



# **CALMER LIFE PROGRAM**

## **COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS CURRICULUM**

Fallon Keegan, B.A., Jose Cortes, B.A., Carolyn Sneed, Sarahi Silva, M.S.W.<sup>1</sup>,  
Anette Ovalle, B.A., Kerstin Hollan, B.A., Srijana Shrestha, Ph.D.<sup>2</sup>,  
Nancy L. Wilson, MSW, & Melinda A. Stanley, Ph.D.

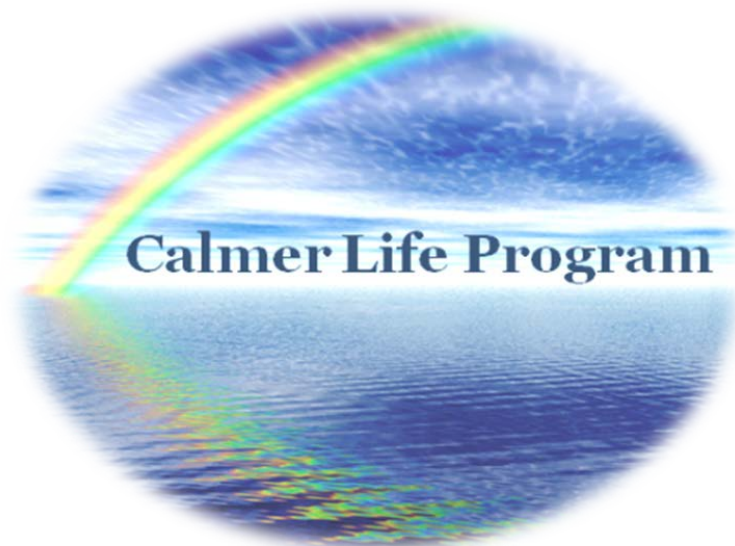
VA HSR&D Houston Center of Excellence,  
Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center

VA South Central Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center, Houston

Baylor College of Medicine

<sup>1</sup>Catholic Charities

<sup>2</sup>University of St. Thomas



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Calmer Life Program  
Community Workshops Curriculum

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## **Development of the Calmer Life Program Workshops**

The Calmer Life (CL) Program is an innovative intervention for worry and stress designed to meet the needs and address the potential treatment barriers of older adults (aged 50+) from underserved, low-income, mostly racial minority communities. The program teaches people a range of skills to reduce worry and stress and is effective when delivered in individual meetings with a counselor. Outcomes following CL are equal to standard community care that involves information and resource counseling, although clients found CL to be more satisfying. Given the effectiveness of the CL intervention for individuals and participants' high level of satisfaction, workshops were developed that teach groups of older adults in the community how to reduce worry and stress. The information delivered in these workshops was derived from skills taught in the CL intervention. The workshop material was reviewed by community partner leaders, counselors, and consumers to make sure that the presentations and materials are easy to understand and digest. Workshop topics include: becoming aware of worry and stress, learning breathing exercises to relax, learning how to stop unwanted thoughts, and learning calming statements to reduce and manage worry and stress. Materials include slides, handouts, and a game of Bingo to help participants learn how to recognize worry and stress.

## **Acknowledgements**

The CL Program was developed and implemented through an academic-community partnership led by Baylor College of Medicine and involving social service and faith-based organizations as well as consumers. The lead community organizations were BakerRipley - Sheltering Arms Senior Services Division and Catholic Charities - Senior Services. Staff from these agencies were trained to deliver the program. All partners listed below contributed in some way to the creation, delivery, or testing of the Calmer Life program.

### **Academic Partners**

- Patient - Centered Outcomes Research Institute
- Baylor College of Medicine - Department of Psychiatry
- Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center
- Houston VA HSR&D Center for Innovations in Quality, Effectiveness, and Safety
- South Central Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center

## **Community Agencies and Faith-Based Partners**

- Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, Office of Aging Ministry
- BakerRipley, Sheltering Arms Senior Services Division
- Catholic Charities, Senior Services
- Care for Elders (formerly at United Way of the Texas Gulf Coast)
- Harris County Area Agency on Aging
- Houston Department of Health and Human Services
- Julia C. Hester House
- The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, Department of Health Disparities Research
- South Main Baptist Church
- St. John's United Methodist Church, Care and Compassion Ministry
- The Council on Recovery

## **Consumers**

- Delores Chandler
- Emma Cooper (In Memorium)
- Marlin Dickerson
- Myrtha Foster
- Dorothy Lindsay
- Diane Pitchford

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Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute

1828 L Street, Suite 900

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: 202-827-7700

Fax: 202-355-9558

E-mail: [info@pcori.org](mailto:info@pcori.org)

Web Site: [www.pcori.org](http://www.pcori.org)

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## Introduction

### WORRY

Worry is a type of anxiety. Individuals who worry tend to be concerned or fret about a lot of different things in their lives. For example, they may frequently have concerns that something bad might happen to themselves or others, and/or they may worry about many different topics, including finances, employment, children, etc. People who worry too much often have trouble controlling their worrying, and it can cause problems in their life.

*Geraldo is 68 years old, and a lot of stressful things have happened to him recently. His wife left him, his mother passed away, and he has a lot of concerns about his health and finances. He finds it difficult to stop thinking about all these problems and spends a great deal of time worrying about his health, finances, and the future. He worries what will happen if his health gets worse, and how he will be able to afford treatment. He worries about where he will live if he can no longer afford his house payments. Even though he is very worried about his finances, he cannot bring himself to open bills when he receives them in the mail, and they are beginning to pile up. He notices that since he has been worrying, he often feels sick to his stomach.*

*Linda is 72 years old. She has a daughter who has three children. Her daughter recently experienced a difficult divorce and is in danger of losing custody of Linda's grandchildren because of her problems with alcohol use. Linda often cares for her three grandchildren, which she enjoys, but she is finding it difficult to keep up with the demands of caring for young children. She has back pain which gets worse with frequent movement and doesn't seem to be responding to the medication she gets from the doctor. Her muscles are very tense and she feels like she can never relax. She worries that if her back pain gets worse, she will be unable to care for the grandchildren. She worries what will happen to them and whether her daughter will ever stop drinking. When she starts worrying about her family and her health, she finds that she is unable to stop. She notices that she is smoking and eating more junk food lately to try to get her mind off her worries.*

Geraldo and Linda both experience worry that is causing problems in their lives. Though their lives are very different, some aspects of their worries are similar. They both worry about several different topics or issues. Both experience physical sensations because of their worry – Geraldo feels sick to his stomach and Linda feels tension in her muscles. Their worrying affects not only their mood, but also

their behaviors. While Geraldo tends to avoid things that he is worried about, Linda tends to use unhealthy behaviors like smoking and eating too much.

Note: We will see the terms *worry/stress* throughout this workbook. Some people to whom you present this material may use or prefer other words to describe their worrying: *anxiety, nervousness, fears, concerns*...feel free to substitute whatever term makes most sense to you and the participants to which you are presenting.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF WORRY/STRESS**

Worry/stress are linked with many negative health problems, including sleep difficulties, depression, lower quality of life, problems with thinking and memory, increased pain, and poorer physical health. Worry/stress have also been linked to increased disability, use of medical services, and mortality.

## **TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR WORRY/STRESS**

Worry/stress (as well as depression) are often treated with medication. Though this workshop curriculum does not include specific information about using medication for reducing worry/stress, it does include brief information about communicating with a doctor about worry symptoms.

Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is another way to manage worry/stress that involves learning how to better understand and recognize worry/stress, as well as how to use skills to manage them. CBT is effective for reducing worry and depression, and improving quality of life, in older adults. This workshop curriculum is designed to help you teach CBT skills to groups of people, though some people find benefit from seeing a therapist or counselor individually to work on their worry/stress. Workshop participants who express a need for more service than these workshops provide can be referred to their doctor.

## **THE WORKSHOPS**

You should recommend that Workshop I, “Becoming Aware of Worry and Stress,” be presented first as it provides attendees the knowledge for recognizing when to implement the skills that will be discussed in the remainder of the workshops. Following Workshop I, the rest of the workshops can be presented in the order that best fits the needs of the attendees.

In any workshops presented after Workshop I, presenters should begin by reviewing the key steps or ideas presented in the previous session and answer any remaining questions about that session. Presenters should invite a brief discussion about the attendees’ experience practicing the skills from the previous session.

### **OPTION TO INCLUDE RELIGION/SPIRITUALITY**

Throughout this workshop curriculum, the option for participants to incorporate any religious/spiritual (R/S) beliefs they may have into the skills is given. In the first module, you will describe how including R/S beliefs may be useful for some people. The choice is the participant's, and he/she can choose to include, or not include, R/S in any skill. Throughout this workshop curriculum, text for presenting the optional R/S elements will be presented in *italicized* font.

