

MODULE 5

DEALING WITH STRESSFUL,
PROBLEMATIC AND CRISIS
SITUATIONS IN THE ECONOMIC
AND ADMINISTRATIVE
INDUSTRY

SCENARIO WITH TIPS FOR THE EDUCATOR FOR 4
WORKSHOP HOURS



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- Working methods
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INFORMATION



Duration of workshop:

4 clock hours

Workshop recipients:

The recipients of the workshop are adults, employees of the administration and economic sector.

The workshop plan can be used by all people from other professional groups interested in the topic of multiculturalism and working in a multicultural environment.

Number of participants:

A group of 12 people of both sexes. It is also possible to conduct the workshop in a smaller group of at least 8 people, depending on the premises or the size of the team.

Proposed working methods:

- Brainstorming
- Active methods of conducting the workshop: group work
- Active methods of conducting the workshop: work in pairs
- Individual work
- Relaxation techniques
- Psychoeducation
- Mini lecture

Example materials needed for the workshop:

- Work cards,
- Felt tip pens,
- Crayons,
- Markers,
- Sticky notes,
- Flip chart,
- A4 sheets,
- Pens,
- Certificates,
- Evaluation questionnaire.



INFORMATION



Aim of the workshop:

The main goal is to acquire skills and strengthen existing competences in dealing with stressful, problematic and crisis situations in professional and private life.

Mini lecture: (30 minutes)

What is stress?

Stress is an automatic physiological reaction to any situation that threatens us, overwhelms us, or requires us to take immediate action. The body is unable to tell the difference between real threats and imagined ones. It responds to each of these situations in the same way - with the "fight or flight" response.

The heart begins to beat faster, blood pressure and heart rate increase, and breathing speeds up. The body reacts in such a way in order to oxygenate itself and increase its efficiency.

Thanks to this, a person becomes ready to fight or flee from the threat.

Stress can be positive.

In extreme situations, it activates adrenaline, noradrenaline and cortisol, and these hormones mobilise for greater activity and faster action.

However, if stress accompanies you chronically, it turns into negative stress, i.e., distress.

This type of stress weakens the body, negatively affects the psyche and triggers a number of overwhelming emotions such as fear, anxiety or sadness.

So how do you deal with stress when it takes its negative form?

INFORMATION



Types and symptoms of stress

The American Psychological Association distinguishes three types of stress: acute, chronic and traumatic.

Acute stress occurs as a result of a sudden threat - physical, psychological or economic stimulus.

Chronic stress occurs when we are exposed to stressors for a long time. It is accompanied by constant tension, exhaustion and less ability to regenerate.

Traumatic stress, on the other hand, is a reaction to life- or health-threatening situations.

Stress at work - causes, consequences and ways to manage stress in the organisation

Occupational stress is a very unfavourable factor at work. It can not only destroy the health of the employee, but also contribute to reducing the level of efficiency and productivity in the company. The consequences of stress in the workplace affect the employee as well as the organisation. That is why it is so important to know how to prevent this unfavourable element from occurring in the working environment.

What is occupational stress?

Occupational stress occurs when the demands of the superior and the pressure exerted on the employee are greater than the skills and knowledge possessed by them. The employee is unable to meet the expectations of the employer, which causes stress and frustration. Stress can arise in a variety of circumstances, but the risk of its escalation is greatest when an employee feels that they have little support from their supervisor and colleagues, and when they have little control over their work.

In this sense, a healthy workplace is one in which the pressure on the employee is adequate to their skills, resources and support that the employee receives from the team.

INFORMATION



According to the WHO definition, health is not only a state of absence of disease but also a positive physical, mental and social state. In a healthy working environment, health is promoted and factors that cause stress are observed.

