

Stress and coping strategies

Teacher's Guide



Activities for secondary education

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INTRODUCTION

Stress is a natural experience that is part of the **daily life of adolescents**. At this age, many students begin to live with higher academic demands, social pressures, physical and emotional changes, interpersonal conflicts, and external expectations that, **without proper guidance, can generate overload or dysregulation**.

The objective of this module is to offer a safe and structured space so that 7th and 8th grade students **understand what stress is, how it manifests in their body and mind, and what tools they can use to manage it effectively**. Through experiential activities, debates, symbolic games, physical exercises, and guided reflections, students will learn to identify early signs of activation, to regulate themselves in tense situations, and to develop self-care and coping strategies.

The module's approach is practical and respectful of their developmental stage: **it seeks to strengthen emotional autonomy, decision-making capacity, personal responsibility, and peer support**. Additionally, work is done on understanding brain function under stress, the importance of rest, and the need to balance demands and well-being.

Module Objectives

- Understand what stress is from a **scientific and accessible perspective**.
- **Differentiate between functional stress and overwhelming stress**.
- Identify academic, social, and personal situations that generate stress.
- **Recognize the bodily, emotional, and cognitive reactions** linked to stress.
- Explore practical regulation strategies (breathing, thought, movement, pauses, planning).
- Understand the **"emergency program"** of the brain and how to lower it.
- Know and apply **coping strategies**.
- Reflect on one's own **"emotional tank"** and how to keep it full.
- Promote responsibility and collaboration in the group climate.
- Develop personal resources such as the stress poster or emergency strategies.

Key words

- Stress
- Activation
- Physiological response
- Brain in emergency mode
- Emotional tank
- Regulation
- Self-care
- Coping strategies
- Body signals
- Automatic thoughts
- Support
- Attention and concentration

Expected results module 2

Upon finishing this module, students will **understand that health also includes how we feel and think**. They will develop a **greater awareness of their emotions and needs**, and will learn to identify the people and resources they can turn to for help, both for themselves and to support others.



Teacher Orientation — Flexible use of the module

This module has been designed as a **flexible bank** of activities, not as a rigid program that must be completed in its entirety. Although the workshop is planned for **2 sessions of 60–90 minutes**, it includes **more activities than strictly necessary**, with the aim that the teacher can adapt the path to the rhythm of the group, the available time, and their own experience.

Keep in mind that:

- **It is not necessary to perform all activities.**
- **Some activities are intended as key**, as they support the main objectives of the module.
- **Others function as support, enrichment, or alternative activities**, useful if the group moves quickly or if more time is available.
- **You can choose, combine, or substitute activities** without losing pedagogical coherence.

If this is the first time you are teaching this module, **we recommend:**

- **Prioritize the key activities indicated in the guide.** Indicated as MA+number (main activity) in pink and A+number (secondary activity) in blue. Ex: **MA1** or **A3**
- Maintain a calm pace, without rushing to "get to everything".
- Remember that the goal is not to complete activities, but to **facilitate understanding, body awareness, and practical stress regulation tools**.

The module will function correctly even if only part of the proposed material is used. **Trust your professional judgment and the group's response.**

Recommendations for the teacher

- **Create a safe climate:** talking about stress can trigger deep emotions. Guarantee confidentiality, respect, and no public exposure of personal situations.
- **Avoid judgments or interpretations:** adolescents can be sensitive to external evaluations; always validate their experiences without minimizing them.
- **Encourage voluntary participation:** do not force sharing personal experiences. Offer observation or writing alternatives.
- **Alternate activity and calm:** combines active dynamics with moments of reflection or physical regulation exercises.
- **Work with general examples:** avoid asking for intimate experiences; use fictitious, anonymous, or hypothetical examples.
- **Observe non-verbal signals:** restlessness, nervous laughter, avoiding eye contact, or difficulty following the rhythm can indicate emotional activation.
- **Promote critical thinking:** invite students to question beliefs such as "I have to be able to do everything" or "if I rest, I fail".
- **Normalize asking for help:** reinforce that seeking support from an adult is not a sign of weakness, but of self-care and emotional intelligence.
- **Maintain a clear structure:** adolescents function better with concrete instructions, defined limits, and an explicit start/close.

1.1.1 Objective:

1. Welcome and introduce the topic of stress in a language that resonates with adolescents.
2. Activate prior knowledge without asking for personal experiences.
3. Explore the first associations students make with the word “stress”.
4. Create a climate of respect, safety, and listening.

Materials

- ☐ Circle of chairs or classroom arrangement that allows us to see each other.
- ☐ Whiteboard or flipchart (optional).
- ☐ Quiet environment, without excessive noise.

1.1.2. Activity Description:

1. Welcome and climate creation
 - Tell the students that this session will be participatory and practical. Suggested phrase:
 - “Today we are going to work on something that absolutely everyone experiences: stress. And we will do it in a clear, respectful, and useful way for your daily life.”
 - Explain that they will talk about general sensations, not intimate experiences.
2. Initial round: “When I think of stress...”
 - Ask each student to briefly complete the sentence: “When I think of stress, I think of...”
 - Important clarifications:
 - Do not speak about specific personal cases.
 - General responses, such as sensations, single words, or images.
 - One can pass their turn if they do not wish to speak.
 - Examples you can offer to inspire without leading:
 - “pressure”, “tiredness”, “exams”, “noise”, “blockage”, “tension”, “not making it”.
3. Record (optional)
 - You can write the most repeated or significant words on the board to:
 - Visualize the general map of the group or use it later on Day 1, during “Modern Times” or “Stress reactions”.
 - Optionally, group ideas into:

Emotions

- Nervousness
- Overwhelmed

Situations

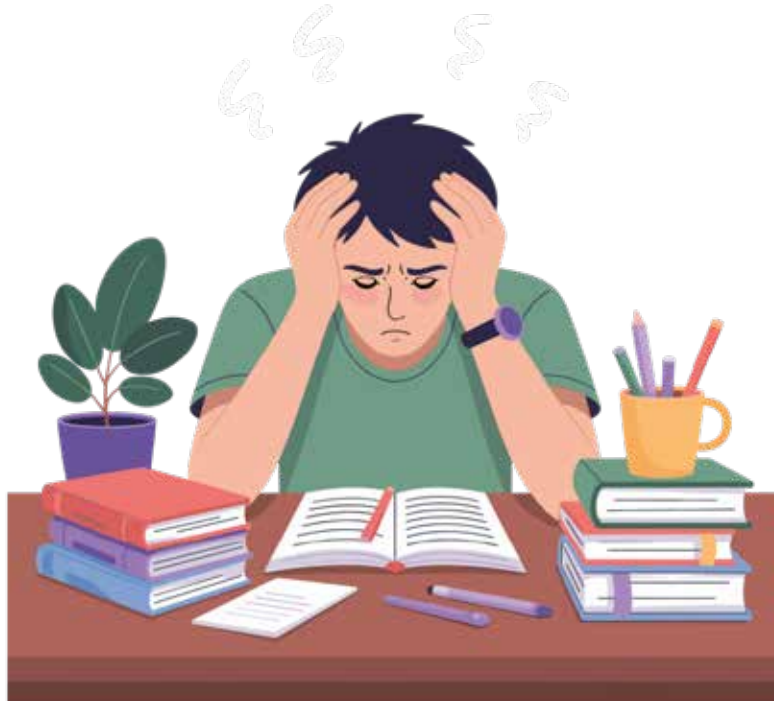
- Exams
- Conflicts

Sensations

- Tension
- Stomach ache

4. Connection with the module

- Close the activity by explaining:
 - *"What you have just said shows us that stress takes many forms. Throughout the next activities, we will see what it really is, how it works in the body, and what we can do to manage it."*



Note for the teacher

- **Avoid letting the group drift toward personal or difficult experiences.** If one arises, validate and redirect:
 - *"Thank you for sharing; today we will talk about stress in general, not individual cases."*
- Keep the activity brief so as not to consume time from the subsequent theoretical block.
- **Observe the initial emotional climate:** apathy, irony, nervousness, or laughter can indicate activation or resistance, which is normal in secondary school.

1.2.1 Objective:

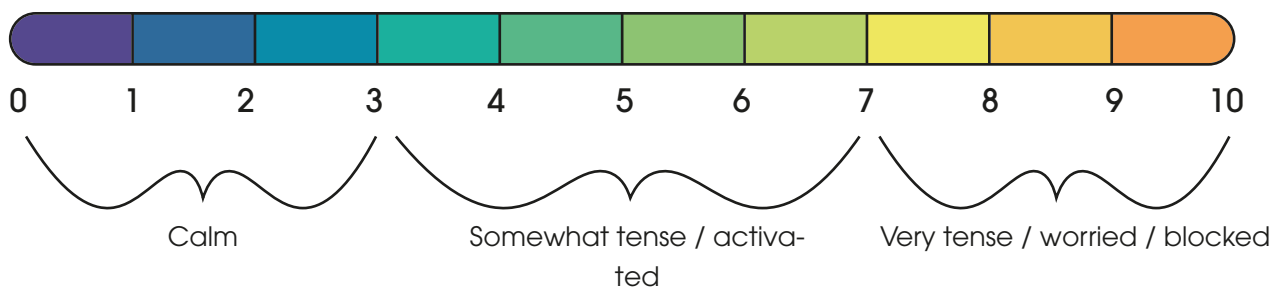
1. Facilitate students **identifying their current level of emotional activation**.
2. Introduce the idea that **stress has gradations** (it is not "all or nothing").
3. Create an **internal reference** to be used in later activities.
4. **Promote self-regulation** through early recognition of signals.

Materials

- ☐ None specific.
- ☐ Classroom in a circle or with good visibility between students.

1.2.2 Activity Description:

1. **Brief introduction:** Explain
 - "Before diving into the workshop content, we're going to do a small exercise to understand how our body is right now. Stress doesn't appear all at once: it works like a scale, from 1 to 10."
 - Clarify that this activity does not ask for personal details, only internal sensations.
2. **Self-assessment exercise:** Tell the group
 - "Close your eyes for a moment if you feel comfortable. Think: 'On a scale of 1 to 10, how stressed do I feel right now?'"
 - Define briefly
 - Do not use words like "bad" or "dramatic"; keep it neutral.



