a few minutes to make their action plan.



Time Estimate: 5 minutes

SAY:

Please review “Ways to Reduce Stress” and Healthy Ways to Manage Stress” on pages 5, 6, and 7 again. Between now and our next session, try some of these strategies to help manage the stresses you wrote down on page 2 of your guide. You can use the space at the bottom of page 7 to note which strategies you want to try.

DO:

Answer questions as needed.

SAY:

We have come to the end of our meeting. Today, we discussed how to manage stress. We talked about:

- Some causes of stress
- The link between stress and type 2 diabetes
- Some ways to reduce stress
- Some healthy ways to manage stress

DISCUSS:

Do you have questions about anything we talked about today?

SAY:

Next time, we’ll talk about the things you tried at home, including your action plan. We’ll also talk about [include specific topics that will be presented in the next session].

Thank you for coming to this session. Remember to bring your Participant Guide and Action Plan Journal to the next session.

End of meeting.