Causes of occupational stress

Factors that increase the risk of occupational stress can be grouped into several categories. Below are the 8 main categories of stressors:

1. Nature of work: monotonous tasks, lack of variety in work.
2. Workload: too many or too few responsibilities, working under time pressure.
3. Working hours: strict adherence to working hours (inflexible working hours).
4. Career development: lack of job security, lack of promotion opportunities, being overqualified or underqualified for the job.
5. Role in the organisation: vaguely defined job role and poorly defined responsibilities in the company, role conflict within the same job.
6. Interpersonal relationships: inadequate, rude, unsupportive supervisor, poor relationships with colleagues.
7. Organisational culture: poor communication in the company, lack of clarity of the organisation's goals and structure.
8. Work - private life: work-life imbalance.



At work, as well as at home, school and university, we are exposed to the risk of encountering difficulties. The work environment poses a number of challenges to subordinates, so it is important to be able to find oneself in various situations.

What difficulties can we encounter in the workplace?

How to deal with problems in the company?

Are there methods that will make it easier for us to communicate with colleagues?

Problems at work - what are the problems?

INTRODUCTION



1. Introduction of the workshop topic - (5 min.)
2. Introduction to the workshop program
3. Introduction of the workshop educator
4. Welcome - (5min.)
 - full name
 - education,
 - professional experience
 - interests
5. Ice breaker- introduction of the workshop participants (15 min.)
 - Talent chain
 - Finish the sentence:
My name is
 - I like
 - My talents are
 - I feel confident in
 - My strength are
 - The last training course I went on was
 - My favourite colour is

6. Group rules - (15 min.)

The workshop leader distributes two sticky notes to the participants and asks the participants to write down on one of them what we do and on the other what we don't do during the workshop to ensure a nice and safe atmosphere.

The leader gives participants 2 minutes for this task.

INTRODUCTION

Example:

What we do	What we don't do
<p>We are kind to each other We respect each other We communicate when we need breaks</p>	<p>We don't criticise each other We don't use mobile phones We don't judge other people's opinions</p>

The educator collects the sticky notes, reads them aloud, asks if everyone agrees to the presented rules. Stick them in a visible place or ask one of the participants to do so.

The educator then asks that participants write their name on another sticky note and stick it in a visible place on their chest.

Questions about what we expect after the workshop. Verification of expectations - (10 min)

The workshop educator distributes one sticky note to the participants and asks them to write down their expectations in relation to the workshop. The educator gives participants 3 minutes to do this. Then collects the cards, reads the questions/statements and discusses them.

Garage - (5 min)

The educator takes out a previously prepared A4 sheet / flipchart with the title "GARAGE" and a marker and informs the participants what the "Garage" is.

"Garage" - during breaks in the garage, each participant can anonymously write down a question about the content and the workshop. The questions will be answered after the break.



MERITS

Task 1 - (20 min)

The educator divides the group into 3 teams. Each team prepares information about the symptoms of stress on a flipchart:

- physiological, i.e., those flowing from the body,
- emotional and mental, i.e., what we feel and how it affects the actions we take,
- behavioural, i.e., what we do when we are in a stressful situation, or an event causes us to experience stress.

List of symptoms for educator use:

Physiological symptoms:

- Stomachache,
- Headache,
- Heart pain (chest pain),
- Increased heart rate,
- Dizziness,
- Nausea,
- Sweaty palms/hands,
- Tiredness,
- Muscle tension,
- Ringing in the ears,
- Being Overweight or underweight,
- Upset stomach,
- Diarrhea,
- Constipation,
- Reluctance to have sex,
- Frequent colds and flus,
- Indigestion,
- Increased frequency of urination,
- Gastric reflux,
- Hair loss.



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Mental and emotional symptoms of stress:

- Problems with concentration,
- Difficulty making decisions,
- Irritability, bad mood,
- Loss of sense of humor,
- Low self-esteem,
- Anxiety and fear,
- Panic attacks,
- Mood swings,
- Inability to relax,
- Feeling of loneliness and isolation,
- Depression,
- Helplessness.

Behavioral symptoms of stress:

- Compulsive eating,
- Tendency to act recklessly,
- Frequent job changes,
- Alcohol or drug abuse,
- Withdrawal from relationships or social situations,
- Too much or too little sleep,
- Isolating yourself from others,
- Neurotic behaviours (e.g., nail biting),,
- Nervous tics.