3. **Hand signal:** Ask
 - "When I tell you, show your number with your fingers, so we can see how the group is in general."
 - Indicate that:
 - No comments will be made about high or low levels.
 - It is not an exercise of personal exposure.
 - Reasons are not shared.
 - Time: 3 seconds of group visualization.

4. General group comment (not individual): Say phrases like

- *"I see there is variety, which is normal."*
- *"The goal is not to be at 1; it's learning to manage the levels as they rise."*
- *"Later we will see tools to lower a point or two when you need it."*
- We never point out who has high numbers.

5. Reflection questions (general and non-invasive)

- *"Does it surprise you to see that not everyone is at the same level?"*
- *"What things usually happen that make you go from a 3 to a 6?"*
- *"Have you noticed how your body changes when the scale goes up?"*
- If the group is very quiet, offer options:
 - *"Maybe muscle tension?"*
 - *"Difficulty concentrating?"*
 - *"Faster breathing?"*

Note for the teacher

- **Avoid personal descriptions of stressful situations;** always keep it on a descriptive plane ("sensation", "level") and not a narrative one ("what happened to me").
- If any student shows discomfort, **allow them to pass their turn without giving explanations.**
- **Observe signals:** very tense, closed-off, or excessively scattered students may need more containment or movement in later activities.
- This exercise **helps calibrate the "emotional climate"** of the group before entering more theoretical content.

MA3 Activity 3: What is stress? + Story "The hunter's heart"

(15 - 20 minutes).

Materials

- ☐ Whiteboard or flipchart.
- ☐ Printed or digital copy of the text "The hunter's heart".
- ☐ Classroom in a semicircular or exhibition arrangement.

1.3.1 Objective:

1. Understand what **stress** is from a scientific and accessible perspective.
2. Explain how the brain evaluates threats (real or perceived).
3. Introduce the concept of **functional stress and overwhelming stress**.
4. Understand the **body's physiological response** to danger.
5. Use the narrative metaphor of the hunter to explain activation and recovery.

1.3.2 Activity Description:

1. **Initial activation (2 min):** Begin with a general question
 - "Before explaining anything, what do you understand by stress?"
 - Collect 3-4 ideas on the board (sensations, words, images).
 - Do not go into details yet or correct concepts.
2. **Clear explanation: What is stress? (5 min)**
 - You can say:
 - "When we talk about stress, we refer to the response of the body and brain to a situation it interprets as a threat, a challenge, or a pressure. It is not just an emotion; it is a set of physiological reactions."
 - Clarify these points:

01 Stress is normal and necessary. It helps us react, concentrate, move, and perform

02 The body constantly evaluates situations.

It decides if something is:

- Safe
- Neutral
- A possible threat.

03 The brain does not distinguish well between real and symbolic threats. Examples

- An exam
- An argument
- A message that worries you
- A loud noise.

They can activate the same neural network as a real danger

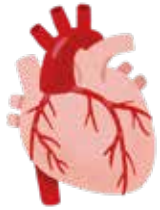
04 Difference between Eustress and Distress.

Eustress: useful activation, concentration, energy.

Distress: overload, blockage, exhaustion.

3. Body reactions to stress (3 min)

- Explain in accessible language:



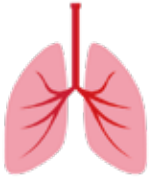
The heart beats faster.



Muscles tense up.



Digestion decreases.



Breathing quickens.



Adrenaline and cortisol are released.



Vigilance increases.



- Guide phrase:
 - *"It's as if the body prepares to run, fight, or react... even when the threat is not physical."*

4. Reading the story "The Hunter's Heart" (5 min)

- Indicate that it is an evolutionary metaphor to understand how stress works.
- Read it yourself or ask a volunteer student to read selected fragments to avoid overextending.

THE HUNTER'S HEART

The hunter's heart beats strongly. His brain and senses work at maximum speed to anticipate his opponent's plan. Not even the slightest movement of the enemy escapes his sharpened senses. His muscles receive maximum blood flow; all organs that are not essential for survival are in a state of rest. The blood sugar level has increased to allow for maximum muscular performance.

Blood clotting is activated to prevent him from bleeding to death in case of injury. To do this, blood flow in the hands and feet is also reduced: the hands with which he holds the spear are freezing. He is not sure if he should fight or flee; the bear in front of him can kill him with one swipe. But the winter is long, and he and his family urgently need meat and a warm coat. He risks everything and thrusts the spear with maximum force against the bear's chest.

A huge roar is heard and, with a shout, the hunter lunges toward the bear, sinking the knife into its chest. He perceives the bear's breath and the smell of its sweat. A burning pain pierces his body as the bear's claws tear his back. The bear lifts him effortlessly into the air, and the hunter prepares to deliver the final blow. But the spear and the knife have already done their job; with a groan, the bear drops him and collapses to the ground. The fight is over.

Back in the safety of the cave, the hunter tells his family about the dangerous combat, and only now does he begin to feel the pain of the many wounds the bear caused him. But his immune system is working at full capacity, and in a few days the wounds have closed. Shortly after the combat, his heart had returned to normal, his blood pressure had dropped, and a deep sense of relaxation had flooded him.

- Key aspects of the story:
 - The hunter feels real fear before a bear.
 - His body reacts strongly and quickly.
 - Tension serves to act.
 - Once the danger ends, the body relaxes.
- Connect it with current life:
 - *"Nowadays, our threats are not bears. But our body continues to react as if they were."*

5. Connection with daily life (2–3 min): Guide the reflection:

- "What situations at school make us react like the hunter?"
- "What symbolic 'bears' do you have in your daily life?"
- Avoid personal examples.
- Accept responses such as:
 - "exams", "fighting with a friend", "too much pressure", "too many tasks" ..

6. Reflection questions

- *"What part of the hunter's story feels like what you experience?"*
- *"What body signals do you recognize when you are activated?"*
- *"Why do you think it is sometimes hard to relax afterward?"*

Note for the teacher

- **Maintain an informative tone:** this activity is "input", not personal debate.
- Prevent students from telling specific or sensitive situations.
- **The hunter metaphor sometimes generates humor or discomfort:** use it to your advantage, keeping the focus on the scientific explanation.
- This activity lays the conceptual foundation needed for "Modern Times", "Weightlifting Game", and "Tank Model".

Materials

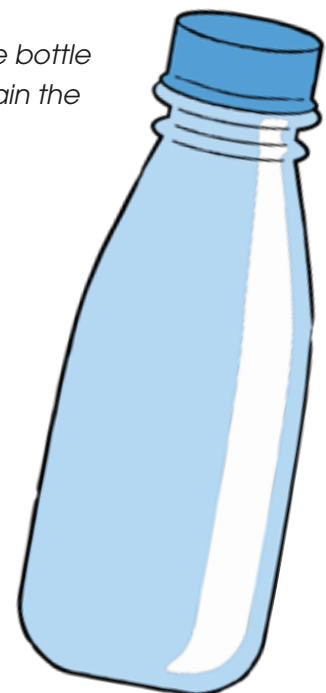
- ☐ Small water bottles (500 ml) or light weights (one per student).
- ☐ Safe space to extend the arm without hitting others.
- ☐ Stopwatch (optional).

1.4.1 Objective:

1. Understand that stress depends not only on intensity but on the **time we sustain it**.
2. Physically experience the metaphor of prolonged “**emotional weight**”.
3. Connect the bodily experience with the theoretical content previously explained.
4. Introduce the importance of **letting go, resting, and asking for support**.

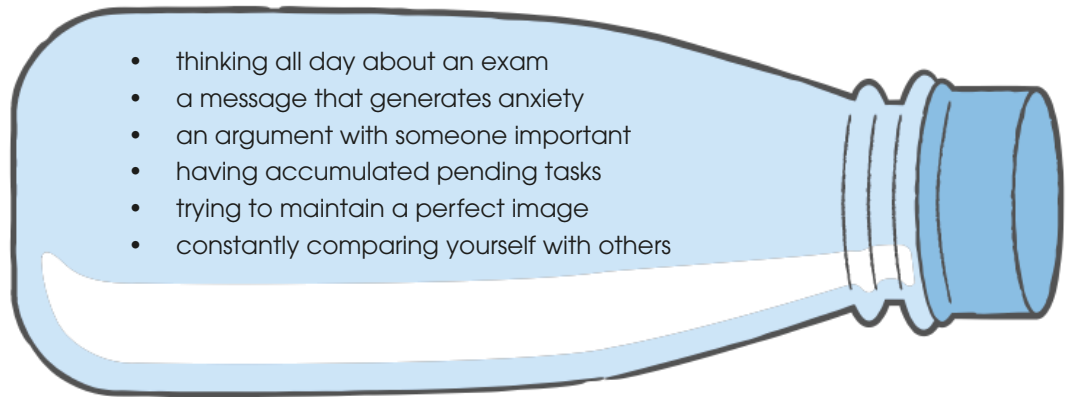
1.4.2 Activity Description:

1. **Presentation of the exercise:** Explain to the group
 - “We are going to do a simple experiment to understand how stress works. It’s not about physical strength, but about observing how the body reacts when it holds something for too long.”
 - Hand out a bottle or weight to each student.
2. **First evaluation: Does it weigh or not?**
 - Question: “Does this object seem light to you? Do you think it would be easy to hold for a while?”
 - Most will answer yes.
 - Confirm: “Perfect. Let’s check.”
3. **Main physical exercise:** Indicate
 - “Stretch your arm forward, parallel to the ground. Hold the bottle without bending your elbow. Breathe normally and maintain the position.”
 - Time: 20–30 seconds (sufficient for adolescents).
 - Observe signals:
 - Tension in the hand
 - Arm trembling
 - Shallow breathing
 - Increasing discomfort
4. **Immediate reflection: Ask**
 - “Has anything changed since we started?”
 - “Does the object weigh more now than before?”
 - Guide the reflection:
 - “The weight is the same... what changes is the time you hold it. And with stress, exactly the same thing happens.”