### **CRISIS INTERVENTION/SUICIDE RISK PROCEDURES**

Should participants endorse suicidal ideation or other issues that warrant immediate attention, follow your agency's crisis guidelines.

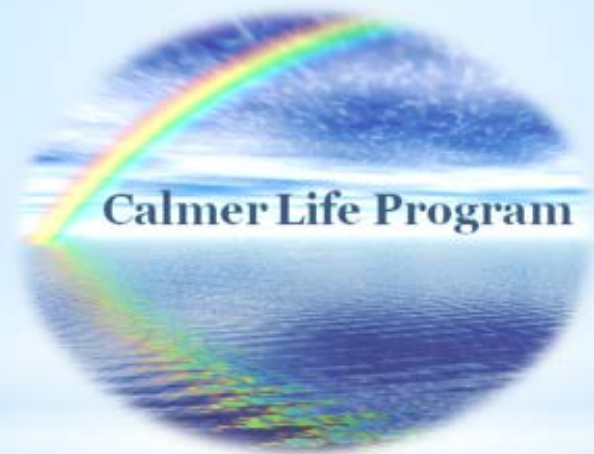


Workshop I:  
Becoming Aware  
of Worry and Stress

Workshop I: Slide 1  
Becoming Aware of Worry and Stress

Materials Needed:

1. Pens or pencil and
2. Summary handout of the workshop  
(distribute at the end)



# **Becoming Aware of Worry and Stress**

## Workshop I: Slide 1

### Becoming Aware of Worry and Stress

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Today is one of four possible workshops.
- Today's focus is to learn about awareness:
  - Learn about worry/stress.
  - Discuss how to identify when you are experiencing worry/stress.
  - Review general strategies and benefits of reducing worry/stress.
  - Emphasize individual differences in worry/stress.
  - Understand the differences in worry/stress and depression.
- Ask participants to think about what worries and stresses they have.
  - Invite brief, general participant responses about what worries/stresses them and what these experiences are like.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*Today is one of four separate workshops on worry and stress in which you will discuss what worry and stress are and how they can affect you and review general strategies to reduce worry and stress in your daily life. Hopefully by the end of your time today, you will be able to recognize the symptoms of worry and stress that you experience. One important thing to remember is that you are all unique, which means that what I worry and stress about is more than likely not what you worry and stress about. Similarly, something that worries or stresses you a great deal may not bother me at all.*

*One other important thing that you'll address today is the difference between*

#### Questions for participants

*I would like for you to think about your own specific worry and stress.*

- *What kinds of things do you worry about?*
- *What kinds of things cause you stress? How do these affect you?*

#### Examples of Worry and Stress:

- Loved ones
- Health
- Finances
- Problems at work, school, or place of worship

*worry and stress versus depression. These emotions/feelings/experiences can be a lot alike in some ways, and it can be difficult to tell them apart. But you want you to realize that they are two separate kinds of symptoms, and they do have unique differences that set them apart.*



# Becoming Aware

- ❖ Worry/stress has three types of symptoms:
  - Physical
  - Thoughts
  - Behaviors

## Workshop I: Slide 2

### Becoming Aware of Worry and Stress

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Worry/stress can manifest as three types of symptoms: physical symptoms, negative or repetitive thoughts, and behaviors that you do too little or too much.
- Remind participants that everyone experiences worry/stress differently and not all participants will experience every symptom that is presented.

#### Possible wording - Speaker to Participants:

*Worry and stress can manifest as three different types of symptoms: physical ( for example, what you experience in your body – maybe aches or pains, stomach distress, dizziness); thoughts (for example, what is going through your head – usually negative or repetitive thoughts about what might happen in the future to you, your family, and your friends); and behaviors (for example, things you do too frequently or things you avoid because you are worried or stressed, such as snacking too much, avoiding going to the doctor for fear of what he/she will say, etc.).*

*In the next three slides, you will review the three different types of symptoms more in depth. As you discuss these things, I also want everyone to know that you don't have to feel every single type of symptom listed here to have worry or stress. You might be experiencing only one physical symptom and no negative thoughts or behavioral changes, or you might be experiencing every single symptom we are about to discuss. As we discussed before, worry and stress are unique for each person; therefore, you all experience worry and stress differently. So, let's talk about each type of symptom in a little more detail.*

# Physical

## ❖ How your body reacts to worry/stress

- Muscle tension
- Rapid pulse
- Butterflies in stomach



Chest Tightness



Unexplained Sweating



Dry Mouth



Nausea or Stomachaches



Weight Loss or Gain



## Workshop I: Slide 3

### Becoming Aware of Worry and Stress

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Define and provide examples of physical symptoms.
- Invite discussion of participant symptoms.

#### Possible wording - Speaker to Participants:

*As we discussed a minute ago, physical symptoms are the way the body reacts to worry and stress. These symptoms can include muscle tension, rapid pulse, and butterflies in the stomach. When stressed or worried, you might also experience shortness of breath, shaking or trembling, sweating, fatigue, chest tightness, headaches or dizziness, dry mouth, or even nausea and stomachaches. Physical symptoms of worry and stress are often the symptoms that are most noticeable because you start to feel unwell, and you can tell there is a change happening in your body.*

#### Questions for participants

*How does your body feel when you are worried or stressed?*

*Or, what symptoms do you notice in your body when you are worried or stressed?*

#### Example:

*One example that frequently comes up during these workshops is, your blood pressure being higher when you go to the doctor's office. This is known as "White Coat Syndrome," and can happen because you are worried and stressed about what the doctor might say about your health.*

# Thoughts

## ❖ Common areas of worry:

- Health
- Finances
- Family/friends



Unwanted Thoughts



Fret about Friends/Family



Concerned about Aging

## Workshop I: Slide 4

### Becoming Aware of Worry and Stress

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Define and provide examples of cognitive symptoms/thoughts, making the point that people usually have multiple worry-related thoughts.
- Invite discussion of participant thoughts associated with worry/stress.

#### Possible wording - Speaker to Participants:

*As we discussed earlier, worry and stress can also show up through your thoughts - usually these thoughts are negative, and you play them in your head hour after hour and day after day. These thoughts tend to focus on negative things that may happen in the future to you, your family, and your friends. As you age, common thoughts that accompany worry focus on your health, finances, family and friends.*

*As you age, you might notice that your health is changing; maybe things that had never hurt before are starting to become a nuisance, or maybe you have a medically unexplained symptom that you are worried may be a sign of a serious illness, despite your doctor's reassurance. Finances might be a source of worry and stress. You might also worry and stress about your family and friends. You might have a family member who needs your help more than others, you might find yourself being the caretakers of your spouses, or you might be grandparents taking care of your grandchildren without help. Similarly, you might find yourselves worrying and stressing about your close friends, who many times are going through similar, or even more difficult, situations than you.*

*Areas of worry are also often interconnected. Most people do not worry about just one topic. More often, you are worried about the health of a family member who needs financial assistance, or you are worried about how you are going to pay your monthly rent because you have been unable to work due to your health and you find yourself alone with no support from family or friends.*

*Besides health, finances, and family and friends, your thoughts can also focus on other things, such as feeling concerned about aging, world events, or events taking place at your place of worship.*



# Behaviors

Actions you take to reduce worry/stress:

## ❖ Avoidance

- Avoidance of activities
- Procrastination



## ❖ Doing too much

- Checking
- Smoking
- Asking for reassurance



## Workshop I: Slide 5

### Becoming Aware of Worry and Stress

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Define and provide examples of behaviors related to worry and stress, making the point that people's behavior usually changes to include avoiding activities and doing activities repeatedly (too much).
- Invite discussion of participant behaviors associated with worry/stress.

#### Possible wording - Speaker to Participants:

*Worry and stress can also impact your behaviors - you may start to avoid doing things, or you may start doing things too much.*

*When you avoid things because of worry and stress, you avoid them because they are making you feel uncomfortable. If you worry and stress over getting along with someone, you might avoid places and events where you know this person will be. If you are having difficulty paying your bills, you might put off looking at your bills or paying anything all together.*

*Worry and stress can also cause you to repeat behaviors. If you are worried about someone breaking into your homes, you might constantly check all your doors and windows to be sure they are closed and locked, or you can begin to eat more (nervous eater), or smoke more. You can also begin to ask for reassurance more often. If you are worried about the well-being of a family member, you might begin to call them every day to check to see how they are doing, or you might even ask for reassurance on a job that you know you are doing well but just need to double and*

#### Questions for participants

*What are some positive behaviors you do to help you reduce worry and stress?*

- Exercising
- Doing Yoga
- Eating well
- Socializing

*triple check you are doing it correctly! These behaviors give you momentary peace from your worries and stress.*

*Unfortunately, when your behaviors change due to worry and stress, most of the time, you use these behaviors as a coping tool to make you feel better in the moment, but in the long run, these behaviors can have negative impacts and cause you to feel even more worried and stressed. In short, worry and stress behaviors only momentarily dull the worry and stress – but they make the feelings worse over time.*





## **Worry/Stress can be a Problem When...**

- ❖ It's too frequent.
- ❖ It's too intense.
- ❖ It continues past a frightening situation.
- ❖ You can't control it.
- ❖ It prevents you from reaching goals or living life.
- ❖ When has worry/stress been a problem for you?