The groups present the results of their work, and the other participants complete the missing symptoms.

The educator summarises the task by presenting the missing symptoms.

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Task 2 - (20 min)

The educator divides the participants into pairs and says:

“Your task is to have a conversation with another person about the impact of stress on a person's life. Remember to ask your interview partner if they are stressed, and then conduct a preventive interview, offering your expertise. Each person in the pair is an educator and speaker.

You can use the materials (here the educator distributes cards with the names of the illnesses/diseases below to the participants). You have 20 minutes for this. “

Negative effects of stress

Long-term stress has a destructive effect on a person and contributes to the development of many diseases and illnesses. People who have experienced many stressful situations in their lives (divorce, death of a spouse) are more likely to suffer from diseases such as:

- stomach ulcers,
- coronary artery disease,
- myocardial infarction,
- depression,
- neurosis,
- sexual dysfunction,
- atherosclerosis (leading to heart attacks and strokes),
- cancers,
- obesity,
- autoimmune diseases,
- skin diseases.

On the other hand, extreme stress accompanying such events as war or natural disasters can leave a permanent psychological mark in a person in the form of:

- post-traumatic stress,
- sleep disorders,
- insomnia,
- recurring memories and trauma.

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After the talks, the educator asks the participants about the conclusions from the task.

How did you feel as an interlocutor?

How did you feel as an educator?

Was it easy to convince the person that the effects of stress were not healthy?

Did the interlocutor receive information from the educator?

The educator sums up the task and draws conclusions.

Task 3 - (20 min)

The educator presents the role of breath in human life, and then conducts a breathing exercise.

Breathing is the most important activity in life. It does not require the participation of our consciousness, so we do not think about how we breathe on a daily basis - and this is a mistake. It turns out that proper breathing (using the diaphragm) is very important.

The influence of breathing on the body is among others part of:

- obstetrics – proper breathing helps to relax during labour,
- psychology - relaxation techniques combined with learning proper breathing are used to work with stress,
- sport - martial arts are based on working with the breath,
- philosophical systems - Buddhism, yoga or tai-chi are based on combining movement with breath and are used to work in psychosomatic ailments,
- physiotherapy – the basis of respiratory physiotherapy (used in various diseases of the respiratory system – (asthma, COPD, bronchitis, pneumonia etc.) are breathing exercises and learning how to breathe properly.

Stress causes changes in vegetative-somatic indicators, i.e., under the influence of a threat, the sympathetic system is activated (the "stimulating" part of the autonomic nervous system): the adrenal glands increase the secretion of adrenaline, blood pressure increases, heart rate accelerates, blood glucose concentration increases, and digestive processes are inhibited.



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Stress affects the nervous system, especially the hypothalamus and pituitary gland, and mobilizes the body for the “fight or flight” response. All this makes us instinctively accelerate our breathing to ensure a minimum of ventilation with decreasing respiratory capacity.

Breathe with an extended exhalation.

Always through the nose.

1-2-3 **INHALE**

1-2-3- **EXHALE**

When you master 3-6, try 4-8.

1-2-3-4 **INHALE**

1-2-3-4 **EXHALE**



Direct your breath to your belly.

Place your hands on your belly and, breathing slowly and steadily, feel your belly rise slightly with the inhale and fall with the exhale.

Try to keep all your attention on the abdomen area, follow its movement.

Exercises are performed together with the group until the participants perform the exercise on their own.

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Task 4 - (20 min)

The educator shows participants another way to deal with stress; the impact of physical activity on stress reduction, and then invites participants to form a circle and play.

The educator starts the chain of activities by performing a simple exercise, and then indicates the next participant, who will perform the task next.

It is said so often today: "sport is health", unfortunately for many of us it has become an empty, meaningless slogan.

Meanwhile, this statement is absolutely correct and should not be underestimated in the context of dealing with stress.