5. Explicit connection with stress: Explain

- *"Stress doesn't always come from huge things. Sometimes a small worry, if we hold it all day, becomes very heavy."*
- Examples:



- Key phrase:
 - *"It doesn't matter how strong you are: if you never let go of the weight, the arm gives out."*

6. Letting go of the weight: Indicate

- *"Now lower your arm and leave the bottle in your lap."*
- Question:
 - *"What sensation appears when letting go? Relief? Release? Relaxation?"*
- Explain:
 - *"In real life it is the same: when we let go, ask for help, rest, or change strategy, our body is released."*

7. Reflection questions

- *"What things in your life function like this weight?"*
- *"How do you notice that you are 'holding too much'?"*
- *"What signals does your body give when you need to let go?"*
- *"What helps you let go of the 'weight of stress'?"*

Note for the teacher

- Ensure that no student forces their arm too much. If there is discomfort, allow them to hold the weight with two hands or for less time.
- **Avoid the exercise turning into a competition** ("I can hold longer").
- Focus on the **bodily experience**, not on performance.
- This activity functions as a direct bridge to: the analysis of "Modern Times" videos and the identification of stress signals.

A5 Activity 5: “Modern Times” — Permanent stress and how it affects us (10 - 15 minutes).

Materials

- ☐ Projector or screen to show videos.
- ☐ Links to 1-2 brief Modern Times videos.
- ☐ Whiteboard.

1.5.1 Objective:

1. Understand the difference between a **specific threat** (hunter model) and the **permanent stress** typical of modern life.
2. Observe how accelerated rhythms, multitasking, and interruptions generate constant activation.
3. Reflect on the **impact of prolonged stress** on concentration, motivation, and well-being.
4. Prepare the ground for the next activity: “What causes me stress?”

1.5.2 Activity Description:

1. Introduction to the concept of “**permanent stress**” (2 min): Connect with the hunter story.
 - “We have seen how the body reacts to a real danger and how it returns to calm afterward. But today, in modern life, we are in a kind of ‘activated mode’ almost all the time.”
 - Clarify:
 - “We no longer fight bears, but our lives are full of constant small pressures: notifications, tasks, deadlines, conflicts, noise, stimuli... The body has no time to disconnect.”
2. Video viewing (3–5 min): Select videos that usually show:
 - Before playing them, explain:
 - “These videos show what modern stress looks like.”
 - Watch them thinking: “Does this happen to me? Does it accompany my day-to-day?”
 - Project 1–2 clips of 30–60 seconds



“Fragmented daily life”: the modern person is, therefore, under constant tension.

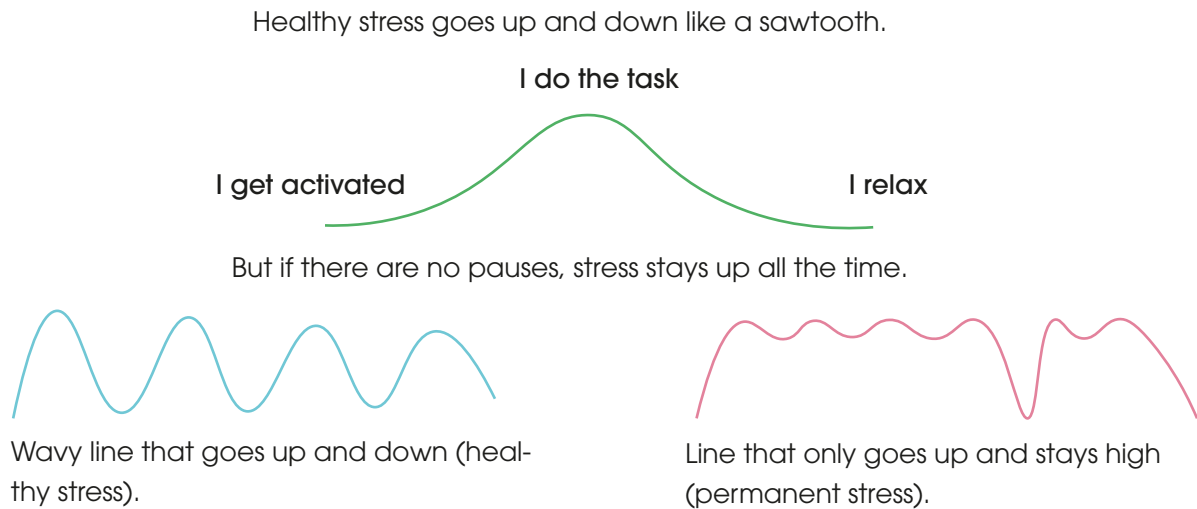


Film - breaks

3. **Brief group reflection (5 min):** Guide the conversation with general questions, without exposing personal cases:
 - *"What sensation did the videos convey to you?"*
 - *"Does this type of rhythm or pressure sound familiar in your daily life?"*
 - *"What things from day-to-day keep stress 'turned on' all the time?"*
 - Avoid delving into individual situations.
 - If the group disperses, redirect:
 - *"Let's think about general elements: noise, screens, tasks, speed, schedules."*

4. **Key concept: the "sawtooth" of stress**

- Explain it in an accessible way:



- Guide phrase:
 - *"The problem is not getting activated, but not having real moments to come down."*
5. **Connection with the following activity:** Anticipate.
 - *"Now that we have seen what permanent stress is, we are going to explore what specific things generate it in your daily life. No personal details, but general situations that affect many adolescents."*
 6. **Reflection questions**
 - *"Why is it so difficult to relax nowadays?"*
 - *"What is the difference between the hunter's stress and modern stress?"*
 - *"What signals tell you that your stress is not going down?"*
 - *"What daily situations do you think generate this permanent stress in adolescents?"*

Note for the teacher

- Keep videos brief. The goal is to generate reflection, not entertainment.
- **Avoid letting the group drift toward intense personal experiences** (common in secondary school).
- If the group shows apathy or irony, **remind them that prolonged stress affects everyone**, even when not verbalized.
- You can return to this diagram on Day 2 when working on the Emergency Program and the Emotional Tank.

MA6 Activity 6: “What things cause me stress?” — Metaplan Cards (10 - 12 minutes).

1.6.1 Objective:

1. **Identify common situations** that generate stress in adolescents.
2. Move from the abstract concept of stress to everyday examples.
3. **Visualize coincidences** within the group.
4. Prepare for subsequent work on stress signs, tank model, and coping strategies.

Materials

- ☐ Metaplan cards (small colored rectangular papers) or post-its.
- ☐ Markers.
- ☐ Whiteboard / wall / panel for posting.
- ☐ An ample space.

1.6.2. Activity Description

1. **Brief presentation (1 min):** Say something like:
 - *“Now that we’ve seen what stress is and how it works in the body, we’re going to identify what situations usually activate it in your day-to-day. We’ll use cards to write general ideas, not personal experiences.”*
 - **Emphasize:** Do not use names, do not tell intimate situations, do not write anything sensitive.
 - Offer general examples only if necessary.
 - Repeat always: **General, not personal.**
2. **Place the cards on the wall (2 min):** Ask the group:
 - *“Come and post your cards here, on the wall or whiteboard.”*
 - Example categories:

Academics	Social	Relatives	Personal	Digital	Physical and health
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High standards / perfectionism

3. **Reading and grouping aloud (3–4 min):**
 - Select some cards without identifying authors.
 - Read varied examples aloud:
 - *“Exams and hand-ins”*
 - *“Sleeping little”*
 - *“Messages that overwhelm me”*
 - *“Conflicts”*
 - *“Having many tasks”*

- Group visually:
 - *"These three seem related to school... These others to social relationships... Here I see stress from the phone..."*
- The idea is to show coincidences without pointing anyone out.

4. Closure and connection with subsequent content (1 min)

- Explain:
 - *"In the modern world, many of these things add up. When they accumulate without pauses, the permanent stress we talked about before appears. Later we will work on what signals the body gives us and what strategies we can use to handle these situations."*

5. Preguntas de reflexión

- *"Which stress categories appeared the most?"*
- *"Do you think adolescents in other classes would have similar cards?"*
- *"Does it surprise you that many of you have sources of stress in common?"*
- *"Which situations do you think can be managed with simple strategies?"*

Note for the teacher

- Avoid reading cards that could be interpreted as too personal or sensitive.
- If an inappropriate card appears (e.g., very intimate or worrying content), remove it discreetly without comment.
- **Maintain light dynamics:** this is not a moment for deep debate, but for general recognition.

A7 Activity 7: “Stress Reactions” — How my body, emotions, and conduct respond (10 - 12 minutes).

1.7.1 Objective:

1. **Identify signs** of common stress in adolescents.
2. Connect physiological responses from previous input with everyday examples.
3. **Increase body and emotional awareness.**
4. Prepare the ground for regulation exercises (“counter-programs”) and for the Day 2 Emotional Tank.

Materials

- ☐ Whiteboard or flipchart.
- ☐ Markers.
- ☐ Three prepared columns (optional):
Body – Emotions – Thoughts / Conduct.
- ☐ Cards / post-its (optional).

1.7.2. Activity Description:

1. **Brief introduction (1 min):** Explain:
 - “When we are stressed, our body and our mind react automatically. These reactions give us clues: they warn us that we are reaching the limit.”
 - Clarify that we will talk about general signs, not personal stories.

2. **Create three columns (1 min):**

- Write:

Body

Emotions

Thoughts / Conduct

- Explain that stress is expressed at different levels.

3. **Generate ideas in a group (4–6 min):**

- Ask students to name typical responses to stress.
- You can phrase it like this:
 - “When someone gets stressed (not necessarily you), what things usually happen...?”
- Collect ideas and write short words in each column.