## Workshop I: Slide 6

### Becoming Aware of Worry and Stress

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Define and provide examples of when worry and stress is a problem and when it's not, making the point that worry and stress is not always a problem.
- Invite discussion of when worry/stress is a problem.

#### Possible wording - Speaker to Participants:

*Up to this point, we have been talking about the negative aspects of worry and stress; but the truth of the matter is that there are some benefits to feeling worry and stress in small doses. Small amounts of worry, and stress can be helpful in motivating you to reach your goals, complete time-sensitive tasks, or even serve as a reminder of important things you need to do.*

*Worry and stress can, however, go from being positive motivators to debilitating problems when the symptoms begin to occur too frequently or the symptoms are too intense and not appropriate for the situation. Worry and stress can also be a problem when the symptoms continue past a frightening situation or if you feel unable to control or manage the worry and stress. Most importantly, worry and stress are a problem when they prevent you from reaching your goals and living your daily life. Even so, it may be difficult to tell whether you are experiencing problematic worry and stress.*

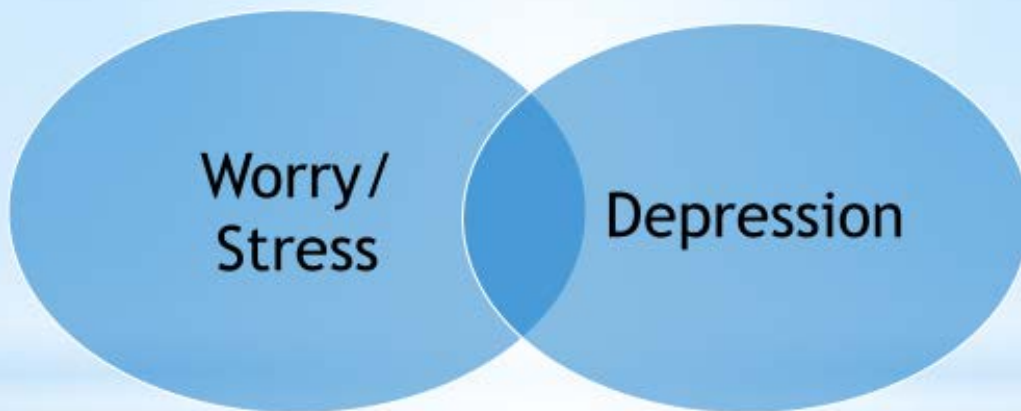
#### Questions for participants

When has having worry been a problem for you?

Example:

- While driving in traffic
- When visiting family
- When facing the loss of a loved one

## Worry/Stress vs. Depression



## Workshop I: Slide 7

### Becoming Aware of Worry and Stress

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Define and provide examples of how people discuss worry/stress and depression.
  - Make the point that people often use similar words to describe both worry/stress and depression.
  - Discuss that worry/stress may lead to depression.
- Invite discussion of the different words people use to describe worry/stress and depression.

#### Possible wording - Speaker to Participants:

*People are often confused about the differences between worry and stress and depression. It can be confusing, as these feelings share many of the same symptoms. Even more confusing, however, can be the ambiguous way the symptoms are sometimes described.*

*In your daily life, you might say, or hear someone, saying, “I am feeling blue” or “I feel bothered.” Yet these descriptions might not make clear whether the person is feeling worried and stressed or whether he/she feels depressed. Unfortunately, it might also not be clear to the person using these terms. This lack of clarity can leave you feeling overwhelmed and unsure of what it is that you are going through.*

<b>Other Common Descriptions</b>	
Worry and Stress	Depression
<i>distressed</i>	<i>feeling low</i>
<i>on pins and needles</i>	<i>crestfallen</i>
<i>nervous</i>	<i>in a blue funk</i>
<i>fretful</i>	<i>melancholy</i>
<i>concerned</i>	<i>down</i>

## Worry/Stress vs. Depression

### ❖ Worry/stress

- Feeling afraid or worried about things you want to do
- Feeling stressed
- Focusing on the future
- Tending to feel on edge

### ❖ Depression

- Losing interest in things you used to enjoy
- Feeling hopeless and sad
- Focusing on the past
- Tending to feel slow, sluggish

## Workshop I: Slide 8

### Becoming Aware of Worry and Stress

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Define and provide examples of how people discuss worry/stress and depression.
  - Highlight that worry/stress focuses on the future.
  - Identify that depression focuses on the past.
- Define and discuss the differences between worry/stress and depression, inviting discussion of the differences between worry/stress and depression to help clarify.

#### Possible wording - Speaker to Participants:

*Worry and stress are often defined by feelings of concern, uneasiness, and even apprehension. When you are worried and stressed, you might feel afraid of doing things that you otherwise want to do. You may also feel on edge. Worry and stress, however, are most importantly characterized by a sense of doubt about the future. People who are experiencing worry and stress tend to fret about future prospects.*

*Feelings of depression, however, tend to focus more on the past. Sometimes this includes feeling bad about a loss or feeling guilty about something you did or didn't do; other times, you may remember the good things that happened in the past but feel no hope or joy in the present moment. Depression is also characterized by losing interest in things that were once enjoyable, feeling hopeless and sad, or tending to feel sluggish and lacking energy. Sometimes, people who are experiencing depression can also have unwanted thoughts of death and suicide.*

*While some people experience only worry and stress and other people experience only depression, many people experience worry/stress and depression at the same time.*

#### Questions for participants

*Are there any questions about the differences between worry/stress and depression?*

## **Reducing Worry/Stress**

- ❖ Talk to your doctor.
- ❖ Talk to a counselor.
- ❖ Learn skills to cope with worry/stress.



## Workshop I: Slide 9

### Becoming Aware of Worry and Stress

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Discuss ways to reduce worry/stress.
  - Point out that a primary care provider should always be consulted.
  - Highlight that getting support doesn't necessarily mean having to talk to a licensed mental health professional (although a professional may be helpful). Sometimes a pastor, priest, or friend can be a good person with whom to talk.
  - Clarify that the CL Program offers a series of three additional workshops that teach skills for reducing worry and stress.

#### Possible wording - Speaker to Participants:

*When you are feeling worry and stress, it can sometimes be difficult to have clarity on how to seek help. Because of the nature of worry and stress, and even depression, it can often be confusing and embarrassing thinking about whom to approach. Even worse, sometimes when you confide in someone they laugh it off and tell you to, "Just smile, it'll get better," leaving you feeling worse about not having been taken seriously.*

*But there are several effective things that you can do to help reduce worry and stress in your daily life. First, it is important to talk to your primary care provider (PCP,) who may be able to offer different resources in your community that can help. You can talk to a counselor or licensed therapist who can offer guidance and consultation. Pastors, church leaders, other church members, or friends may also be able to guide you toward helpful resources.*

*Finally, you can also learn skills and techniques to cope with the worry and stress you face in your daily life. This is what the CL Program will focus on teaching in future workshops.*

## Benefits and Obstacles in Reducing Worry/Stress

- ❖ What **benefits** might you get from reducing worry/stress?
- ❖ What **obstacles** might you face in trying to reduce worry/stress?

## Workshop I: Slide 9

### Becoming Aware of Worry and Stress

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Identify benefits of reducing worry/stress, making the point that reducing worry/ stress can have a positive impact in reducing other chronic health conditions.
- Identify obstacles of reducing worry/stress, making the point that worry/stress can sometimes get in the way of engaging in healthy behaviors that improve functioning and quality of life.

#### **Questions for participants**

*What benefits might you get from reducing worry and stress?*

#### **Benefits**

- *Reducing worry and stress can help manage some symptoms of chronic illnesses, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and high cholesterol.*
- *Reducing worry and stress can help you emotionally, to be less irritable and feel better.*
- *Reducing worry and stress can lead you to reach your goals and live a positive life.*
- *Worry and stress reduction can also normalize your sleeping patterns and eating habits, leading to more restful and restorative sleep and healthier eating.*

#### **Obstacles**

- *Having to admit that you need help and reaching out for help can be an obstacle.*
- *Worry and stress can be obstacles in themselves, causing you to avoid the things that could help, such as socializing, exercising, or having a better diet.*

## Future Workshops

### ❖ **Deep Breathing**

- Learn breathing exercises that can help you relax.