It turns out that physical activity, on the one hand, reduces the level of cortisol in the body, which is also called the "stress hormone", and on the other hand, increases the amount of endorphin produced, i.e., the hormone of happiness.

It is worth adding that exercise will allow you to significantly reduce the risk of various types of cardiovascular and metabolic diseases that could be a natural consequence of constant stress.

What is good enough to achieve the desired effect?

Even 20-30 minutes of walking every day - in the fresh air and in a quiet place that will allow you to calm down. You don't need to play sports professionally to reduce stress!

After the exercise, the educator activates the brainstorming, encouraging the participants to share their experiences:

- What sport do you do to feel good?
- if you want to start being active, what sport are you thinking about?

The educator encourages the participants to be active for a few minutes a day.



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Task 5 - (20 min)

Remember to analyse each stressful situation properly. Don't get carried away by negative emotions, but carefully examine the threats, consequences of your actions and face the problem. Very often we dramatise and exaggerate our problems when they are really trivial and not worth our stress and nerves.

The educator distributes work cards to the participants:

Work card 1

<p>How is it ? Describe the problem.</p>	<p>How was it? What happened when the problem occurred?</p>
Empty space for description	Empty space for what happened
<p>How do I want it to be? What needs to change?</p>	<p>What can I do so it can be how I want it to be? What actions can I take to solve the problem? List them.</p>
Empty space for what needs to change	Empty space for actions to solve the problem



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After the task is completed, the educator encourages the participants to share their experiences from the completed exercise. The educator reminds the participants that the problem will not solve itself and encourages them to analyse their situation.

Task 6 - (20 min)

Edukator krótko przedstawia, czym jest RTZ oraz jaki wpływ na radzenie sobie z sytuacjami krytycznymi ma myślenie w oparciu o fakty.

RATIONAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY RBT is a form of short-term cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) created by the American psychiatrist Maxie C Maultsby jr.

It is a method of working with emotions, serving better thoughts and beliefs and changing behaviour. It is most often used to work with people without diagnosed clinical disorders, who experience difficulties in coping with life situations, destructive habits and their own emotionality. RBT is, among other things, working with beliefs. Rational Behaviour Therapy does not exclude faith, spirituality or love, because sometimes relying only on facts may be an insufficient for rational thinking and acting. Also, what is rational for someone at one time or situation may not be rational for them at another time or situation.



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Work card 2

CARD – CHANGING BELIEFS

1. Think about the belief you want to change:

Blank area for writing the belief to be changed.

2. What negative consequences are a result of believing in this belief? Write them down.

Blank area for writing negative consequences.

3. Think about what facts prove that the belief is true? Write them down.

Blank area for writing facts that prove the belief is true.



MERITS

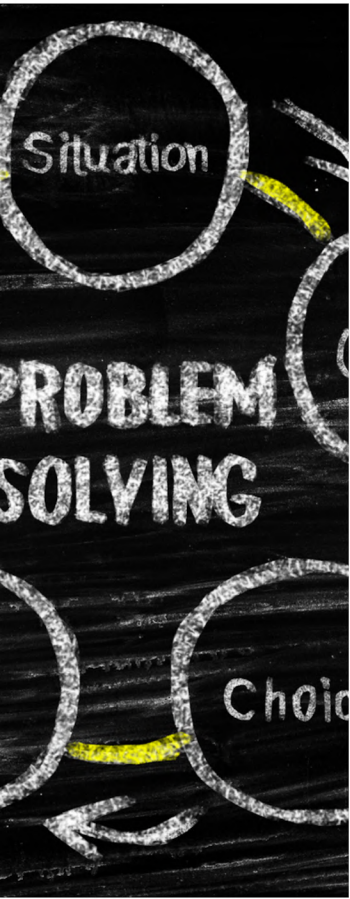
Work card 2

CARD – CHANGING BELIEFS

4. Think about what facts prove that the belief is not true? Write them down.

5. Write a new belief without using the words "I WON'T " based on facts..

6. Use a new belief each time and consider if your mood has changed as well.



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Task 7 - (20 min)

The educator invites the participants to do the task using the ABCD model:

- A - Briefly describe the event that led to unwanted reactions.
- B - Write down exactly all the thoughts you have about this event.
- C - Using simple statements, describe your emotional feelings in this situation.
- D - Write what you did, how you behaved.

