

## SESSION 3

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# The Mind-Body Connection

### AGENDA

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1. Scanning Relaxation
2. Review of Session 2/Motivational Activity
3. Comfort zones
4. Stress filters
5. Home Practice: *Daily Scanning Relaxation*

### MATERIALS

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- Student Manuals
- Figures 6, 7, and 8 (reproduced in a whole-class format)
- Scanning Relaxation CD and CD player
- Scanning Relaxation Rating Sheets (several copies for each student)

### OBJECTIVES

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#### *Students will . . .*

1. Review the main concepts presented in Session 2: distress and eustress, emergency reactions, Real Alarms and False Alarms.
2. Understand the concept of comfort zones with regard to stress and be able to determine their own comfort zones.
3. Recognize the advantages of having broad comfort zones with regard to stress.
4. Comprehend the idea that people have stress filters that vary in their effectiveness in screening out stress.
5. Become aware that stress enters the body through the mind—that is, that the mind functions as the stress filter.

### PROCEDURE

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#### **Scanning Relaxation**

*Begin by conducting Scanning Relaxation with the CD, following the procedures in Session 1. Have the students fill out a Scanning Relaxation Rating Sheet before and after practice. Address any*

*comments or questions about home practice, then collect the Scanning Relaxation Rating Sheets.*

## **Review of Session 2/Motivational Activity**

*Refer students to the story on **page 17** in their Student Manuals. Read or have a student read the story aloud, then ask the discussion questions.*

Remembering what we talked about during the last session, let's see if we can understand what was happening to Luci.

1. What happened to Luci each time the phone rang?

*Luci experienced physiological reactions of distress (in the order Luci experienced them): jumpiness, heart pounding, shortness of breath; bloated, upset stomach; tiredness; headache; tightness and stiffness of jaw and neck muscles; shaky hands, queasy stomach. Label these responses emergency reactions to False Alarms.*

2. Why was Luci headachy and tired by the end of the day?

*Luci felt this way because frequent False Alarms kept her body in a state of emergency reaction (for example, her muscles were tensed and tight all day).*

3. Who or what were the stressors in this story?

*Stressors were Luci's own thoughts, the phone ringing, and Mr. Wilson.*

4. What do we call the harmful reactions Luci was experiencing?

*Answer: Distress.*

## **Comfort Zones**

During the last session we talked about how people experience and show distress in different ways. Some people get headaches. Others get gassy, upset stomachs. Others feel very shaky and like crying.

People are also different in the amount of healthy stress or harmful distress they can deal with comfortably. People have different **COMFORT ZONES**.

*Display the whole-class version of Figure 6.*



Figure 6

Turn to **page 18** in your manuals. The pace of life and the number of unpleasant (and pleasant) activities people are comfortable with are different for each person. The amount of stress and distress a person feels comfortable dealing with is called the person's **COMFORT ZONE**.

To understand this idea more clearly, let's look at the comfort zones of six people: Jennie and Roberto, Keisha and Mike, and Lisa and Joe.

1. Jennie and Roberto are comfortable only in low gear, with a few exciting activities and very little distress. Long periods of noise and activity are stressors for them.
2. Keisha and Mike like to run at high gear all the time. They begin to get upset and feel distress if they're not doing something or going somewhere every minute.

Although these four are comfortable with their lifestyles, these lifestyles might not be healthy for them.

- ▶ Jennie and Roberto may not be able to deal with tough situations later in life and may spend much of their lives like the tortoise, hiding in their shells.
  - ▶ Keisha and Mike may seem to be happy with their fast-paced life, but they may be able to keep up their pace only by keeping their bodies in Real Alarm or False Alarm all the time or by using stimulants like coffee or drugs.
3. Now let's look at Lisa and Joe. Their comfort zone is the widest. They can feel comfortable in fast-paced situations and in quieter, slower paced ones. They can handle a tough, demanding stressor and balance it with quiet, relaxing time to give their bodies and minds a chance to refresh themselves.

We all need to learn about our own comfort zones so we can live at a pace that keeps our distress at low levels. We are also learning techniques that may help us broaden our comfort zones to deal with more of the situations we will face in our lives.

Where is your **COMFORT ZONE** on the diagram?

*Have students mark the diagram to show their present comfort zones, then discuss. Emphasize the need to develop a wide comfort zone and to balance times when they are in high and low gear.*

## Stress Filters

One reason we have different comfort zones is that we each also have a different **STRESS FILTER**.

*Display Figure 7 in a whole-class format.*

## STRESS FILTER

Figure 7

What do you think I mean by a **STRESS FILTER**?

What is a filter—what does it do—for example, on a water faucet? (*It keeps dirt or harmful substances from getting into the water we use.*)

A stress filter determines how much stress gets into our bodies and makes us react. What, really, then, is a stress filter?

Obviously, it isn't something we can see and touch like a water filter, and we don't have force fields around us as in *Star Wars* and other science fiction movies. The stress filter is your **MIND**—the way you see and think about the stressor.

Look at **page 19**. What we need to say to ourselves is: **Stress and distress enter my body through my mind.**

*Display the whole-class version of Figure 8. Explain that this is the most important idea in the program and that you will be discussing it in more detail at the next session.*

## STRESS AND DISTRESS ENTER MY BODY THROUGH MY MIND

Figure 8

### Home Practice

*Refer students to the instructions for home practice of Scanning Relaxation on **page 19** of their manuals. Ask students to practice Scanning Relaxation at least once daily and to fill out a Scanning Relaxation Rating Sheet before and after each practice.*

*Distribute enough rating sheets so each student has two per day until the next session.*

# Scanning Relaxation Rating Sheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Check one:  Before practice  After practice

Rate your feelings of relaxation from 1 (very relaxed) to 5 (very tense) for each muscle group. Circle your rating for each group. Then add these ratings to get a total score.

## ***Forehead and eyes***

very relaxed \_\_\_\_\_ very tense  
1 2 3 4 5

## ***Jaws and mouth***

very relaxed \_\_\_\_\_ very tense  
1 2 3 4 5

## ***Neck***

very relaxed \_\_\_\_\_ very tense  
1 2 3 4 5

## ***Shoulders***

very relaxed \_\_\_\_\_ very tense  
1 2 3 4 5

## ***Arms and hands***

very relaxed \_\_\_\_\_ very tense  
1 2 3 4 5

## ***Chest***

very relaxed \_\_\_\_\_ very tense  
1 2 3 4 5

## ***Back***

very relaxed \_\_\_\_\_ very tense  
1 2 3 4 5

## ***Stomach***

very relaxed \_\_\_\_\_ very tense  
1 2 3 4 5

## ***Hips***

very relaxed \_\_\_\_\_ very tense  
1 2 3 4 5

## ***Legs and feet***

very relaxed \_\_\_\_\_ very tense  
1 2 3 4 5

**TOTAL** \_\_\_\_\_

# False Alarm Sheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. Stressor (What happened?)

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## 2. Self-talk

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## 3. Meaning (Why is this important to me?)

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## 4. Physiological (body) reactions

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