### ❖ **Thought Stopping**

- Learn how to stop unwanted thoughts to reduce your worry and stress.

### ❖ **Calming Statements**

- Learn helpful statements, and create your own to manage stress and worry.

## Workshop I: Slide 10

### Becoming Aware of Worry and Stress

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Pass out handouts and remind participants to use them to assist in practicing throughout the week.
- Give an overview of what the other three Calmer Life workshops can offer.
  - Deep Breathing Workshop
    - Will teach how to use a breathing skill to help reduce worry and stress.
  - Thought Stopping Workshop
    - Will teach skill to help stop unwanted thoughts that can accompany worry and stress
  - Calming Statements
    - Will teach skill about using ‘self-talk’ or statements that many of you already use to help reduce worry and stress.
- Invite discussion of any remaining questions about today’s workshop.

#### Possible wording - Speaker to Participants:

*Now that you have become aware of what worry and stress are, how they can affect you, and the differences between them and depression, you can start working on reducing worry and stress in your daily life.*

*(Here the presenter may introduce any workshops that will be taught in the future). In addition to learning to recognize your worry and stress, there are skills that can help you deal with worry and stress. One skill is Deep Breathing, which teaches you to calm yourselves by breathing from your diaphragms. Another is Thought Stopping, which teaches participants how to stop unwanted thoughts. A third skill is Calming Statements, which teaches participants helpful statements to use as instructions for themselves to deal with worry and stress.*

*Handouts that summarize the content of these workshops will be available at the end of each session. We encourage you to review these handouts throughout the week so that you can learn to recognize worry/stress and use the skills in your daily life.*

### **Questions for participants**

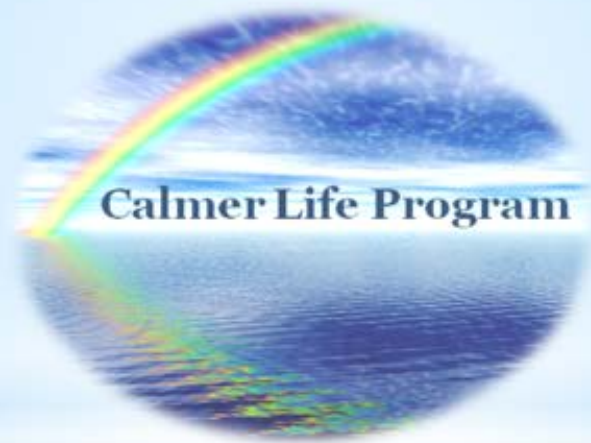
*Are there any questions about today's workshop?*

# Workshop II: Deep Breathing

Workshop II: Slide 1  
Deep Breathing

Materials Needed:

1. Pens or pencil and
2. Summary handout of the workshop  
(distribute at the end)



# Learn How to Relax I: Deep Breathing



## Workshop II: Slide 1

### Deep Breathing

At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Use the Deep Breathing skill correctly.
- Apply their religion/spirituality to the skill if desired.
- Recognize stressful situations in which Deep Breathing can help.

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Today is one of four possible workshops that focus on managing/reducing worry and stress.
- Focus today is on learning Deep Breathing- why it is helpful and when to use it.

#### Possible wording - Speaker to Participants:

*Today is one of four separate workshops on worry and stress during which we will be discussing what worry and stress are and how they can affect you, and reviewing general strategies to reduce worry and stress in your daily life.*

*(You may use the following wording to review any skills that you have taught so far. Omit any that you have not taught.) You learned that worry and stress can show up in three different types of symptoms: negative thoughts, physical symptoms, and behavioral symptoms. You learned the skill Thought Stopping, with which you tell yourselves to stop; picture a stop sign or a pink eraser; and you focus your attention on other things around you. You also learned Calming Statements, which use helpful statements as instructions for dealing with worry and stress*

*Today you will learn a skill called Deep Breathing that can help relieve worry and stress. Hopefully by the end of the presentation, you will know how to use the skill and will be able to recognize some specific times in your life when it can be helpful.*

## Worry and Stress

❖ All of us have some worry and stress in our lives.

❖ What are your sources of worry and stress?

❖ Worry and stress can be:

- Negative thoughts
- Physical symptoms
- Behavior symptoms



## Workshop II: Slide 2

### Deep Breathing

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Present a brief overview of the three types of symptoms, with very simple examples.
  - Negative thoughts
  - Physical symptoms
  - Behavioral symptoms
  - Not everyone experiences all of these symptoms. The experience of worry/stress is personal and unique for each person.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*We all worry, whether you admit it or not. During the last session, you learned that worry and stress can manifest as three different types of symptoms: negative thoughts (for example, what is going through your head – usually negative or repetitive thoughts about health, family, money, work); physical symptoms (for example, what you experience in your body – maybe aches or pains, stomach distress, dizziness); and behaviors (for example, things you do too frequently, or things you avoid because you are worried or stressed, such as snacking too much, avoiding going to the doctor for fear of what he/she will say, etc.).*

## **Deep Breathing Can Help**

- ❖ When you're worried, your breathing becomes rapid and shallow.
- ❖ Rapid and shallow breaths can make you feel dizzy, lightheaded, and even more worried.
- ❖ Changing the way you breathe can make your mind and body more "relaxed."

## Workshop II: Slide 3

### Deep Breathing

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Breathing during stress is often dysfunctional and can increase stress.
- Learning to breathe from the diaphragm can alleviate stress.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*Often, when you get very worried, our heart starts beating fast, your blood pressure increases, and your mind is filled with negative, worried thoughts. When you feel like this, you tend to take quick, shallow breaths, which can make you feel faint or dizzy. Your breathing during times of stress keeps you from filling your lungs and feeling relieved. In fact, shallow breathing can make you feel even more worried. Learning to control your breathing during these times can calm your physical reactions to stress and help focus your mind.*

## Two Key Features

### 1. Take slow, even, deep breaths.

- Inhale through your nose to the count of four.
- Exhale through your mouth to the count of four.
- Do not pause at the top of each breath.



## Workshop II: Slide 4

### Deep Breathing

#### **Topics to cover:**

- The first key feature of Deep Breathing is taking even and deep breaths.
- Inhale through the nose, exhale through the mouth.
- Count the lengths of the inhalations and exhalations. Individuals may have different lung capacities and should use whatever breath length is comfortable.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*The first key to learning the Deep Breathing skill is taking even, deep breaths. You want to breathe in through your nose and breathe out through your mouths. When you exhale, you should form your mouth as if you are blowing on hot soup or blowing out a candle.*

*I want you to breathe in to the count of four. Four is the number that we recommend, but not everybody can breathe in to the count of four, sometimes because of decreased lung capacity or health problems. Similarly, some people cannot exhale to the count of four. If you need to inhale to the count of three or two instead of four, that is fine. Just be sure that you exhale and inhale to the same count and that that count stays consistent as you do the skill. Do not pause between the breaths.*

## Two Key Features

### 2. Breathe through your diaphragm, not your chest.

- Place one hand on your stomach.
- Place the other hand on your chest.
- The hand on your stomach should move in and out as you breathe.
- The hand on your chest should stay still.





## Workshop II: Slide 5

### Deep Breathing

#### **Topics to cover:**

- The second key feature of Deep Breathing is breathing from the diaphragm instead of the chest.
- Ask participants to place one hand on their stomach and another on their chest to examine whether they are breathing from the chest or the stomach.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*The second key to the Deep Breathing skill is learning to breathe from the diaphragm instead of the chest. I would like you to place one hand on your chest and one hand on your stomach about an inch above your navel. As you breathe, pay attention to which hand is moving the most. Now everyone inhale (count to four) and exhale (count to four), remembering to breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth. (Repeat inhaling and exhaling while counting out loud three times).*

*If your stomach moved the most, that is good. If your chest moved more, then you should focus on breathing from the stomach. When you are stressed, you tend to take shallow breaths that come from the chest. When you expand your lungs, your stomach moves. Making sure that you are breathing from the stomach ensures that you are getting enough air.*

#### Questions for participants

- *Which one of your hands moved the most?*
- *Could you breathe in to four?*

## Using Religion/Spirituality to Enhance Relaxation

- ❖ Spiritual relaxation can also help.
- ❖ You can visualize any religious image or word over and over again as you take slow, even, and deep breaths.

