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Action KA210-ADU - Small-scale partnerships in adult education



THRIVE50+

Set of materials for the workshop



**Title: Sleep and Stress
Improving Rest for Better
Stress Management**

Project title:

**Total Health Resources for Improving
Vitality and Endurance 50+**

Project No.:

2023-2-RO01-KA210-ADU-000184831

THRIVE 50+





FACILITATOR GUIDE

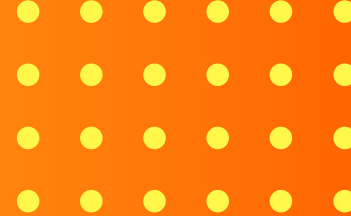


BASIC INFORMATION

Stress and sleep are closely linked. Stress can adversely affect sleep quality and duration, while insufficient sleep can increase stress levels. Both stress and a lack of sleep can lead to lasting physical and mental health problems especially for people aged 50+. Preventing and managing stress can lower your risk for other conditions like heart disease, obesity, high blood pressure, and depression.



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TARGET GROUP NEEDS

People over 50 experience a lot of stress and sleep-related difficulties such as insomnia, fragmented sleep or working. These groups of people experience a lot of anxiety and thereby putting them in a very vulnerable state.



DURATION

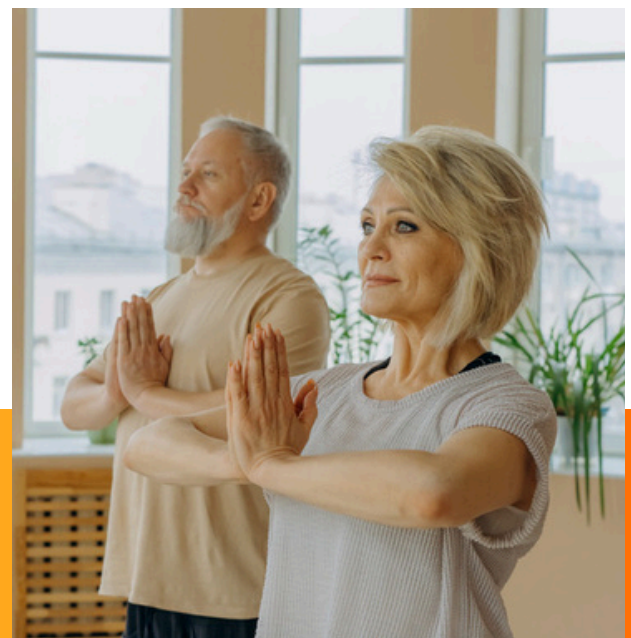
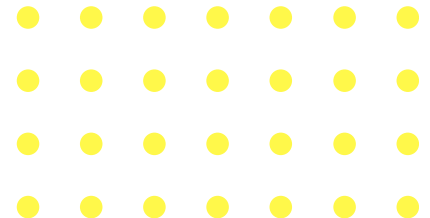
2 Hours duration has been chosen to ensure that participants have sufficient time to learn and practice Techniques to improve sleep quality and the relationship between sleep and stress without feeling overwhelmed. This length allows for a comprehensive introduction to the topic, practical exercises, and a Q&A session, all while keeping participants engaged.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

The optimal number of participants is set at 2-15 to allow for personalized attention and interaction. This size fosters a supportive environment where participants feel comfortable sharing their experiences and can receive individualized feedback.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

- Understand the bidirectional relationship between sleep and stress.
- Recognize the specific sleep challenges faced by individuals aged 50+.
- Learn practical techniques to improve sleep quality and reduce stress.
- Develop a personalized sleep improvement plan.





TECHNICAL AND EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

- Projector for powerpoint presentation.
- Presentation slides
- Notepads and pens

MATERIALS

- Whiteboard or flip chart
- Markers
- Handouts (sleep hygiene checklist, stress-relief techniques)
- Relaxation tools (optional: aromatherapy, soothing music)
- Projector for slides

METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

- Creating a Relaxing Environment
- Use Interactive Learning Techniques
- Visual Aids and Demonstrations
- Practical and Hand-On Application.
- Incorporate self-reflection and goal setting
- Q&A and Participant Engagement.





