



Dealing with Stress: Five Things...

Edited by Kaylie Allen from *Singing to the Lions*

Notes for Leading the Exercise

Feel free to combine this activity with other coping mechanism practices from *Singing to the Lions*, and explain that internal safety and relaxation may be necessary in times of anger and stress.

Allow the group to offer examples of their own common coping mechanisms, and then discuss the power we each have to walk away and use one of these *Singing to the Lions* practices to regulate our own internal peace before reacting to stress or conflict.

This exercise can also be further discussed or practiced by giving a variety of options for how to do it.

The Facilitator is encouraged to explain that stress can occur anywhere, including in crowded or quiet places such as classrooms at school. This means the participants will not always have the ability to move around as much, so take a few minutes to discuss quiet, in-place alternatives for these types of exercises.

The Facilitator is encouraged to test out multiple methods of leading this exercise. First, allow participants to quietly think of their answers. Next, give everyone a chance to speak their answers aloud, and even move around to identify their answers.



Dealing with Stress: Five Things...

Step-by-Step Instructions for Guiding the Exercise

(Note: The Facilitator should read in a soft, slow voice and make sure to pause after each question.)

The Facilitator says:

5. What are five things around you that you can see?
5. What are five things around you that you can hear?
5. What are five things around you that you can touch?

4. What are four things around you that you can see?
4. What are four things around you that you can hear?
4. What are four things around you that you can touch?

3. What are three things around you that you can see?
3. What are three things around you that you can hear?
3. What are three things around you that you can touch?

2. What are two things around you that you can see?
2. What are two things around you that you can hear?
2. What are two things around you that you can touch?

1. What is one thing around you that you can see?
1. What is one thing around you that you can hear?
1. What is one thing around you that you can touch?

Discussion Questions

- How did your breathing change as we went from five to one? How did your emotions change?
- What did you notice about your temper, or anxiety, or stress? Did it change or reduce?
- Perhaps you felt distracted, giving you time to relax before responding to an upsetting situation.
- Perhaps this gave you the time or space you needed to clear your mind or think more rationally.
- How can we adjust this activity based on location, such as at school versus at home?

Participants may also want to discuss their emotional triggers/pet peeves that bring on anger and how best to incorporate activities like these into their lives. Many students even dug deeper into discussion, asking how best to respond if they are still feeling very upset or angry after completing the exercises above.

I encourage open discussion and even allowing participants to take a walk or take some time to themselves to promote a peaceful mindset for the rest of their day.

The Facilitator may want to close with a prayer for peace or offer a word to the group about how to respond safely and calmly to issues throughout their day.