## Workshop II: Slide 6

### Deep Breathing

#### Topics to cover:

- Spiritual relaxation enhances the skill by personalizing the skill and centering the mind.
- Those who do not want to use a spiritual image or phrase can use any calming image or word.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*Using your spirituality in this skill can be helpful. You can visualize a religious image or think a religious word over and over while you breathe deeply. Some people like to think of a cross or the name of a religious figure, or they think the word peace. The word or phrase you use does not necessarily need to be religious. Some people like to think of calming scenes like waterfalls or fields. You can use any image or word that helps calm you with this skill. Using these words or images can help you make the skill more personal and can help you focus your mind away from negative thoughts to calming thoughts.*

#### Questions for participants

*What are some examples of an image or word that you could use?*

##### Examples of words/images:

- *A cross*
- *The ocean*
- *Your home*
- *Peace*
- *Jesus*
- *Allah*

## Let's Practice

1. Sit comfortably in a chair with your feet uncrossed.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Place one hand on your stomach and place the other hand on your chest.
4. Now, inhale through your nose to the count of four, and exhale through your mouth to the count of four.
5. As you exhale, purse your lips.
6. Remember to take slow, even, deep breaths and breathe through your diaphragm.
7. If you have a religious or spiritual image or word that makes you relaxed, you can visualize your image or word over and over again.



## Workshop II: Slide 7

### Deep Breathing

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Sit comfortably.
- Breathe through the diaphragm.
- Remind participants to inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth.
- Remind participants to inhale and exhale to a count of four if possible, but a lower number can be used if four is not comfortable.
- Breathing should be continuous.
- Ask participants to choose a religious or spiritual image or word, if desired.
- Practice Deep Breathing together.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*Now you are going to practice Deep Breathing. I would like everyone to sit up straight and comfortably. Uncross your feet, and close your eyes. Place your hands on your chest and stomach. When you are breathing, remember to inhale through your nose and exhale through your mouth, and breathe from your diaphragm.*

*I am going to count to four, but if you cannot inhale for that long, do not wait to exhale. Your breathing should be continuous, without stopping before exhaling. If you have a religious or calming image or word you want to use, imagine that. Now you are going to practice. Inhale (count to four), exhale (count to four) (repeat this a few times). Now, open your eyes.*

#### Questions for participants

- *How do you feel?*
- *Did you use a spiritual or calming word or image?*

## Instructions For Practice

- ❖ Choose a regular time to practice each day for 10-15 minutes.
- ❖ Remember, the more you practice, the easier it will be to use this tool.
- ❖ Once you feel comfortable with this skill, you can use it when you are in a situation that makes you worried or stressed.



## Workshop II: Slide 8

### Deep Breathing

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Choose a regular time to practice the skill each day for 10-15 minutes in a comfortable place.
- Practice is important.
- It is important to use the skill when you recognize your symptoms of worry/stress.
- Skills can be used in any environment at any time.
- Invite a brief discussion on situations where Deep Breathing can be useful.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*It's important to practice this skill every day to improve. Practicing Deep Breathing at home is different from practicing in a room full of people. When you do this at home, find a place that is comfortable and quiet. You can dim the lights or lie down or take off your belt- whatever makes you feel the most relaxed and comfortable. It's best to pick a regular time and place and to practice the skill so that you do not forget. We suggest that you spend 10 to 15 minutes per day Deep Breathing, but any time that you choose is better than no time.*

*Once you learn to breathe deeply, you can use this skill in other areas of your life where you feel stressed. You can also use this skill to prepare for stressful situations. Once you*

#### Questions for participants

*What are some examples of situations in your own life where Deep Breathing could help?*

#### Examples of possible situations:

- *Doctor's office (before and during)*
- *When a stress-inducing family member calls*
- *When trying to fall asleep*

*recognize your first signs of physical, mental, or behavioral symptoms of worry or stress, you should begin Deep Breathing. Deep Breathing is a “portable skill”- you can use it anytime, anywhere, without any equipment. Once you practice and improve your use of Deep Breathing, you will be able to do the skill anywhere without anyone else knowing that you feel worried or stressed.*





Workshop II: Slide 9

Deep Breathing



## Workshop II: Slide 9

### Deep Breathing

**Topics to cover:**

- Address any questions that the participants may have.

## Future Workshops

### ❖ **Deep Breathing**

- Learn breathing exercises that can help you relax.

### ❖ **Thought Stopping**

- Learn how to stop unwanted thoughts to reduce your worry and stress.

### ❖ **Calming Statements**

- Learn helpful statements, and create your own to manage stress and worry.

## Workshop II: Slide 10

### Deep Breathing

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Pass out handouts, and remind participants to use them to assist in practicing throughout the week.
- Give an overview of other CL workshops that will be offered.
  - Thought-Stopping Workshop will teach skill to help stop unwanted thoughts that can accompany worry and stress.
  - Calming Statements will teach skill about using “self-talk” or statements that many already use to help reduce worry and stress.
- Invite discussion of any remaining questions about today’s workshop.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*In addition to learning to recognize worry and stress and learning to breathe deeply, there are other skills that can help you deal with worry and stress. (Here the presenter may introduce any workshops that you will teach in the future). In addition to learning to recognize worry and stress, there are skills that can help you deal with them. One skill is Thought Stopping, which teaches how to stop unwanted thoughts. The other skill is Calming Statements, which teaches helpful statements to use as instructions to deal with worry and stress.*

*Handouts that summarize the content of these workshops will be available at the end of each session. We encourage you to review these handouts throughout the week, so that you can learn to recognize worry/stress and use the skills in your daily life.*

#### Questions for participants

*Are there any questions about today’s workshop?*



# Workshop III: Thought Stopping

Workshop III: Slide 1  
Thought Stopping

Materials Needed:

1. Pens or pencil and
2. Summary handout of the workshop  
(distribute at the end)



# Thought Stopping



## Workshop III: Slide 1

### Thought Stopping

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Today is one of four possible workshops that focus on worry and stress.
- Focus today is on Thought Stopping:
  - Learning to use the skill.
  - Using religion/spirituality to enhance the skill, if desired.
  - Recognizing situations in which Thought Stopping can be helpful.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*Today is one of four separate workshops on worry and stress in which you will be discussing what worry and stress are, how they can affect you, and reviewing general strategies to reduce worry and stress in your daily life.*

*Today you will learn another tool called Thought Stopping that you can add to our toolbox for dealing with worry and stress. Hopefully by the end of the presentation you will know how to use the skill and be able to recognize some specific times in our life where it can be helpful.*

## Worry and Stress

- ❖ All of us have some worry and stress in our lives.
- ❖ What are your sources of worry and stress?
- ❖ Worry and stress can be:
  - Negative thoughts
  - Physical symptoms
  - Behavior symptoms



## Workshop III: Slide 2

### Thought Stopping

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Review any workshops that have been taught.
  - Everyone experiences some worry/stress, although the causes of this worry and stress are different for different people.
  - Worry and stress have three different types of symptoms: negative thoughts, physical symptoms, and behavioral symptoms. Give brief examples of each type of symptom.
  - Deep Breathing can help relieve worry and stress. It has two key features:
    - Inhale from the nose, exhale through the mouth while counting to four or to whatever count is comfortable.
    - Breathe through the diaphragm rather than the chest.
  - Calming Statements involves using phrases as instructions for dealing with worry/stress.
- Invite a brief discussion about whether participants used Deep Breathing and its effects.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*(You may use the following wording to review any skills that you have taught so far. Omit any that you have not taught.) You learned that worry and stress can show up in three different types of symptoms: negative thoughts, physical symptoms, and behavioral symptoms. You learned a skill called Deep Breathing, with which you breathe from your diaphragm to reduce worry. You also learned Calming Statements, with which you use helpful statements as instructions for dealing with worry and stress*

*Today you will learn the skill Thought Stopping, with which you tell yourself to stop, picture a stop sign or a pink eraser, and focus your attention on other things around you.*

#### Questions for participants

- *Did anyone practice Deep Breathing during the past week?*
- *Was it helpful?*

## Thought Stopping Can Help

- ❖ Use thoughts or images as cues to stop worry and stress thoughts.
- ❖ This helps you redirect your attention.