Body

Emotions

Thoughts / Conduct

- Neck or shoulder tension
- Stomach ache
- Accelerated breathing
- Cold hands
- Sweating
- Trembling
- Tachycardia
- Extreme tiredness

- Irritability
- Nervousness
- Frustration
- Feeling blocked
- Overwhelm
- Fear of failure

- “I won’t be able to”
- Difficulty concentrating
- Going over the same topic repeatedly
- Avoiding tasks
- Responding impulsively
- Procrastinating
- Comparing oneself with others

4. **Integrative comment (2 min):** Say something like
 - *"All these reactions are normal: they are the way the body tries to protect us. But if they are maintained for a long time, they exhaust us."*
 - Connect with what was seen in "Modern Times":
 - *"As we saw before, when stress never goes down, these signals become stronger."*
5. **Preparation for the next block (1 min):** Introduce
 - *"Now that we know how the body reacts to stress, we're going to see what we can do to deactivate those signals. In the next activity, we will explore quick regulation exercises."*
 - This links to: 1.8 Counter-programs: The power of thought + Smile muscle training.
6. **Reflection questions**
 - *"Which body signals do you think appear first when someone gets stressed?"*
 - *"What emotional reactions have you seen in other students when they are under pressure?"*
 - *"What behaviors usually indicate that stress is increasing?"*
 - *"Which of these three levels (body, emotions, conduct) do you find most difficult to manage?"*

Note for the teacher

- **Keep the conversation general**, not personal.
- If a strong emotional reaction arises in a student, validate and redirect:
 - *"Thank you for sharing; now we are going to focus on general examples."*
- **Avoid judgments on any reaction**; all are adaptive.
- This activity helps detect group patterns that can be revisited later during the Tank Model and the Day 2 Emergency Program.

A8 Activity 8: Counter-Programs — “The power of thought” + “Smile muscle training” (10 minutes).

1.8.1 Objective:

1. Introduce quick strategies to reduce stress activation.
2. Move from theoretical explanation to bodily and cognitive practice.
3. Show how thoughts and facial expression influence the nervous system.
4. Prepare students for deeper regulation techniques on Day 2.

Materials

- ☐ None essential.
- ☐ Classroom in a circle or an arrangement that allows observing the group.
- ☐ Whiteboard (optional) to write down key words

1.8.2. Activity Description:

1. **Introduction (1 min):** Explain
 - *“When stress rises significantly, we cannot always change the situation, but we can influence how our body reacts. These small techniques act like ‘switches’ that help reduce activation.”*
 - Clarify that these are simple exercises but based on how the nervous system works.
2. **Counter-Program 1: “The power of thought” (4 min):** Tell the group to sit comfortably.
 - Explain:
 - *“When we think about something stressful, our body reacts as if it were happening right now. But the same occurs in reverse: if we think about something that makes us feel good, the body responds by relaxing.”*
 - **Instructions:** Ask them to close their eyes (if they are comfortable). Tell them:
 - *“Imagine something that generates calm: a place, a memory, a sensation.”*
 - Leave 10–15 seconds in silence.
 - **Question:**
 - *“What has changed in your body? Breathing? Tension? Posture?”*
 - Do not ask for details of the thought; only general sensations.
 - **Teacher guide phrases:**
 - *“Thought can activate or calm the body.”*
 - *“We can choose thoughts that help us in moments of stress.”*
 - *“It’s not about avoiding problems, but about regulating ourselves to think clearly.”*
3. **Counter-Program 2: “Smile muscle training” (4 min)**
 - *“Our facial expression is connected to the nervous system. Activating the smile muscles, even gently, sends signals to the brain that we are safe.”*

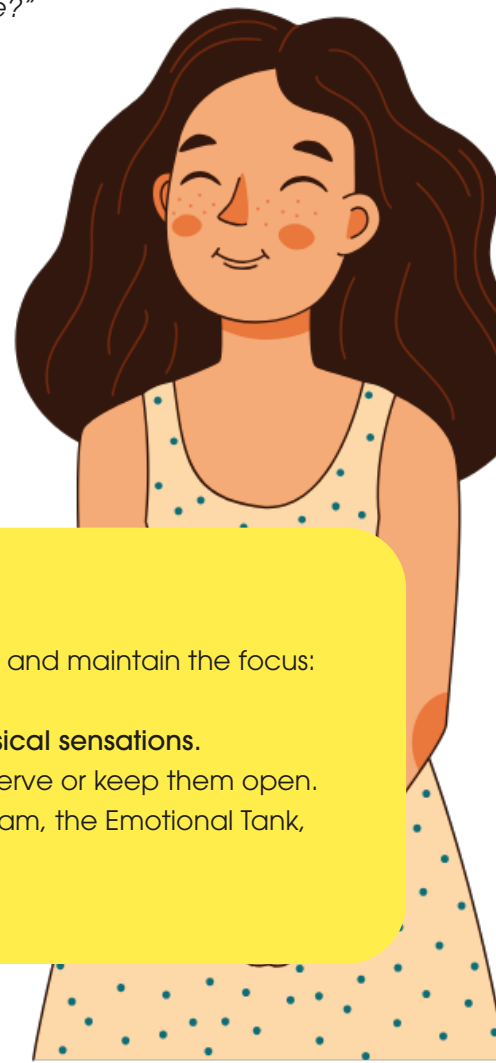
- Instructions:
 - Ask the group to relax their jaw.
 - Then indicate:
 - *"Now, make a very small, almost imperceptible smile."*
 - Hold it for 10 seconds.
 - Then ask:
 - *"Do you notice any change in your body?"*
 - Clarify:
 - *"We are not talking about smiling to hide emotions, but as a physical tool to reduce the activation of the emergency system."*
- Key ideas to highlight:
 - Activating the zygomatic muscle can decrease tension. The body and mind influence each other.
 - It is a quick exercise that can be used before an exam or a high-pressure situation.

4. Final integration (1 min)

- Explain:
 - *"These techniques are small tools you can use in moments when stress starts to rise. They don't solve all problems, but they help lower activation so you can think better."*
- Connect with what's coming in the next activity:
 - *"Now that we've seen quick ways to regulate, we're going to end Day 1 with a brief closure to integrate what we've learned."*

5. Reflection questions

- *"Which exercise was easier for you: thought or smile?"*
- *"In what situation do you imagine yourself using them?"*
- *"Have you noticed real changes in your body?"*
- *"Do you believe that something so small can make a difference?"*



Note for the teacher

- **Some adolescents may joke** when practicing the smile. Normalize it and maintain the focus: the technique is simple but effective.
- Avoid asking them to share personal thoughts; **always focus on physical sensations**.
- If a student shows discomfort in closing their eyes, allow them to observe or keep them open.
- These techniques will be useful on Day 2 when the Emergency Program, the Emotional Tank, and Coping Strategies are explained.

1.9.1 Objective:

1. Integrate in a simple and non-invasive way what was learned during Day 1.
2. **Promote a sense of closure, order, and emotional security.**
3. **Reinforce the concepts worked on:** stress, body signals, permanent stress, and first regulation techniques.
4. Anticipate the content of Day 2 to maintain continuity.

Materials

- ☐ Circle of chairs or a quiet arrangement.
- ☐ Whiteboard (optional) to leave 2–3 key ideas of the day visible.
- ☐ Calm environment (it is recommended to lower the rhythm before closing).

1.9.2. Activity Description:

1. **Gather the group in a circle (1 min):** Explain
 - *"We're going to do a brief closure to integrate what we've learned today. You don't have to share anything personal; just one general idea."*
 - Create a quiet environment, especially if the previous activity generated energy or laughter.
2. **General integration question (2 min):** Offer these options
 - *"In one word or a short phrase, what idea are you taking away from today?"*
 - Suggest phrasing it like this:
 - *"Something I understood better..."*
 - *"Something that surprised me..."*
 - *"Something I didn't know about stress..."*
 - *"Something that helped me relax..."*
 - You can collect 5–8 voluntary contributions, without insisting.
3. **Teacher summary (1 min)**
 - The teacher makes a clear and brief recapitulation:
 - *"Today we saw: what stress is and how the body reacts, the difference between a real threat and permanent stress, what things generate stress for us, how to identify our signals, and two quick techniques to calm down."*
 - Optional: write these 3 words on the board:

Important:

Please do not ask about personal matters. General answers are welcome, even if they are simple (e.g. "constant stress", "breathing", "tension", "smile", "the bear").

Body

Permanent Stress

Regulation

4. **Day 2 Preview (1 min):** Explain
 - *"In the next session, we will learn deeper tools to manage stress; we will understand how the brain's 'emergency program' works, we'll look at the Emotional Tank Model, and we will explore very useful coping strategies."*

- This generates continuity and security.

5. Reflection questions (optional)

- *"What idea do you think could serve you tomorrow?"*
- *"What technique would you like to practice more?"*
- *"Is there anything that surprised you about how stress works?"*

Note for the teacher

- **Do not overextend the closure;** its function is emotional, not academic.
- Avoid deep conversations or personal cases; the closure should be light and contain the group.
- If the group is very activated, incorporate a joint breathing exercise of 10 seconds before dismissing.
- It is a good idea to leave a phrase on the board like:
 - ***"Stress is a normal reaction. The important thing is to learn to regulate it."***

A1

Day 2. Learning to self-regulate and take care of myself

Activity 1: Welcome and Day 1 reframing (10 minutes).

2.1.1 Objective:

1. Reconnect students with the work done on Day 1.
2. Activate the **emotional and cognitive memory** of the module.
3. Establish the objective of Day 2: learning **specific coping and regulation strategies**.
4. Create a calm and focused starting atmosphere.

Materials

- ☐ Circle of chairs or arrangement that encourages dialogue.
- ☐ Whiteboard (optional) to jot down 2–3 key ideas that arise.
- ☐ Posters or Day 1 material visible (optional).

