Stroke self-management video series

Practical Strategies for Managing Anxiety & Frustration after Stroke

Once you have watched the video on Practical Strategies for Managing Anxiety & Frustration after Stroke, please check out these useful websites and resource documents.

Client & Caregiver Resources

1. Heart & Stroke Foundation of Canada Topics:

Emotions and feelings

https://www.heartandstroke.ca/heart/recovery-and-support/emotions-and-feelings

Depression

https://www.heartandstroke.ca/stroke/recovery-and-support/emotions/depression

Stress basics


Rehabilitation and Recovery Infographic:

https://www.heartandstroke.ca/-/media/1-stroke-best-
Transitions and Community Participation Infographic:  

2. Canadian Stroke Best Practices

Post Stroke Depression

https://www.strokebestpractices.ca/recommendations/mood-cognition-and-fatigue-following-stroke/post-stroke-depression

3. Canadian Mental Health Association

https://cmha.ca/

Links to audio tracks:

Deep breathing:

https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Alberta/Pages/Deep-Breathing-Audio-Track.aspx
https://www.anxietycanada.com/articles/calm-breathing-audio/
Visual resource for deep breathing:

Breathing bubble:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5DqTuWve9t8

Muscle relaxation/mindfulness/body awareness:

https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Alberta/Alberta%20Images/Audio-Tracks/body-scan.mp3

https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Alberta/Alberta%20Images/Audio-Tracks/progressive-muscle-relaxation.mp3

https://www.anxietycanada.com/articles/how-to-do-progressive-muscle-relaxation/

Printable resources/documents:

Heart & Stroke Foundation of Canada: “Coping with Stress”

Deep breathing

Sit or lie down comfortably.

Repeat these steps at least 4-5 times.

Close eyes. Place one hand on chest, another on belly.

**Breathe out** slowly through mouth. Count 1...2...3...

**Breathe in** deeply through nose. Count 1...2...3...
**Sensory grounding**

1. Sit comfortably in a quiet space.
2. Take several deep breaths.
3. Notice, say, or think of:

   5 - things you **see**
   4 - things you **hear**
   3 - things you can **touch**
   2 - things you **smell**
   1 - thing you **taste**

**Modify this exercise:**
- For **aphasia/word finding** challenges: Visualize items in your mind instead of saying them. Look at them in the room.
- For **vision** challenges: Skip this step, or focus on what is directly in your field of view, or imagine objects in the room.
- For **hearing** challenges: Skip this step, or notice objects in the room that you know make a sound.
- For **sensory tactile challenges/numbness**: Skip this step, or use the unaffected side of your body to touch objects.
- For problems with **taste/smell**: Skip this step, or sip a cool glass of water/hot tea, and notice the temperature and feel.
- Skip any step that causes pain, discomfort, or frustration.
Quick muscle tense and release

1. Sit comfortably in a quiet space

2. Take several deep breaths

3. Tense (squeeze) and release (let go) different muscle groups.
   - Notice what relaxed feels like.

4. As you relax, say or think “relax,” “calm,” or “safe.”

5. How to tense four muscle groups:
   - **Face** – wrinkle your forehead
   - **Shoulders** – shrug shoulders to your ears
   - **Hands & arms** – clench fists and lift arms
   - **Legs & feet** – lift feet and point toes to ceiling

Modify this exercise:
- If you have pain, numbness, or difficulty moving one or more of your limbs, try the exercise using only the unaffected side.
- If tensing causes pain or discomfort, simply bring your awareness to each muscle group, notice what you feel, and imagine that muscle relaxing and a sense of calm in your body.
- Skip any step that causes pain, discomfort, or frustration and ask a medical professional how to modify safely.
The Stroke Self-Management video series was produced as a collaboration among the following partners:

CALGARY STROKE PROGRAM

Alberta Health Services

HEART & STROKE FOUNDATION
Canadian Partnership for Stroke Recovery

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