Distraction and Relaxation Skills
adapted from Seeking Serenity workshop.

Spring Semester 2020

For more support or information, reach out to Student Health and Counseling Services (760)750-4915. If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, call our after-hours/off campus line at (760)750-4915 ext. 9. For life threatening mental health emergencies, call 911.

Distraction Strategies

Instructions: Check all of the distraction strategies that you are willing to try.

___Engage in a hobby (specify: __)
___Clean/organize
___Go to a coffee shop
___Write in a journal
___Surf the web
___Read a magazine
___Sunbathe
___Do a puzzle
___Paint nails
___Call/text/visit a friend
___Go for a walk
___Go out for a meal
___Draw
___Watch T.V.
___Sing along to the radio
___Wash dishes
___Cook favorite food
___Make a scrapbook
___Do homework
___Recite a song
___Count as high as you can
___Squeeze a stress ball
___Lift weights
___Go for a run
___Nature-watch
___Interact with animals
___Look at funny memes online
___Write a poem/short story/play
___Make list of 10 places you want to go
___Learn words to a new language
___Send a thank you letter/card/email
___Do a crossword/word search puzzle
___Go to an event (specify: __)
___Play video games
___Play a sport
___Exercise
___Watch a sporting event
___Get a haircut
___Listen to music
___Take a gym class
___Go for a drive
___Go shopping
___Do laundry
___Make something for someone else
___Do something for someone else
___Do volunteer work
___Watch soap operas
___Read a book
___Watch a movie
___Make a video
___Read a joke book
___Listen/watch a comedy routine
___Read funny greeting cards
___Count/name the colors you see
___Blow bubbles
___Take photographs
___Paint
___Call a crisis line
___Play a game on your phone
___Look up new Apps
___Change your hair color
___Name all the sounds you can hear
___Other:
___Other:
___Other:

PAUSE:
Write down your top 6 Distraction Strategies:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.
Relaxation Strategies
Instructions: Check all of the relaxation strategies that you are willing to try.

__Light a scented candle ___Listen to soothing music
__Burn incense ___Play an instrument
__Observe nature around you ___Listen to a white noise machine
__Look at an art/photography book ___Spray a pleasant fragrance
__Sit at the beach/watch the waves ___Focus on sounds around you
__Star-gaze ___Put on perfumes/lotions
__Fix hair/nails/makeup ___Slowly eat a popsicle
__Samples flavors in an ice-cream shop ___Bake cookies/cake/bread
__Let ice melt in your mouth if it’s hot outside ___Eat a dessert
__Touch something soft ___Eat chocolate
__Take a bubble bath ___Work on an art project
__Pet your dog/cat ___Drink tea/hot chocolate
__Soak your feet ___Get a massage
__Sit in a comfortable chair ___Listen to a visualization tape
__Practice deep breathing ___Take a warm/cool shower
__Hug/squeeze a pillow ___Put on a fuzzy shirt/scarf/hat/slippers
__Listen to upbeat music ___Put a cold compress on your forehead
__Pray/meditate ___Hug someone you care about
__Slowly suck on a hard candy ___Other:
__Buy/pick a single beautiful flower ___Other:
__Look up beautiful places online ___Other:
__Blow bubbles ___Other:
__Listen to a recording of nature ___Other:
__sounds ___Other:
__Lie in/smell the grass ___Other:
__Make a collage of pleasing images ___Other:

PAUSE:
Write down your top 6 Relaxation Strategies:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

PAUSE:
Create a complete list of these skills available (i.e. on your phone, on a piece of paper/notecard).

You can get creative, write this list on paper and decorate it (i.e. draw, add stickers, make a poster on your computer, etc.) to keep visible in your room/home as a reminder of the tools you have!
Planning to Use Your Plan

Instructions: Write down 3 situations (i.e. before/after homework or a test, in between classes, during a time you might feel bored or frustrated) over the upcoming week when you anticipate it could be helpful to use your distraction and relaxation plans.

1.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

2.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

3.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Repeat this weekly!

TIP: re-evaluate your top 6 distraction and top 6 relaxation skills as needed and replace ones that don’t work for you with new skills from the list.
Additional Community Resources

**Student Health and Counseling Services**
Contact the front desk to schedule a virtual initial consultation. (760)750-4915. For our 24/7 mental health crisis line, call the main Number (above) and dial 9. You may be placed on a brief hold.

**Mindfulness Mondays 3-4pm**
Contact Dr. Juan Alvarez for Zoom information at jalvarez@csusm.edu

**Creating Emotional Balance – Self-Guided**
Contact Kristina Mendez, M.S. at kmendez@csusm.edu to set up a wellness consult to learn how to use the self-guided manual.

**Low Fee Off Campus Online Group Therapy**
"Coronavirus Drop-in Support Group" Wednesdays 4pm

*Fee*: Pay-what-you-can ($2-$60 per session)

If interested, contact Coastal Therapy Group's Care Coordinator to learn more or schedule a pre-group meeting with the relevant group leader:

Ally Wagner - Coastal Therapy Group Care Coordinator
(760) 334-6262 info@coastaltherapygroup.com.