## Workshop III: Slide 3

### Thought Stopping

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Thought Stopping redirects your thoughts to the things happening around you in the present.
- It involves using multiple senses to refocus on your surroundings or get engaged in another behavior to refocus.
- It is particularly helpful to stop the negative thoughts symptom of worry and stress.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*Thought Stopping can help you redirect your thoughts. Some days you wake up with negative thoughts. Sometimes they consume your minds. The more you think about them, the bigger they get. You take the thoughts with you as you go about your day and you are still consumed by them when you get home. While this is a common experience, it is one sign that worry and stress might be a big problem in your life. As soon as you realize you're worried about something, that's your cue to stop it. Then say "stop," and redirect your attention to the world around you. That way, you can replace the worried thought with something else.*

## Thought Stopping Steps

1. Be aware of worry or stress thoughts.  
This helps challenge anxiety-related thoughts.



## Workshop III: Slide 4

### Thought Stopping

#### **Topics to cover:**

- The first step of Thought Stopping is being aware that you are worried – or maybe thinking the same negative thought over and over.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*The first step of Thought Stopping is being aware that you are worried. Sometimes it is easy to tell that you are worried; you have thoughts in the back of your mind that you cannot quit thinking about. Sometimes, you are so used to being worried that you do not even notice that you are thinking negative thoughts. This is why you teach you to become aware of your unique worry and stress symptom. As soon as you notice that your thoughts are becoming negative, repetitive, or too focused on worries, use Thought Stopping.*

## Thought Stopping Steps

2. Tell yourself "STOP!" (silently or loudly) when you experience worry/stressful thoughts.





## Workshop III: Slide 5

### Thought Stopping

#### **Topics to cover:**

- The second step of Thought Stopping is telling yourself “stop.”
- Imagine a red stop sign or a pink eraser as a cue to stop.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*The second step of Thought Stopping is to say “stop.” You can say it out loud or to yourself. You can think of a big red stop sign or one of those big pink erasers you had in school as a cue to erase that thought from your mind.*

## Thought Stopping Steps

3. Direct your attention towards other things.
  - Focus on what you see in the room, what you hear, or smell.
  - You can also focus your attention on doing other activities, such as meditation or prayer.



## Workshop III: Slide 6

### Thought Stopping

#### **Topics to cover:**

- The third step of Thought Stopping is redirecting your attention to other things.
- Focus on engaging any or all of the five senses.
- You can meditate or pray to redirect attention.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*The third step of Thought Stopping is immediately redirecting your attention to other things. You can't just sit there, realize you're worried, say stop, and then feel better. That doesn't work. Instead, you need to replace those thoughts by actively choosing to focus on something else or engaging in a different activity. You can focus on the things in the room, the colors and light you see. You can look outside the window and see the trees and the flowers. You can also focus on what you hear or smell or taste. You can smell your coffee or perfume, or put a mint in your mouth, or feel the texture of your clothes. Getting up and taking a walk or doing another activity may be helpful.*

*You may also want to redirect your attention to meditation or prayer. Many people have a scripture or saying or prayer that they say when they are worried or stressed that helps calm them down. You can say it over and over until that thought goes away.*

*Whatever you choose to focus your attention on is good- as long as you're not focusing on another worry. The important thing is to get your mind away from the negative thought. Remember, if you don't do anything but say stop, the negative thoughts will not go away. You must replace them with something.*

## Instructions for Practice

1. Picture yourself in the worry/stress situation.
2. Tell yourself to “STOP!,” and picture a stop sign.
3. Then focus your attention on what's around you.



## Workshop III: Slide 7

### Thought Stopping

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Practice Thought Stopping together.
  - Ask participants to dwell on a recent stressful situation.
  - Say “Stop.”
  - Ask multiple, quick, specific questions about their surroundings. Engage as many senses as possible.
- Invite a brief discussion about how they feel about after using Thought Stopping.
- Encourage them to practice Thought Stopping for 10 -15 minutes per day.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*Now, let’s practice Thought Stopping together. I want you to close your eyes and think of a time recently when you felt worried. Think about where you were, what you were feeling, what you were worried about, what will happen if the problem is not solved. Now, stop! Open your eyes. (At this point, immediately redirect their attention by asking multiple, quick, specific questions about their surroundings. Some possible questions are listed in the box below). Now, how do you feel? Are you still thinking about the thing that was worrying you?*

*Just as with Deep Breathing, it is important to practice this skill at home to learn to use it throughout your life. We ask that you practice for 10 to 15 minutes a day. Once you feel comfortable with the skill, you can use it anywhere or anytime without anyone noticing that you are using your Thought Stopping skill.*

#### Questions for participants

- *What color is the carpet?*
- *How many pictures are on the walls?*
- *Are the lights in this room bright or dark?*
- *What do you hear?*
- *What do you smell?*
- *Does your shirt feel soft or rough?*
- *Specific questions will need to be related to the location the person is in.*

## Future Workshops

### ❖ **Deep Breathing**

- Learn breathing exercises that can help you relax.

### ❖ **Thought Stopping**

- Learn how to stop unwanted thoughts to reduce your worry and stress.

### ❖ **Calming Statements**

- Learn helpful statements and create your own to manage stress and worry.

## Workshop III: Slide 8

### Thought Stopping

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Pass out handouts and remind participants to use them to assist in practicing throughout the week.
- Give an overview of other Calmer Life workshops that will be offered.
  - Deep Breathing Workshop will teach how to use a breathing skill to help reduce worry and stress.
  - Calming Statements will teach skill about using “self-talk” or statements that many of you already use to help reduce worry and stress.
- Invite discussion of any remaining questions about today’s workshop.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*(Here the presenter may introduce any workshops that will be taught in the future). In addition to Thought Stopping, other skills can help you deal with worry and stress. One skill is Calming Statements, which teaches helpful statements to use as instructions for dealing with worry/stress. The other is Deep Breathing, which teaches a breathing skill to reduce worry/stress.*

*Handouts that summarize the content of these workshops will be available at the end of each session. We encourage you to review these handouts throughout the week so that you can learn to recognize worry/stress and use the skills in your daily life.*

#### Questions for participants

*Are there any questions about today’s workshop?*



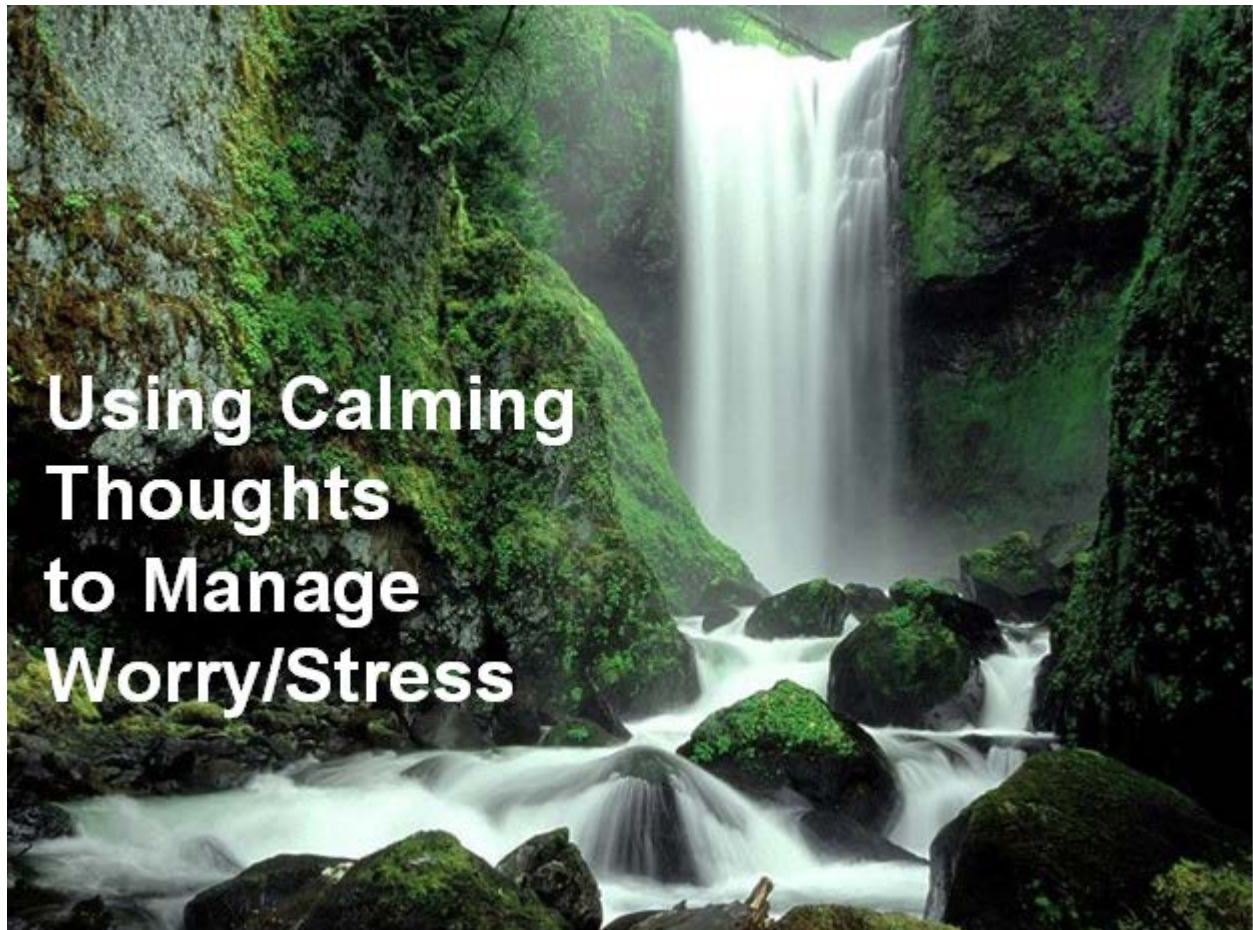


# Workshop IV: Calming Thoughts

Workshop IV: Slide 1  
Calming Thoughts

Materials Needed:

1. Pens or pencil and
2. Summary handout of the workshop  
(distribute at the end)



## Workshop IV: Slide 1

### Calming Thoughts

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Everyone experiences some worry and stress, although the causes are different for different people.
- Worry and stress have three different types of symptoms: negative thoughts, physical symptoms, and behavioral symptoms. Give brief examples of each type of symptom.
- Deep Breathing can help relieve worry and stress. It has two key features:
  - Inhale from the nose; exhale through the mouth to four or to whatever count is comfortable.
  - Breathe through the diaphragm rather than the chest.
- Thought Stopping is another skill that you can use to relieve worry and stress. It has two steps:
  - Say “Stop,” and imagine a pink eraser or a stop sign.
  - Focus your attention on the world around you.
- Invite a brief discussion as to whether participants used Thought Stopping, and its effects.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*Today is one of four separate workshops on worry and stress in which you will be discussing what worry and stress are, how they can affect you, and reviewing general strategies to reduce worry and stress in your daily life. (If you have been administering the sessions in the suggested order, it may be helpful to review the past skills in the following manner.) You learned that worry and stress can show up in three different types of symptoms: negative thoughts, physical symptoms, and behavioral symptoms. You learned to use Deep Breathing, where you use deep, even breaths from your diaphragm to calm yourself. You also learned Thought Stopping, which involves telling yourselves to stop, picture a stop sign or a pink eraser, and focus your attention on other things around you.*

*Today you will learn another tool called Calming Statements that you can add to your worry and stress toolbox. By the end of this session, you should have some Calming Statements of your own and should know how to use them in your life.*

### **Questions for participants**

- *Did anyone try Thought Stopping this week?*
- *Was it helpful?*



## Calming Thought

- ❖ A Calming Thought is a statement that you make to yourself that helps to decrease your worry and stress about certain situations or to see them in a new way.
- ❖ The goal is to help you realize that you are able to manage things.



## Workshop IV: Slide 2

### Calming Thoughts

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Calming Statements are instructions for yourself to manage worry/stress in the form of a phrase, scripture, or prayer.
- Participants may already do this without having a name for it.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*This session is about learning to use Calming Statements to manage worry and stress. A Calming Thought is a statement you make to yourself that helps you decrease worry and stress about a situation or helps you see that situation in a different light. Many of you may already do this without calling it Calming Statements. You may have a favorite phrase, scripture, or prayer that you say to yourself when you are going through a difficult situation or need to calm yourself down. You might have a few different ones that you use for different situations. As the years pass, you may change and use different statements for different problems. Today, we want to teach you use those statements more often in times in your life when you feel stressed. The goal of these Calming Thoughts is to help you realize that you are able to manage your situation*

## Calming Thought Examples:

- ❖ *“If I take it one step at a time, I can meet this challenge.”*
- ❖ *“Even if I make mistakes, it will be okay.”*
- ❖ *“It’s not the worst thing in the world.”*



## Workshop IV: Slide 3

### Calming Thoughts

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Give some examples of Calming Statements that participants can use.
- Invite participants to provide other possible Calming Statements.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*Here are some examples of Calming Statements that you can use. The purpose of these statements is to remind yourself that you are capable of solving your problems with the right mindset. They remind you that problems that may seem large now may not be as big as you think they are, or they may remind you that mistakes are okay. You don't have to use the Calming Statements listed here, but you should choose statements that are comforting or give you the confidence to deal with your problems or your worry/stress.*

#### Questions for participants

*Do any of these statements seem like they might be helpful for you?*

*Are there any other statements that you already use?*

#### Examples of Calming Statements :

- *I can do what I need to do.*
- *I can do what I have to do in spite of my worry/stress.*

## Religious/Spiritual Calming Thoughts



❖ Some people include religion and/or spirituality in their calming thoughts to help them.



❖ The idea that you are not alone and can depend on something greater than yourself can help reduce worry and stress.

## Workshop IV: Slide 4

### Calming Thoughts

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Including religion and spirituality may make the Calming Statements more powerful and personal.
- Religious Calming Statements remind you that you are not alone.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*If you are religious, then many of your Calming Statements may be religious as well. Some people like to include their religious or spiritual beliefs in their Calming Statements because it helps them remember that they are not alone and they do not have to deal with their problems by themselves. It may be comforting to believe that you have something to hold onto and to believe that there is someone larger than you looking out for you.*

## Religious/Spiritual Calming Thought Examples:

- ❖ *“I can do what I need to do, with \_\_\_’s help.”*
- ❖ *“\_\_\_ will never give me more than I can handle.”*
- ❖ *“I am thankful for this opportunity to grow.”*

## Workshop IV: Slide 5

### Calming Thoughts

#### **Objectives:**

- Give examples of some religious/spiritual Calming Statements.

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Give examples of some religious/spiritual Calming Statements.
- Read the Calming Statements and invite the participants to fill in the blanks with the name of their higher power.
- Scriptures or short prayers can be used instead.
- Invite participants to provide examples of religious or spiritual Calming Statements that they can use.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*Here are a few examples of religious or spiritual statements that you can use. I'm going to read the statement out loud, and you fill in the blank with the name of your higher power. "I can do what I need to do with blank's help." (Allow participants to say their higher power's name out loud). "Blank will never give me more than I can handle." The last one is "I am thankful for this opportunity to grow." Sometimes your Calming Statements can express gratitude. Difficulties prune you so that you can grow.*

#### Questions for participants

*What are some examples of religious or spiritual Calming Statements that you can use?*

## Now it's your turn...

- ❖ Think of a stressful situation.
- ❖ Now think of a Calming Statement.
- ❖ Say the statement out loud.
- ❖ Take a deep breath and exhale.
- ❖ Repeat.
- ❖ PRACTICE on your own!



Practice  
Makes  
Progress

## Workshop IV: Slide 6

### Calming Thoughts

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Have participants think of a Calming Statement that they would like to use.
  - You may distribute notecards and ask participants to write the statements on the notecards if desired.
- Practice together.
  - Imagine yourself in a stressful situation.
  - Say your Calming Statement to yourself.
  - Take a deep breath.
  - Continue repeating the Calming Statement and breathing deeply until you no longer feel worried.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*Now we are going to practice together. I want you to think of a Calming Statement that calms you down. (If you have passed out notecards, you may ask them to write the statements on the notecards now. Allow them a few minutes to think and write). Do you have your statement in your mind? Close your eyes, and think of a stressful situation that you experienced recently. Remember what you were thinking, how you felt, what you were saying to yourself, what you were seeing, who you were with. Now, think of your Calming Statement. Say the statement out loud. You can say the statement to yourself if you are not comfortable saying it out loud. Take a deep breath through your nose and exhale through your mouth. Repeat your Calming Statement, and take another deep breath. Now open your eyes.*

*Just as with Deep Breathing and Thought Stopping, we encourage you to practice this skill at home for 10 to 15 minutes per day. When you practice at home,*

#### Questions for participants

- *How do you feel?*
- *Was the thought you chose a good one?*

*you can repeat your Calming Statement and breathe deeply as many times as you need until you no longer feel worried.*





## **Tips!**

**Easy ways to include into your daily life:**

- ❖ **Don't be afraid to say these out loud!**
- ❖ **Record thoughts on tape.**
- ❖ **Write favorite ones on note cards.**

## Workshop IV: Slide 7

### Calming Thoughts

#### **Topics to cover:**

- Participants can record statements on CD's, tape recorders, or cell phones.
- Writing the statements on notecards and posting them in places participants go frequently is helpful for remembering the statements.

#### Possible Wording-Speaker to Participants:

*Here are some ways that you can include Calming Statements in your daily life. It is good to say the Calming Statements out loud when you practice, as hearing the statements out loud can make the statements feel more real and convincing. Recording them on a CD or your cell phone can help you hear the statements out loud wherever you are. Writing them on note cards can be helpful, as well. You can place the notecards on your refrigerator, on your bathroom mirror, in your bedroom or in your wallet - anywhere that you will see it frequently. Seeing the statements often will help you remember them.*

Workshop IV: Slide 8

Calming Thoughts

**Questions/Comments?**

## Workshop IV: Slide 8

### Calming Thoughts

**Topics to cover:**

- Answer any questions that the participants have.