2.1.2. Activity Description:

1. **Welcome and space organization (1 min)**
 - Invite students to sit in a similar way to Day 1.
 - Suggested phrase:
 - *"We are going to start the second day of the workshop. Today we will see very practical tools to manage stress in your daily life."*
2. **Activation question: "What do you remember from yesterday?" (3–4 min)**
 - Ask general and brief questions:
 - *"What main ideas do you remember from yesterday's workshop?"*
 - *"What caught your attention about stress?"*
 - *"Which Day 1 exercises did you find useful?"*
 - You can guide the group if they don't respond:
 - *"Do you remember the hunter's story?"*
 - *"The difference between real threat and modern stress?"*
 - *"The weight game?"*
 - *"What stress signals did we see in the body?"*
 - Write 2–3 key words on the board, no more.
3. **Attendance verification (1 min)**
 - Question:
 - *"Is there anyone who wasn't at the previous session?"*
 - If someone was missing, give a 30-second mini-summary:
 - *"Yesterday we saw what stress is, how the body notices it, what situations generate it, and some quick regulation techniques. Today we will learn to manage it better."*
 - Avoid explaining the entire workshop; it's just a framework.

4. Connection with the Day 2 objective (3 min)

- Explain:
 - *"Today we are going to focus on the most important part: what I can do when I am stressed and how I can regulate myself."*
- Clarify the goals for the day:
 - Understand the brain's emergency program.
 - Discover strategies to lower activation.
 - Work on the emotional tank model.
 - Choose the coping strategies that work best for each individual.
 - And experience a guided relaxation technique.
- Guide phrase:
 - *"Today you will learn tools that will serve you for a lifetime: in exams, in moments of pressure, or when you feel overwhelmed."*

5. Light emotional activation (1 min)

- Voluntary and very brief question:
 - *"Has anyone felt a moment of stress since yesterday?"*
- Only hand raising; do not ask for explanations.
- **Normalize:**
 - *"Stress appears often. That is precisely why we are going to learn new ways to manage it."*

6. Reflection questions

- *"What would you like to learn today about stress?"*
- *"Is there a situation in which you would like to feel more in control?"*
- *"What tools do you think can help you more: physical, mental, or emotional?"*

Note for the teacher

- **This activity must be brief;** the core of Day 2 learning is in the following activities.
- Prevent anyone from sharing sensitive personal situations; **always maintain a general framework.**
- If the group arrives excited, start with a 10-second guided breath.
- This activity directly prepares for the Emergency Program (Activity 2.2).

2.2.1 Objective:

1. Explain clearly **how the brain reacts to stress**.
2. Understand why under a lot of pressure it **is difficult to concentrate, think, or reason**.
3. Introduce the bodily levels in which one can intervene (body-emotion-cognition).
4. Prepare students for the **practical coping strategies** in the next block.

Materials

- ☐ Whiteboard or flipchart.
- ☐ Markers.
- ☐ A simple drawing of the brain (optional):
 - Upper brain (thought)
 - Midbrain (emotions)
 - Reptilian brain (survival)

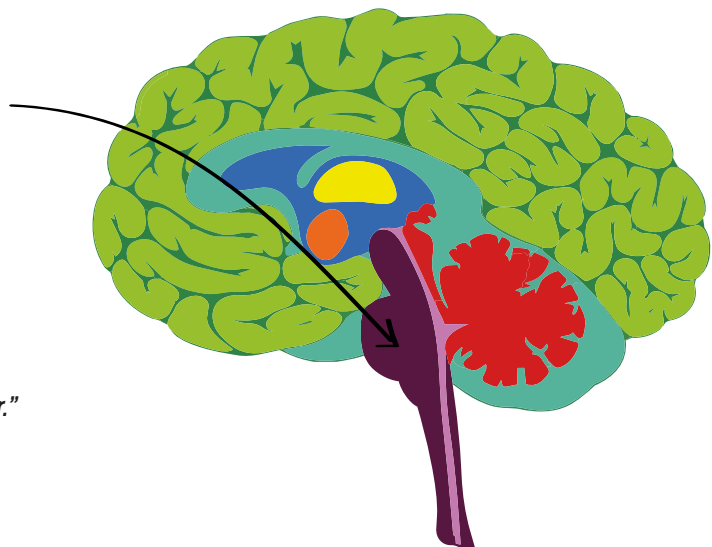
2.2.2. Activity Description:

1. Introduction: “The brain doesn't always think, sometimes it just survives” (1-2 min)
 - Explain:
 - “When stress rises a lot, the brain activates an ‘emergency mode’ designed to protect us. In that mode, it doesn't think clearly: it only tries to survive, just like in the hunter's time.”
 - Connect with Day 1:
 - “The body reacts as if there were a bear in front of it, even if the ‘bear’ is now an exam, a conflict, or a message that upsets you.”
2. Explanation of the “Emergency Program” (4 min):
 - Draw three levels of the brain:

Level 1 — Survival (lower / reptilian brain)

1. Activates fight, flight, or freeze.
2. Automatic reaction.
3. Priority: staying safe.
4. Does not allow for thinking.

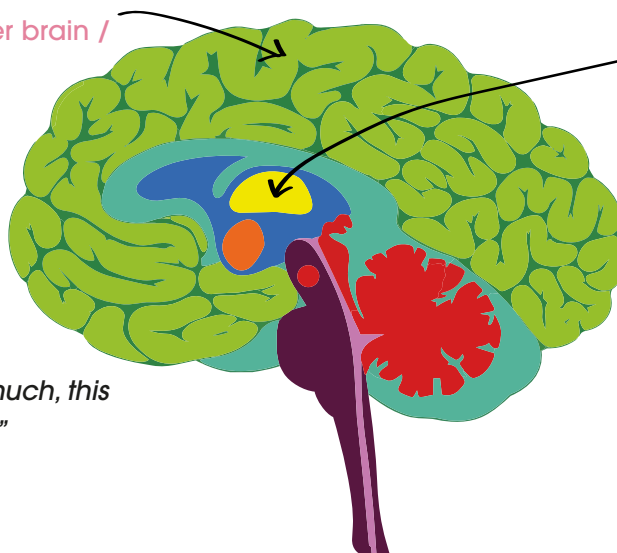
“It is the automatic pilot of fear.”



Level 3 — Thought (upper brain / cortex)

1. Plans
2. Organizes
3. Memorizes
4. Concentrates
5. Makes decisions.

"When stress rises too much, this level... turns off!"



Level 2 — Emotion (midbrain / limbic system)

1. Activates intense emotions.
2. Interprets the threat.
3. Decides if something is safe or not.
4. Can exaggerate dangers.

"Emotion decides if we stay in

3. What happens when the emergency program is activated? (2 min)

- When a person enters emergency mode:
 - It is harder to think.
 - Hard to concentrate.
 - Impulses or blocks appear.
 - Memory decreases.
 - Irritability increases.
 - The body prepares to defend itself.
- Key phrase:
 - *"When you are very activated, it's not that you don't want to think... it's that your brain can't."*
- This reduces guilt and promotes understanding.

4. How do we deactivate emergency mode? (2–3 min)

Level 1. Body

- Slow breathing
- Open posture
- Muscle relaxation
- Gentle movement

"The body is the fastest door to turn off the emergency."

Level 2. Emotions

- Validate what I feel
- Give it a name
- Use calm strategies

Level 3. Thoughts

- Restructure ideas ("it's temporary", "I can ask for help")
- Look for solutions when I am already calmer

"One cannot think well when we are at level 1. First we lower the emotional or bodily level, and then we think."

5. Connection with the following activity

- Explain:
 - *"Now that we know why the brain blocks and how to deactivate it, we are going to learn very specific coping strategies that you can use at any time."*
- This links with: 2.3 Activity — (Coping strategies)

6. Reflection questions

- *"Has it ever happened to you that you knew the answer but stress blocked you?"*
- *"What signals tell you that your brain is entering 'emergency mode'?"*
- *"Why do you think working on the body helps more than thinking when stress is very high?"*
- *"In which level do you notice yourself first: body, emotions, or thoughts?"*

Note for the teacher

- **Avoid overly technical explanations;** maintain accessible and visual language.
- **Ensure you normalize the block:** it is biological, not a lack of effort.
- Some students may use humor to avoid delving deeper; accept the humor without losing the thread.
- This activity should be kept brief to allow sufficient time for the Coping Strategies in the next block.

MA3 Activity 3: “Coping Strategies” — Strategies to manage stress (15 - 20 minutes).

2.3.1 Objective:

1. Learn multiple strategies to manage **stress** on three levels: body, emotion, and thought.
2. Identify which ones work best for each student.
3. Differentiate between useful and non-useful strategies.
4. Prepare the ground for the “Tank Model” in the following block.
5. Promote emotional autonomy and self-regulation capacity.

Materials

- ☐ Printed cards with coping strategies.
- ☐ Whiteboard or flipchart.
- ☐ Markers.
- ☐ Ample space to work in small groups.
- ☐ Optional: envelopes or tables to classify the cards.

2.3.2. Activity Description:

1. Introduction: “Not all strategies work the same for everyone” (1–2 min)
 - Explain:
 - “When we are stressed, each person uses different strategies: breathing, doing sports, talking to someone, distracting themselves, thinking in a different way... Today we are going to discover which ones help you the most.”
 - Important clarification:
 - “We will not talk about personal situations; only about general tools.”
2. Presentation of categories (3 min)
 - Draw three columns on the board:

Body Strategies

To lower physiological activation.

- Slow breathing
- Stretching
- Walking
- Drinking water
- Muscle relaxation

Emotion Strategies

To regulate or name emotions.

- Talking to someone
- Writing what I feel
- Playing calming music
- Short pauses
- Asking for support

Thinking Strategies

To change interpretation or look for solutions.

- Dividing tasks
- Making a plan
- Reminding myself it's temporary
- Questioning catastrophic thoughts
- Prioritizing

3. Small group work with cards (6–8 min)

- Divide the class into groups of 3–4 people.
- Hand out a set of strategy cards. Indicate:
 - “You are going to classify the cards into these three categories: body – emotion – thought.”
- Ask them to discuss:
 - What each strategy means.
 - Examples of how to use them.
 - If they seem useful to them or not.
- **Important:**
 - At no point should they explain personal situations where they use them..
- Circulate among the groups to provide guidance if necessary.