Then answer the so-called five healthy thinking questions:

1. Is this belief based on facts?
2. Does this belief protect my life and health?
3. Does this belief allow me to achieve closer and further goals?
4. Does this belief allow me to resolve or avoid conflicts?
5. Does this belief allow me to feel the way I want to feel?

In order to find out if your suffering is caused by unhealthy beliefs, it is worth asking yourself the above questions. A belief is considered “healthy” if it satisfies at least three of the above assumptions.

Additionally, consider:

- what is healthy thinking for me may not be healthy for another person,
- what is healthy for me today may not be healthy for me at other times.



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Work card 2

A	B	C	D

END OF WORKSHOP - (10MIN)

The educator asks the participants to sit in a circle and each answer the question:

- What did you like the most?
- What will you take away for yourself?
- What are you leaving with?

At the end of the speech of the participants, the workshop leader thanks them for their participation in the workshop.



EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Workshop titled: Dealing with crisis, difficult and problematic situations.

Dear participant,

We hope that today's workshop was interesting for you, and you could learn a lot of interesting things. We are committed to receiving feedback from you, so we will be very grateful if you take the time to complete the following survey.

The questionnaire is anonymous.

1. Did the workshop allow you to get answers to questions that have arisen in your private and professional life?

Definitely yes yes no Definitely not

2. Did the workshop provide you with useful tips and techniques of dealing with problematic, difficult and crisis situations in professional and everyday life, especially when it comes to tools and knowledge that are useful to you?

Definitely yes yes no Definitely not

3. Did the workshop provide you with useful tips that may be helpful in overcoming the symptoms of stress?

Definitely yes yes no Definitely not

4. Which part did you like the most and why?

.....

.....



EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

5. Would you take part in other thematic workshops?

YES

NO

6. If YES, please write down the topics that would interest you.

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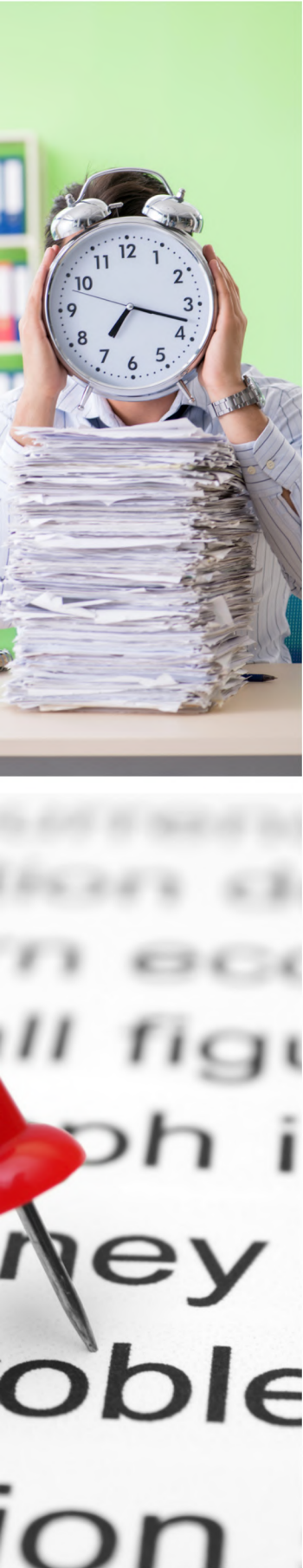
7. Additional comment

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Thank you for completing the questionnaire!



CERTIFICATE TEMPLATE

CERTIFICATE

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT

.....
Took part in workshop titled:
"Dealing with crisis, difficult and problematic
situations"

Project No.

Institution/ Company:

Date:

Place:



.....
Educator