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Curriculum



THRIVE 50+





Welcome and Introduction (15 minutes)

Objective

To set the tone for the workshop by building rapport, introducing the purpose of the session, and inviting participants to reflect on their personal sleep-stress connection.

Explanation of activity:

- Facilitator Introduction:
- Introduce yourself briefly, highlighting your interest and/or expertise in wellness, sleep health, and stress management.
- Workshop Goals (Slide 2):
- Explain the focus of the session:
- Understanding how stress impacts sleep
- Learning practical strategies to improve sleep
- Creating a personal sleep action plan
- Icebreaker Activity:
- Ask participants to answer:
- “How do you feel after a bad night’s sleep?”
- “How does stress affect your sleep?”
- Encourage short, honest responses to build engagement and comfort.





The Relationship Between Sleep and Stress (20 minutes)

Objective

To explore the physiological and emotional links between stress and sleep disruption, emphasizing the bi-directional impact.

Explanation of activity:

- Presentation – The Stress-Sleep Cycle:
- Explain how stress elevates cortisol levels, disrupts the mind, and leads to fragmented sleep or insomnia.
- Show how poor sleep, in turn, raises stress, anxiety, and reduces resilience—creating a cycle.
- Key Points to Highlight:
- Stress leads to poor sleep quality (trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, waking early).
- Sleep deprivation increases emotional reactivity and impairs judgment.
- Long-term lack of rest weakens the immune system, reduces productivity, and increases irritability.
- Interactive Discussion:
- Ask:
- “Have you noticed a pattern between stressful days and restless nights?”
- “What changes do you experience when you sleep poorly?”





Techniques for Improving Sleep Quality (35 minutes)

Objective

To equip participants with practical, science-backed techniques to build healthier evening habits and improve their sleep quality.

Explanation of activity:

- **Sleep Hygiene Habits**

- Regular Sleep Schedule: Emphasize the benefits of going to bed and waking up at the same time every day.
- Optimized Sleep Environment: Encourage blackout curtains, quiet spaces, and cool rooms. Avoid phones/TVs.
- Wind-Down Routine: Suggest non-screen pre-sleep activities like reading, journaling, or stretching.

- **Stress-Reduction Techniques Before Bed:**

- Mindful Breathing (4-7-8 Technique): Inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 7, exhale for 8. Repeat for relaxation.
- **Progressive Muscle Relaxation:** Guide participants through tensing and releasing each muscle group slowly.
- Aromatherapy: Recommend scents like lavender, chamomile, or sandalwood.

- **Nutrition and Sleep:**

- Promote: Herbal teas, nuts, bananas, warm milk.
- Avoid: Caffeine, sugary foods, alcohol close to bedtime.





Creating a Personal Sleep Improvement Plan (20 minutes)

Objective

To empower participants to apply what they've learned by creating a simple and actionable plan tailored to their lifestyle.

Explanation of activity:

- **Goal Setting Template:**
 - Distribute the personal sleep plan sheet.
 - Ask participants to choose 1–2 sleep strategies to implement over the next week.
- **Action Plan Support:**
 - Guide them in setting SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timely).
 - Example: "I will turn off my phone by 9 p.m. and drink chamomile tea before bed every night this week."
 - Sharing (Optional):
 - Invite volunteers to share their plans for encouragement and peer support.



Q&A and Workshop Conclusion (20 minutes)

Objective

To clarify remaining questions and reinforce key lessons from the workshop, leaving participants with confidence and motivation.

Explanation of activity:

- **Q&A:**
- Open the floor for any remaining questions about stress, sleep strategies, or challenges participants foresee.
- **Workshop Recap:**
- Stress and sleep are deeply connected.
- Daily habits can dramatically improve sleep quality.
- Even small changes (like reducing caffeine or meditating) make a big difference over time.
- **Final Thought:**
- Encourage participants to experiment with new techniques and be gentle with themselves. Improving sleep takes time.
- **Closing:**
- Thank everyone warmly and distribute:
- Sleep Hygiene Checklist
- Breathing & Relaxation Handout
- Personal Sleep Plan Template