4. Group sharing (3–4 min)

- Each group shares 2–3 useful strategies (no more).
- Write a brief list of “group favorite strategies” on the board.
- You can ask:
 - “Why do you think this strategy works?”
 - “In what general situation could it serve?” (e.g., exams, arguments, blocks, saturation).



- Avoid delving into personal contexts.

5. Personal choice: “My top 3” (2 min)

- Ask the students to individually choose:

1 Body strategy

1 Emotion strategy

Thinking strategy

- Indicate:
 - “These will be your basic tools. You will use them later in the Tank Model and on the stress poster.”
- It is not necessary to share them with the group.

6. Closure and connection with the next activity (1 min)

- Explain:
 - “Each person regulates stress differently. The important thing is to know what works for you, not what works for others.”

- Introduce the following activity:
 - *"Now that we have our tools, we are going to work with the Emotional Tank Model, which explains why we sometimes empty ourselves and what we need to fill it."*

7. Reflection questions

- *"What type of strategies do you find easier: body, emotion, or thinking?"*
- *"Which strategies do you think adolescents use the most today?"*
- *"What signals tell you it's time to apply a body strategy (and not a thinking one)?"*
- *"Which do you think is the most universal strategy in the group?"*

Note for the teacher

- **Keep the activity on a general level;** if someone starts talking about a personal situation, thank them and redirect.
- Some students may devalue strategies like "breathing" or "talking to someone" because they seem simple: **explain that they are the most effective for activating the parasympathetic system.**
- **Observe which categories appear most complete in the group:** it is useful information for understanding general emotional needs.
- This activity links directly with the **Tank Model** and helps students identify what **"fills"** and what **"empties"** their tank.

MA4 Activity 4: “Tank Model” — The Emotional Tank Model (12 - 15 minutes).

2.4.1 Objective:

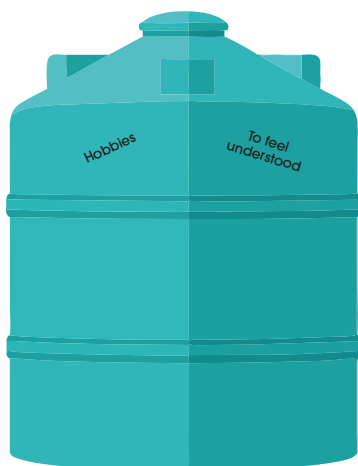
1. Understand why emotional well-being rises and falls throughout the day.
2. Identify what “fills” and what “empties” the personal tank.
3. Introduce the concept of “**emotional gas stations**”: resources that recharge us.
4. Relate the model to the coping strategies chosen in 2.3.
5. Promote self-reflection without the need to share personal experiences.

Materials

- ☐ Whiteboard or flipchart.
- ☐ Markers.
- ☐ Large drawing of a “tank” or container (optional).
- ☐ Cards or post-its (optional).
- ☐ List of personal strategies chosen in the previous activity (“My top 3”).

2.4.2. Activity Description:

1. Introduction: “We all have an emotional tank” (1–2 min):
 - Start by explaining:
 - *“Imagine that everyone has an emotional or energetic tank. When it is full, we feel good, strong, and capable. When it is empty, we get exhausted, irritable, or we block.”*
 - Draw a large tank on the board
2. What fills the tank? (3–4 min): General question
 - *“What body / emotion / thought things help you fill your tank?”*
 - Do not ask them to share specifically.



Typical examples:

1. Supporting friends
2. Resting well
3. Sports
4. Hobbies
5. Laughing
6. Music
7. Time for oneself
8. Feeling understood
9. Having a clear plan
10. Time without screens
11. Moments of calm

*“These are our ‘emotional gas stations’.
Each person has their own.”*

3. What empties the tank? (1 min): Suggested phrase



Typical examples:

1. Too many tasks
2. Sleeping poorly
3. Arguments
4. Comparing oneself with others
5. Academic pressure
6. Saturated schedules
7. Constant notifications
8. Conflict with friends
9. Not having rest time

"They are not 'bad' things, they are things that consume energy."

- This connects with: **2.5 Personal strategies** / "Help system" / Guided relaxation.

Examples of holes:

1. Extreme self-demand
2. Perfectionism
3. Ruminating thoughts
4. Constant anxiety
5. Lack of boundaries
6. Not asking for help
7. Fear of disappointing



"When the tank has holes, no matter how much you try to fill it... it empties quickly."

4. Reflection questions

- "What do you think empties the tank of today's adolescents the most?"
- "What things fill it up quickly?"
- "What is the difference between something that 'empties' and a 'hole' in the tank?"
- "What would happen if we never fill the tank?"

Note for the teacher

- **Keep this activity on general ground**, not personal.
- If sensitive responses arise (“X thing from home empties my tank”), **validate and redirect using generalization**.
- **Observe which categories appear most**: it can indicate the group's stress trends.
- This model is very useful for subsequent tutoring sessions and for integrating **coping strategies**.

MA5 Activity 5: “Help System” + Guided Relaxation (Fantasy / Body Scan / PMR) (10 - 15 minutes).

2.5.1 Objective:

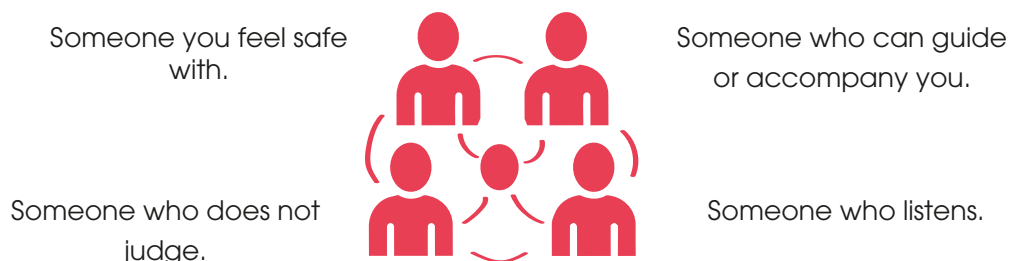
1. Identify who are the people or resources that can help in moments of tension or stress.
2. Give legitimacy to the idea of **asking for help as a self-care tool**.
3. **Connect cognitive, emotional, and physical strategies** with external support.
4. **Promote emotional regulation** through accessible guided relaxation.
5. End the intense part of Day 2 in a **calm and gathered manner**.

Materials

- ☐ Quiet classroom.
- ☐ Possibility to lower lights (optional).
- ☐ Soft music (optional).
- ☐ Chairs or space so that students are comfortable.

2.5.2. Activity Description:

1. Brief introduction: “Stress is not handled alone” (1 min): Explain
 - “We all have moments when we need support. Asking for help is a coping strategy, not a sign of weakness.”
 - Clarify that personal situations will not be shared.
2. What is a “Help System”? (2 min): Define
 - “A Help System is the network of people and resources you can turn to when stress is very high: teachers, trusted friends, family, counselors, coaches...”



- Clarify that they will not be shared and that no one needs to have a very large network.

3. Individual reflection: “Who makes up your support network?” (2 min): Ask silently, without sharing:

- “Think of three people (or resources) you could turn to if your stress were very high.”



4. Explanation: “Asking for help also fills the tank” (1 min): Connect with the Tank Model.

- *“When we share what we feel, we name the emotions and receive support, the emotional tank begins to fill.”*

5. Guided relaxation (5-7 min): Suggested script

- *If you feel like it, close your eyes or look at a fixed point. We are going to do a short exercise to relax the body.*
 - *“We start with the breath... Inhale softly... Exhale slowly. Feel your feet on the floor... Relax them. Now the legs... The abdomen... The shoulders... The jaw... The forehead...”*
- (Brief pause)
 - *Imagine now a place where your body can rest: a forest, the beach, your room, a quiet place... In that place there is no rush. You can let go of the weight of the day. Breathe there for a few seconds...*
- (Final pause)
 - *And little by little, return to the classroom... moving fingers, stretching gently... and opening your eyes when you are ready.*

6. Gentle transition to closing the workshop (1 min): Finalize

- *“Thank you for participating in this part. Now that the body is calmer, we are going to perform the final closing of the module.”*

7. Reflection questions (optional, not personal):

- *“Which part of the relaxation helped you most: breathing, body scan, or imagining the place?”*
- *“What characteristics should a person have to be part of your ‘Help System’?”*
- *“What strategy would you like to remember for the future?”*

Teacher’s Note:

- Some adolescents may use humor to avoid relaxing; normalize it without pressure.
- **Avoid having anyone share specific names** from their support network (privacy).
- Keep the exercise short to avoid discomfort or distraction.
- This activity **reduces activation** before the final closing of the module.

A6 Activity 6: Game “1-7” — Sudden stress and decision making (8 - 10 minutes).

2.6.1 Objective:

1. Observe how we react under **mild pressure**.
2. Work on **attention, coordination, and cognitive flexibility**.
3. Experiment how sudden stress affects response capacity.
4. Connect with the idea that **coping strategies help** even in moments of pressure.

Materials

- ☐ Ample space to form a standing circle.
- ☐ No additional material required.
- ☐ Ensure that students can move without risk.

2.6.2. Activity Description:

1. **Preparation of the circle (1 min):** Ask the students
 - “We are going to play a quick game to see how we react when a sudden stressful situation appears.”
 - Ask them to form a wide standing circle.
2. **Explanation of rules (2 min):** Explain
 - “I will start by making a gesture, and that gesture will pass to the person next to me.”
 - Base gesture:



- The group must repeat the gesture following the indicated direction.
- Now introduce the key element:
 - **We will count from 1 to 7.**
- When it is the number 7's turn, the person receiving the signal must:
 - Raise their hand above their head (not to the shoulder).
- This will cause:
 - The direction to stay the same or the direction to change, depending on where the raised hand points.
- Clarify:
 - “If someone makes a mistake, they sit down for a moment and observe. It is not a punishment; it is part of the game.”

