**Lessons for relaxation:**

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aaTDNYjk-Gw&t=266s>

Clenching different muscle groups, one at a time and then releasing them

Sensation of relaxing tenses muscles creates natural relaxation in the body

Some are doable in your desk at schools – toes, abs, shoulders, and fists (hidden)

Teach them how with video above

Deep breathing/Belly Breathing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_mZbzDOpylA&t=62s>

Funny video with Common – even for the older kids – sticks in your head

Place hand on stomach, take a deep breath and watch it rise

Exhale longer than you inhale

Chest should not be rising as this creates shallow breaths

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sg9XYicHqKo> explanation – others online

Guided Imagery

Think of a place you feel most relaxed and happy

Close your eyes

Pretend you’re in that place in your mind

What do you hear?

What do you smell?

What do you taste?

What do you see?

What do you feel?

Slowly go through all 5 senses

Discuss to recall this environment and go through the 5 senses when feeling stress etc.

Ex: if my place if the beach I hear waves crashing, children laughing; I see a deep blue ocean, clear sky and palm tress; I smell the salty air and coconut sunscreen; I taste fruit punch and coconuts; I feel the sun warming my skin and the breeze on my face… when I am stressed I have practiced coming to this place in my mind.

Thought Stopping

Simple. Effective.

When you have a negative or unhelpful thought pop up you say “Stop.”

You can say it out loud or in your head.

The trick is to immediately replace the negative thought with a positive one

Use this often when you can’t sleep due to restless thoughts or if our going to say something you shouldn’t.

Practice having positive replacement thoughts.

Be relentless until the thought leaves you, say stop and replace as many times as you need to get a thought to go.

If this doesn’t work it is time to change what you are doing; turn on music, sing, watch TV, talk to a friend, call someone, move around, exercise etc.

Ex. “I can’t believe they said that about to me today, I must be terrible.” “STOP.” “I am an awesome person and it doesn’t matter what others say…they don’t know me.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fl1lvccqUzE> (don’t have to do the thigh thing)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_lJx94xD4Hk>

Communication Skills

Reflective listening

When in a conversation with someone – possibly a disagreement – show you are listening and trying to understand by stating what that person said to you. This also helps to clarify what is being said.

Ex. It sounds like you are saying you are unhappy with how I …

I’m hearing you say that you don’t like it when I…

It sounds like you feel angry because…

“I” statements

When talking with anyone, use “I” statements

Avoid “you” statements

Own your thoughts, feelings and actions.

Ex. Instead of saying,:

“You always make me feel…”, “you said…”, “you didn’t…”

Try saying:

“I feel \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ when you \_\_\_\_\_\_.”, “I remember feeling \_\_\_\_\_ when you said…”

“I could have \_\_\_ to make the situation better.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oE78SMNBupY>

Validating

When someone tells you how they feel, even if you disagree, it is important to let them know you heard them and that you are understand how they are feeling.

Ex. I hear that you are angry because \_\_\_\_ and you have every right to be, I …

I understand that you’re upset with this grade, I know that must be difficult to see…

It makes sense that you feel sad about\_\_

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DAydypx-jyo> (example in a marriage but good one)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HhVZmXAGRYc>

Common ground

When disagreeing with someone look for common ground

Find the one thing that is similar in your arguments and start with well we both agree that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Sometimes this is difficult to find but it’s there – even if it’s…we agree that this happened on Tuesday….

Journaling

Write down how your feeling.

Carry a journal to record your thoughts

Share when you need to

Jot down positive things that have happened – even then small ones