# Appendix

## Calmer Life Bingo



Played at the end of Education Awareness Workshop (Workshop I). Please see attached bingo playing cards and example cards (cards to draw) on next pages.

### **Rules of the game:**

- Play like traditional bingo.
  - Each participant gets one bingo card (each one is different).
  - Shuffle example cards (there are 29 example cards, each printed with a picture of worry and stress symptom on the front and a description of the symptom on the back), draw one example at a time, and read the description of the symptom on back of card.
  - Players mark symptoms that are read aloud by placing a bingo marker or coin on the corresponding symptom printed on their cards.
  - Players win by connecting five symptoms in a horizontal, vertical, or diagonal line.

### **To Print:**

1. Fifty bingo playing cards are included and must be printed, one bingo card per sheet.
2. The “Bingo Example Cards” file consists of 58 pages, but example cards should be printed front and back. On one side of an example card, there should be a name and picture of a symptom; on the other side, the description of that symptom should be included. There are 29 symptoms included in this game.








## Becoming Aware of Worry and Stress

Learning to recognize your worry/stress is the first step in learning to reduce it.

Worry can show up in three different ways:

PHYSICAL	THOUGHTS	BEHAVIORS
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Muscle tension</li><li>• Speedy pulse</li><li>• Butterflies in stomach</li></ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Health</li><li>• Money</li><li>• Friends and family</li></ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avoiding activities</li><li>• Putting things off</li><li>• Checking in too much</li></ul>

Worry is normal, and you all have some worry in your life. But it can be a problem when it happens too often, it's too intense, or it interferes with things you would like to do.

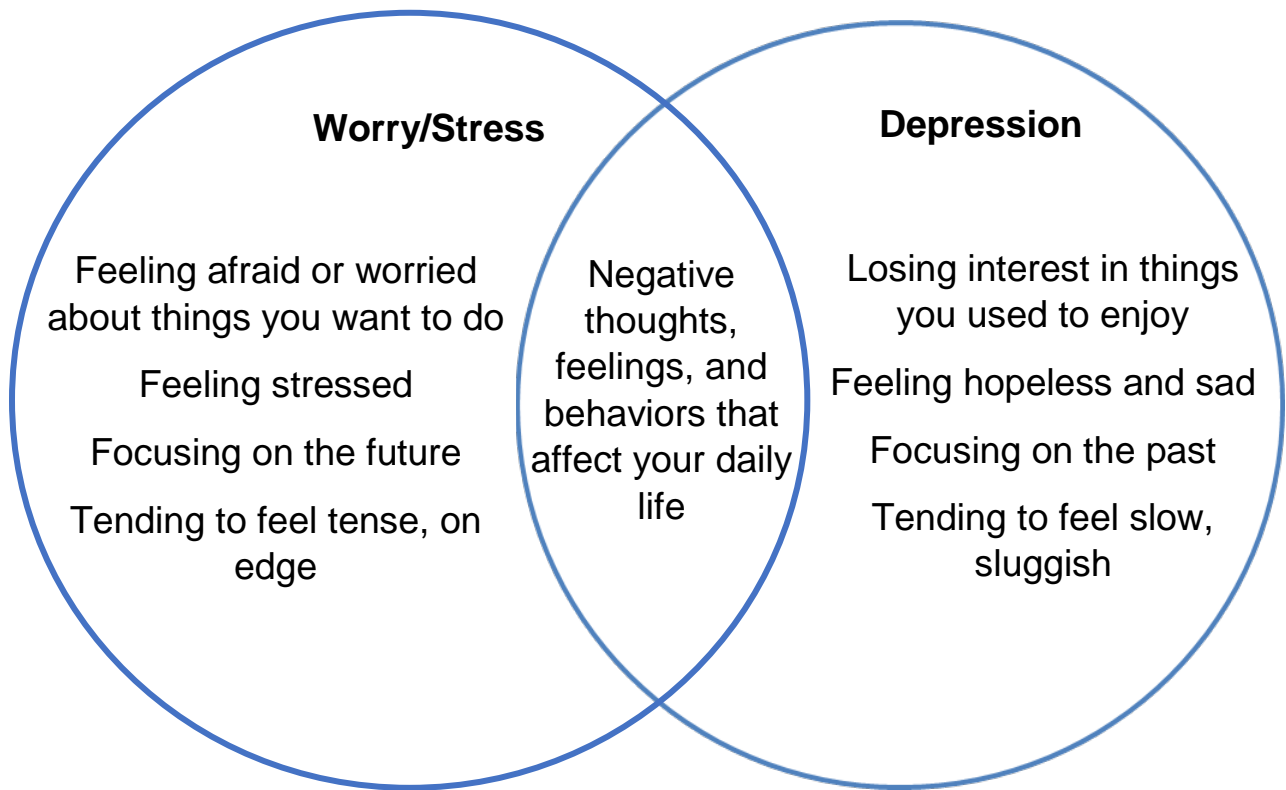
You can reduce your worry and stress by

- Talking to your doctor
- Talking to a counselor
- Learning skills to cope with your worry and stress

*Start paying attention to situations when you feel worried or stressed. What physical signs do you have? What thoughts do you have? What sort of behaviors do you have when you're worried?*

## Worry/stress vs. Depression

Depression and worry/stress are different. Some people who have too much worry and stress can develop depression.



If you think that you have depression, you should speak to your doctor or seek community mental health resources.

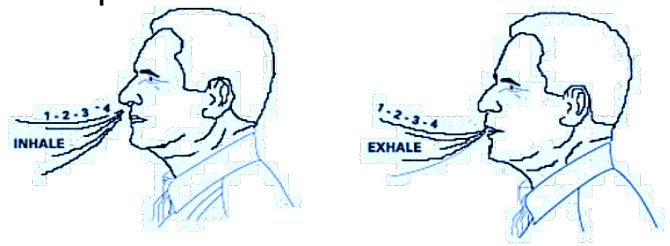
## Learn How to Relax I: Deep Breathing

When you're worried, your breathing becomes rapid and shallow. This can make you can feel dizzy, lightheaded, and even more worried.

Changing the way you breathe can make your mind and body more "relaxed." Deep Breathing helps reduce worry and stress and relaxes your entire body.

### Deep Breathing: Instructions for Practice

1. Sit comfortably in a chair with your feet uncrossed.
2. Place one hand on your stomach, with your little finger about one inch above your navel. Place the other hand on your chest.
3. Now, inhale through your nose to the count of four.
4. And exhale through your mouth to the count of four. Your hand on your diaphragm should be moving out as you inhale and in as you exhale.
5. As you exhale, purse your lips by imagining that you are blowing on hot soup or about to give a kiss.
6. Remember to take slow, even, deep breaths and breathe through your diaphragm. These are the keys to Deep Breathing.
7. If you have a religious or spiritual image or word that makes you relaxed, you can visualize your image or word over and over again.
8. Once you have mastered the breathing part of the skill, you can visualize a situation that caused you worry or stress today as you practice the skill.



**Practice makes progress!  
The more you practice, the easier  
it becomes to use this tool.**



# Thought Stopping

**Thought Stopping has three key steps:**

1. Be aware of worry or stress thoughts. When you are practicing, you can picture yourself in a worrisome or stressful situation
2. When you experience worry/stress thoughts, tell yourself “STOP!” (silently or loudly) or imagine a big red stop sign or big pink eraser.
3. Direct your attention towards other things. You can focus your attention on the details of what’s around you. Or focus on activities you may be in the middle of doing. You can even turn your mind to a state of meditation or prayer.





## Calming Thoughts and/or Statements

A **Calming Thought** is a statement that you make to yourself that helps to decrease your worry and stress about certain situations or helps you see them in a new way. The goal of using Calming Statements is to help you realize that you can manage and are often able to handle things.



### Calming Thought Examples:

- ❖ *“If I take it one step at a time, I can meet this challenge.”*
- ❖ *“Be thankful for what you have.”*
- ❖ *“I can do what I need to do, with \_\_\_\_’s help.”*

### Instructions:

- ❖ Think about a stressful situation that caused you to worry recently. Now think of a calming statement.
- ❖ Take a deep breath and exhale.
- ❖ Repeat that calming statement out loud, and continue breathing.
- ❖ Continue to repeat the statement until you feel some stress going away.

Calming thoughts that I can use:

- ❖ \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ \_\_\_\_\_