3. **Slow rehearsal (2 min):** First
 - sgesture — gesture — gesture only.
 - then gesture + numbering: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6... 7 (hand up)... 1, 2, 3...
 - Do it slowly to ensure understanding.
4. **Full game (3-4 min):**
 - Increase the pace, the necessary attention, the light “stress” of speed.
 - Normalize errors, laughter, and confusion:
 - *“It is normal to make mistakes; **rapid stress confuses the brain.**”*
5. **Brief reflection (1 min):** Ask
 - *“Did you feel a little stressed?”*
 - *“What happened when we tried to go fast?”*
 - *“Did you find it harder to think when the ‘7’ appeared?”*
 - *“What strategies did you use to concentrate?”*
 - Relate it to the Emergency Program:
 - *“Sometimes, even very small stress affects our mental clarity.”*
6. **Additional reflection questions (optional):**
 - *“Which part of the game was harder: following the direction or remembering the number?”*
 - *“Do you think this type of stress also appears in exams or social situations?”*
 - *“What helps most to keep calm in fast moments: breathing or thinking?”*

Teacher’s Note:

- Avoid increasing the speed too much if the group gets confused or frustrated.
- **Maintain a playful atmosphere**, without competitiveness.
- This activity is ideal for **“waking up” the group** before the final closing.
- Avoid jokes between students that may seem like mocking; redirect to the task.
- If the group is very activated, perform 10 seconds of breathing before closing.

MA7 Activity 7: Module Closing — Integration and Final Reflection (5 minutes).

2.7.1 Objective:

1. **Integrate the learning** from the entire module (Day 1 + Day 2).
2. **Emotionally close the experience**, reinforcing calm and safety.
3. Offer students a clear message: **stress is manageable** and real tools exist to regulate it.
4. **Facilitate a smooth transition** to the rest of the day or other subjects.

Materials

- ☐ Circle of chairs or a quiet arrangement.
- ☐ Whiteboard (optional) to write 2–3 key ideas from the module.
- ☐ Calm atmosphere following the previous game.

2.7.2. Activity Description:

1. **Return to the circle (1 min):** Indicate
 - “We are going to close the module by remembering the **most important things we have learned** about stress and about ourselves.”
 - Ask for a few seconds of silence so the group can calm down after the game.
2. **General integration question (2 min):** Ask
 - “In one word or a short phrase, **what are you taking away** from this workshop?”
 - Suggestions to facilitate:
 - “An idea I want to remember...”
 - “A tool that worked for me...”
 - “Something I understood better about stress...”
 - “Something that surprised me...”
 - Accept brief responses without asking for personal explanations.
3. **Teacher’s final summary (1 min):** Reinforce the key points of the module

- “During these two days we have learned that:
*Stress is a **normal reaction of the body and the brain***
There is a difference between occasional stress and permanent stress.
Our body, emotions, and thoughts react to stress.
*We all have an '**emotional tank**' that fills and empties.*
*We can regulate ourselves with **physical, emotional, and cognitive strategies**.*
*And asking for help is part of **self-care**.”*
- “It is not about eliminating stress, but about **knowing how to handle it**.”

4. **Emotional and empowering closing (1 min):** Choose one phrase as a closing:

Remember that you are not alone: we all feel stress. The important thing is to know **what you need and which tools help**.

You have **more resources than you think**: your body, your mind, your strategies, and your support network.

Stress does not define you; it is only a signal. And now you know how to listen to it.

5. Optional reflection questions:

- “Which strategy do you think will be **most useful** for the coming weeks?”
- “What learning would you like the **whole group** to remember?”
- “What idea makes you feel **calmer** regarding stress?”

Teacher’s Note:

- Keep this closing **brief and respectful**.
- Avoid deep conversations that might open sensitive topics at the end of the workshop.
- If the group is very activated, perform a **10-second joint breathing exercise**.
- You can leave a reminder phrase on the board, for example:
 - “*Stress can be regulated. And you can do it.*”

3.1.1 Objective:

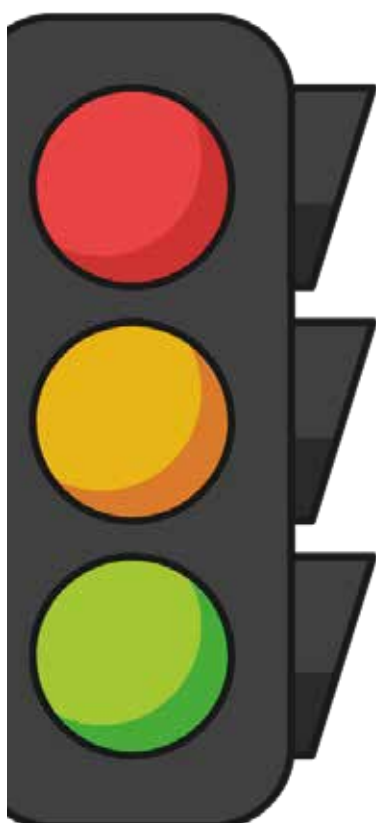
1. Identify the current level of stress: low (green), moderate (yellow), high (red).
2. Normalize emotional fluctuation throughout the day.
3. Facilitate quick self-regulation before exams, presentations, or social situations.
4. Connect with the Emergency Program and the Tank Model.

Materials

- ☐ Red, yellow, and green cardstock.
- ☐ Thick markers.
- ☐ Traffic light template (optional).
- ☐ Whiteboard or flipchart.

3.1.2. Activity Description:

1. **Presentation of the traffic light (1–2 min):** Draw the traffic light on the board
 - **Green:** I am doing well, focused, stable.
 - **Yellow:** Starting to feel tense, nervous, difficulty concentrating.
 - **Red:** Blocked, irritable, racing heart, high anxiety.
 - Explain:
 - *“Stress has levels. It doesn’t appear all at once: it builds up.”*
2. **Examples of each level (3 min): Ask**
 - *“What physical, emotional, or behavioral signals do you see in each color?”*
 - Fill the board with typical responses
3. **“What do I do in each color?” (3–4 min):**
 - Ask for strategies for each color.



Blocked, irritable, racing heart, high anxiety

Signs:

Blocked, wanting to run away, crying, impulsivity, racing heart.

Strategies (Low Emergency):

Slow breathing, asking for help, temporarily changing space, applying coping strategies.

Starting to feel tense, nervous, difficulty concentrating

Signs:

Tension, repetitive thoughts, difficulty concentrating, mild irritability.

Strategies (Lowering activation):

Drinking water, walking for 1 minute, talking to someone, calming music.

I am doing well, focused, and stable

Signs:

Normal breathing, mental clarity, good energy.

Strategies (Maintaining well-being):

Mindful breathing, organizing tasks, short breaks.

4. **Personal traffic light (optional, 2 min):**

- Hand out a template.
- Each student writes:
 - **personal signals** for each color and recommended actions for themselves.

Teacher's Note:

- Ideal for weekly tutoring sessions, **before exams**, or for managing conflicts.

AC2 Activity 2: “Emotional First Aid Kit” — My physical self-care box (15 - 20 minutes).

3.2.1 Objective:

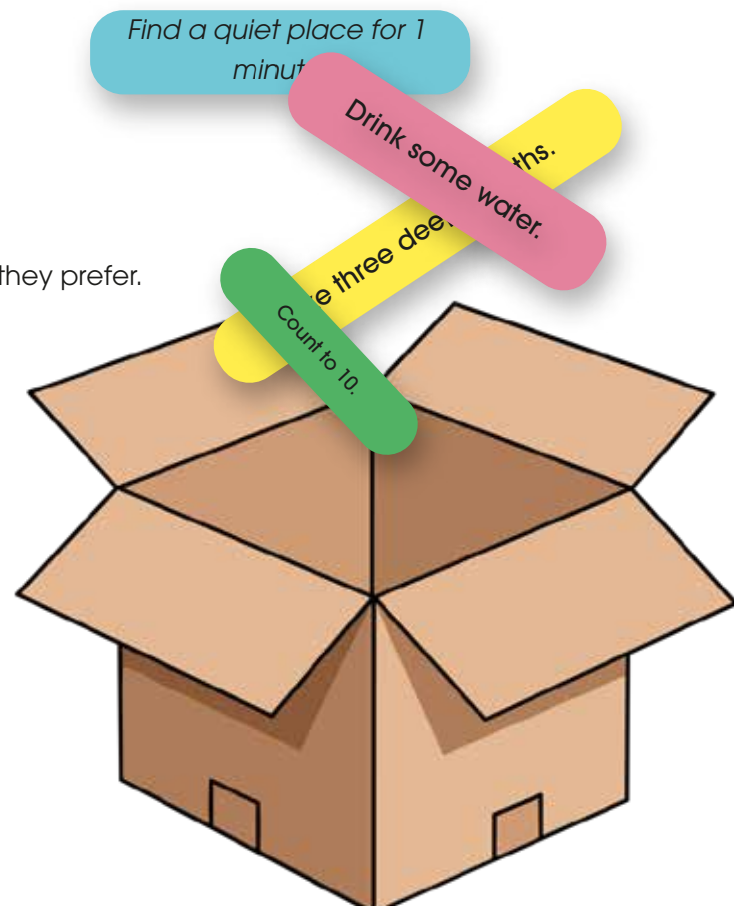
1. Create a physical and personal resource for moments of overwhelm.
2. Connect **coping strategies** with concrete actions.
3. Promote **self-care and emotional autonomy**.
4. Have a **tangible object** to use in the classroom or at home.

Materials

- ☐ Envelopes or small boxes.
- ☐ Small-sized cards.
- ☐ Markers.
- ☐ Stickers (optional).
- ☐ A list of coping strategies from the module.

