



NERT Psychological First Aid

NERT Psychological First Aid Worksheets

Stress Management

1. Reactions to Stress/Disaster

What are some ways you know you or others are stressed?

Physical	Behavioral	Emotional & Spiritual	Cognitive (memory, thought processes)
Stomach irritation	Changes in eating and/or sleeping	Anxiety	Trouble making decisions
Headache	Increased startle reaction	Grief / sadness	Disorientation / confusion
Restlessness	Emotional outbursts	Anger	Difficulty concentrating
Weakness	Aggression	Guilt	Memory Problems
Body pain	Withdrawal	Hopelessness / helplessness	Altruism vs. Apathy
Fatigue	Risk taking / self-medication	Disbelief / numbness	Nightmares
Difficulty breathing	Changes in relationships	Loss of faith	
Increased heartrate	Increase domestic violence	Seeking spiritual answers	

2. Stress Management Techniques

What works for you?

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Mentally Prepare

Describe a challenging situation.

What tasks or reactions may be upsetting or difficult?

Write in the present tense: "I see, smell, hear, think, feel.... "

Decide how you respond and cope.

What do you think, do, and say?

Repeatedly read and imagine how you will cope until you feel confident and prepared.

Situation

Coping with the Situation

I tell myself

I do

I tell the survivor (if applicable)

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Mentally Prepare Worksheet Examples:

Situation: I'm triaging and someone asks me to stay with them. I start to feel upset and stressed.

Coping: I tell myself: "30-2-Can Do. Triage and move on. If YOU stay with one person, YOU can't help anyone else. Connect & Direct."

I do: "4 For Calm" and breathe low & slow.

I tell the survivor: "We know you are here. Other people will come to help you as fast as they can. Right now, I need your help. I need you to remain calm, keep breathing steadily, and wait for help."

Situation: I have to leave someone in danger. I hear them begging me for help. I feel guilty and like I should stay or should be able to rescue them.

Coping: I tell myself: "No hurt NERTs. If you can't rescue someone and you stay, you put 2 people in danger and do harm instead of helping. Follow procedures. Deal with feelings later."

I do: Connect. Direct. Get to safety.

I tell the survivor: "I see the situation. We know you are here. I need to temporarily leave now but someone will come as soon as they can. In the meantime, I need you to conserve your energy and keep breathing calmly and steadily."

Situation: I smell smoke, burned flesh, or other upsetting smells. I see dead bodies and injuries. I begin to get teary, hyperventilate, and want to run away.

Coping immediately: I tell myself: "You will deal with feelings later. Right now you need to triage. Name, NERT, Need. Connect & Direct. 30-2-Can Do. You've trained for this. You can do it."

I do: "4 For Calm" and breathe low & slow, covering my nose and mouth to reduce the smells.

Coping later: I tell myself: "Use your stress techniques. Ask for what you need. I have these feelings and reactions because I am human. They are very likely to be temporary."

Situation:

Survivors or NERTs are irritable and touchy.

Coping: I remind myself: "Everyone is stressed. Let it roll off your back. Send waves of calm and caring. Do 4 For Calm breathing."

Survivor: Name, NERT, Need: "Hi, I'm _____. I'm a NERT volunteer. What's your name? Hi [name]. How can I help?" Connect & Direct: "This is very frustrating. Can you please speak slower? I want to help."

NERT: "What can I do to help? What do you need?" or "Time to Take Five"

Prepare: Repeatedly read and imagine the situation and the coping until you feel confident and prepared.

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Calm, Caring, Competent Worksheet

What if you don't feel caring, or calm, or competent? What will you say and do? Here are what some people do and say:

- I do 4 For Calm breathing. I take a break (Take to Take Five).
- I tell myself: "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace." (prayer of St. Francis)
- "However hard it is to deal with them, it must be so much harder to BE them. They must be so unhappy/afraid/...."
- "May they be healed and whole. May they be protected from harm and free from fear." (Buddhist Metta Bhavana or Loving-Kindness Meditation)
- "Everyone has unseen wounds and struggles. Maybe they are doing the only thing they know."
- "Even when I am angry or scared, I reach inside for the reasons I am a NERT. It doesn't matter how I feel. It matters what I do."

What I Will Do:

I Will Tell Myself:

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Realistic Supportive Self-Talk Worksheet

If you feel guilty, exhausted, overwhelmed, frustrated, or any negative emotion, what will you say to yourself to overcome those feelings?

Here are some examples:

“Good enough has to be good enough.”

“It’s not all depending on me. I can’t do it all. No hurt NERTs.”

“Take one thing at a time. Don’t look too far ahead. Focus right now.”

“I can only control myself. People are different. Everyone’s stressed. Let it go.”

If I feel _____,

I Will Tell Myself:

If I Feel _____,

I Will Tell Myself:

If I Feel _____,

I Will Tell Myself:
