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Action KA210-ADU - Small-scale partnerships in adult education

THRIVE 50+



Project title:
**Total Health Resources for
Improving Vitality and Endurance
50+ ("THRIVE50+")**

Project No.: 2023-2-R001-KA210-ADU-000184831

Set of materials for the workshop

**Workshop Title: Mindfulness and
Meditation: Techniques for
Reducing stress**





Facilitator guide

BASIC INFORMATION

People aged 50+ easily experience stress from life transition, health challenges and other pressures that come with aging. This workshop is designed to help participants in this aged group learn and practice mindfulness and meditation techniques to manage stress effectively, improve mental clarity and enhance overall well-being.

TARGET GROUP NEEDS

People over 50+ often want to look for ways to reduce stress and to cultivate a calmer and more focused mindset. This age group might have equally experienced stress from life transition and other health challenges.

DURATION

A 2-3 hour duration has been chosen to ensure that participants have sufficient time to learn and practice Mindfulness and meditation techniques which are aimed at reducing stress. This length allows for a comprehensive introduction to the topic, practical exercises, and a Q&A session, all while keeping participants engaged.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

The optimal number of participants is set at 2-15 to allow for personalized attention and interaction. This size gives a supportive environment where participants feel comfortable sharing their experiences and can have enough room for meditation exercise.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

-  Educate participants about the benefits of mindfulness and meditation for stress reduction.
-  Teach simple and practical mindfulness techniques suitable for daily use.
-  Provide a safe and calming space for participants to practice meditation.





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-  Empower participants to integrate mindfulness into their routines for long-term benefits.

TECHNICAL AND EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

- Use a calm, soothing tone and background music
- show videos of practical mindfulness exercise using projectors or a TV
- Be mindful of participants' physical limitations; offer alternative postures or adjustments as needed and comfortable chairs.

MATERIALS

- Comfortable chairs or cushions for seated meditation.
- A quiet room with dim lighting.
- Soft background music or nature sounds (optional).
- A timer or meditation bell.
- Printed handouts with mindfulness exercises.
- Refreshments such as water or herbal tea.

METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

-  Use a calm, soothing tone throughout the session.
- encourage participants to approach the practice without judgement, especially if their mind wanders.
- Acknowledge that it's normal for the mind to wander during meditation; emphasize that gently refocusing is part of the practice.
- Create a safe, welcoming space where participants feel comfortable sharing and learning.
- Monitor participants to ensure they are comfortable and relaxed.

Curriculum

1) Welcome and Introduction (15 minutes)

Objective: Establish a welcoming atmosphere and introduce the workshop

Slide 1: Workshop title slide

Icebreaker Activity:

- Have participants introduce themselves and share one thing they are grateful for today.

 **Slide 2: Overview of the Workshop:**

- Explain the workshop's goals and agenda.
- Emphasize that mindfulness and meditation are practices, not perfection, and require patience.





slide 3: Introduction to Mindfulness and Stress.

Objectives:

- Participants will get to know the difference between Mindfulness and meditation.
- Participants will equally understand the different misconceptions about mindfulness and meditation

2. Basics of Mindfulness and Meditation (20 minutes)

slide 4

What is Mindfulness?:

- **Definition:** Mindfulness is the practice of paying attention to the present moment with curiosity and without judgment.
- **Benefits:** Reduces stress, increases focus, enhances emotional regulation, and promotes overall well-being.

What is Meditation?:

- **Definition:** Meditation is a mental exercise that involves focusing attention (e.g., on the breath, a mantra, or a visualization) to calm the mind and body.
- **Benefits:** Improves mental clarity, reduces anxiety, and fosters a sense of inner peace.

Mindfulness vs. Meditation:

- Mindfulness is a way of living, while meditation is a specific practice to cultivate mindfulness.

Common Misconceptions:

- Meditation doesn't require an empty mind—wandering thoughts are natural and part of the process.
- Mindfulness doesn't mean always being calm—it means being aware of emotions without judgment.

3. Guided Meditation Sessions (45 minutes)

slide 5:

Session 1: Mindful Breathing (10 minutes):

- **Instructions:**
 - Sit comfortably with your feet flat on the ground or cross-legged.
 - Close your eyes or lower your gaze.
 - Focus on your breath as it enters and leaves your body.
 - If your mind wanders, gently bring your attention back to your breath.
- **Purpose:** Calm the mind and improve focus.

Session 2: Body Scan Meditation (15 minutes):



- **Instructions:**
 - Lie down or sit comfortably.
 - Bring attention to each part of your body, starting with your toes and moving upward to your head.
 - Notice sensations (e.g., tension, warmth) without judgment and release any tightness.
- **Purpose:** Deep relaxation and awareness of physical sensations.

Session 3: Loving-Kindness Meditation (10 minutes):

- **Instructions:**
 - Sit comfortably and bring to mind someone you care about.
 - Silently repeat phrases like, *"May you be happy. May you be healthy. May you be at peace."*
 - Gradually extend these wishes to yourself, others, and even difficult people.
- **Purpose:** Cultivate compassion and reduce negative emotions.

Session 4: Visualization Meditation (Optional, 10 minutes):

- **Instructions:**
 - Close your eyes and imagine a peaceful place (e.g., a forest, beach, or garden).
 - Engage your senses—visualize what you see, hear, smell, and feel in this place.
- **Purpose:** Reduce stress by creating a mental escape.

Getting started with mindfulness.

- **Starting tips:** Begin with 5 minutes practice short meditation or breathing exercise daily.
- **support systems:** Mindfulness group: join meditation or mindfulness communities.

slide 7: Incorporating Mindfulness into Daily Routines (30 minutes)

1. **Mindful Activities:**
 - **Mindful Eating:** Focus on the taste, texture, and smell of your food. Eat slowly and without distractions.
 - **Mindful Walking:** Pay attention to the sensation of your feet touching the ground, your breath, and your surroundings.
 - **Mindful Listening:** When talking with someone, focus entirely on their words, tone, and body language.
2. **Daily Practices:**
 - **Morning Mindfulness:** Spend 5 minutes focusing on your breath or setting an intention for the day.
 - **Mindful Breaks:** Pause for 2-3 minutes during the day to check in with your body and breath.





- **Gratitude Practice:** Reflect on 3 things you're grateful for at the end of the day.
- 3. **Group Activity:**
 - Ask participants to choose one daily activity they can perform mindfully and share how they plan to do it.

slide 8: Reflection and Closing (10-15 minutes)

1. **Reflection Exercise:**
 - Ask participants to write or share their thoughts on which practice resonated with them the most.
 - Encourage them to commit to practicing one technique for the next week.
2. **Q&A Session:**
 - Allow participants to ask questions about the techniques or share concerns.
3. **Next Steps:**
 - Distribute handouts with mindfulness exercises and tips for home practice.
 - Encourage participants to explore apps like Calm, Headspace, or Insight Timer for guided meditations.
4. **Closing Remarks:**
 - Thank participants for their openness and effort.
 - Remind them that mindfulness is a journey and every small step counts.