3.2.2. Activity Description:

1. **Brief presentation (1 min): Explain**
 - “Just as a physical first aid kit exists, we are going to create an emotional kit for moments of stress.”
2. **Decorating the box (3-4 min):** They can decorate it with clouds, mountains, words like “pause”, “breathe”, “calm”, and colors that convey **safety**.
3. **Creating the kit cards (8-10 min):**
 - Hand out paper strips or cards. Indicate:
 - “Write down **short strategies** that work for you when you are very stressed.”
 - Examples (neutral, not personal):
 - “Breathe 4-6.”
 - “Find a quiet place for 1 minute.”
 - “Count to 10.”
 - “Talk to someone you trust.”
 - “Listen to a song that calms you.”
 - “Do your favorite physical strategy.”
 - “Break the task into steps.”
 - “This is temporary.”
 - They can add symbols instead of phrases if they prefer.



4. **Saving the box:** Each student keeps their cards.
 - Optional: *"You can leave the box in your pencil case, backpack, or in the tutoring room."*
5. **Closing (1 min): Ask**
 - *"What type of strategies do you think you will use more: **physical, emotional, or cognitive?**"*

Teacher's Note:

- You can **reuse this box** in later tutoring sessions or during moments of group overwhelm.

Material Checklist for all activities

Day 1. Recognizing stress and perceiving its signals

1.1 Introduction and presentation

- ☐ Circle of chairs
- ☐ Whiteboard or flipchart (optional)
- ☐ Quiet environment.

1.2 Stress Scale 1-10

- ☐ Classroom in a circle with good visibility between students.

1.3 What is stress? + Story "The Hunter's Heart"

- ☐ Whiteboard or flipchart.
- ☐ A printed or digital copy of the text "The Hunter's Heart".
- ☐ A classroom arranged in a semi-circular or lecture-style layout.

1.4 Game "The weight of stress"

- ☐ Small water bottles (500 ml) or light weights (one per student)
- ☐ Safe space for movement
- ☐ Stopwatch (optional).

1.5 "Modern Times"

- ☐ A projector or screen for showing the videos.
- ☐ Short videos from "Modern Times".
- ☐ A whiteboard for jotting down key ideas (optional).

1.6 "What things cause me stress?"

- ☐ Metaplan cards (colored rectangular papers) or post-its
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Whiteboard/wall/panel for posting
- ☐ Ample space to distribute cards.

1.7 "Stress Reactions"

- ☐ Whiteboard
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ three columns prepared (optional): Body – Emotions – Thoughts / Behavior
- ☐ Cards/post-its (optional for anonymous participation).

1.8 "The power of thought" + "Smile muscle training"

- ☐ Classroom arranged in a circle or in a layout that allows the group to be observed.
- ☐ Whiteboard (optional) for jotting down key words.

1.9 Day 1 Closing — Integration and calm:

- ☐ A circle of chairs or a relaxed seating arrangement.
- ☐ A whiteboard (optional) to display 2-3 key ideas for the day.
- ☐ A calm atmosphere (it is recommended to wind down before finishing).

Day 2. Controlling myself and taking good care of myself

2.1 Welcome and reminder

- ☐ Circle of chairs
- ☐ Whiteboard
- ☐ Posters or materials from Day 1 (optional).

2.2 The Brain Emergency Program

- ☐ Whiteboard
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Simple drawing of the brain (optional):
 - Upper brain (thinking)
 - Middle brain (emotions)
 - Reptilian brain (survival).

2.3 “Coping Strategies” — Strategies for managing stress

- ☐ Cards printed with coping strategies
- ☐ Whiteboard or flipchart
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ A spacious area for working in small groups
- ☐ Optional: envelopes or tables for sorting the cards

2.4 Emotional Tank Model

- ☐ Whiteboard,
- ☐ Markers,
- ☐ Large drawing of a “tank” or container (optional),
- ☐ Cards or post-its (optional),
- ☐ List of personal strategies chosen in the previous activity.

2.5 Help System / Guided Relaxation

- ☐ Quiet classroom
- ☐ Soft music (optional)
- ☐ Comfortable chairs or space for sitting/relaxing
- ☐ Soft lights (optional).

2.6 Game “1-7”

- ☐ Ample space for a standing circle
- ☐ No additional material.

2.7 Module Closing

- ☐ Circle of chairs
- ☐ Optional whiteboard

Complementary Activities

3.1 Stress Traffic Light

- ☐ Red, yellow, and green cardstock
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Traffic light template (optional)
- ☐ Whiteboard.

3.2 Emotional First Aid Kit

- ☐ Small boxes/envelopes,
- ☐ Small cards
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Stickers (optional)
- ☐ List of coping strategies.

Level 3 — Thought (upper brain / cortex)

1. Plans
2. Organizes
3. Memorizes
4. Concentrates
5. Makes decisions

"When stress goes too high, this level... shuts down!"

How is it regulated? **Thought**

- Restructure ideas ("it's temporary", "I can ask for help")
- Look for solutions when I am already calmer

"You cannot think well when we are at level 1. We must first go down to the emotional or body level, and then we think."

Level 1 — Survival (lower brain / reptilian)

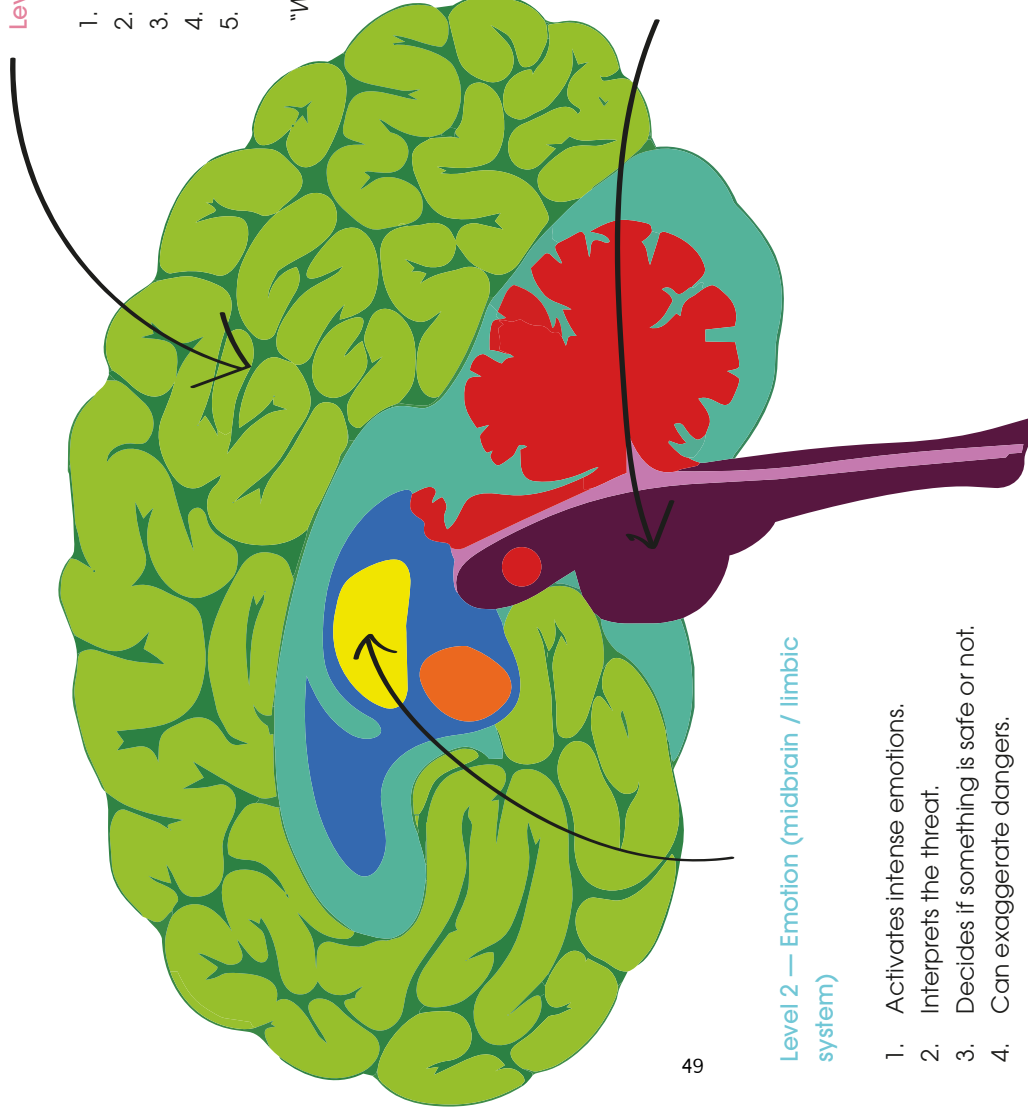
1. Activates fight, flight, or freeze.
2. Automatic reaction.
3. Priority: keep safe.
4. Does not allow thinking.

"It is the autopilot of fear."

(How is it regulated?) **Body**

- Slow breathing
- Open posture
- Muscle relaxation
- Soft movement

"The body is the fastest door to turn off the emergency."



Level 2 — Emotion (midbrain / limbic system)

1. Activates intense emotions.
2. Interprets the threat.
3. Decides if something is safe or not.
4. Can exaggerate dangers.

"Emotion decides if we stay in emergency."

How is it regulated? **Emotion**

- Validate what I feel
- Name it
- Use calming strategies

Go for a run

Call friends

Spend time
in nature

Have a
party/chat
with others

Fantasizing
(dreaming
of a way
out)

Start an
argument

Write about it

Eat less

Cook
something

Flee / Run
away

Sleep less

Getting sick /
feigning
illness

Take the dog
for a walk

Blaming others

Telling
everyone how
bad I feel

Blaming
oneself

Cry

Take a
shower

Go shopping

Searching
for new
friends

Pray

See a
counselor /
advisor

Painting /
drawing

Set goals

Take a day
off

Take risks

Clean

Postpone or
avoid things
that need to
be done

Go swimming

Sleep more

Do
something

Waiting for
everything to
get better

Work out /
Train

Ask a strong
person for
help

Staying
awake for a
long time

Staying
awake for a
long time

Listen to
music

Visit someone
you like

Make jokes
or laugh

Drink
alcohol

Problem
solving

Meditate

Withdraw
(not talking
or thinking
about it)

Play computer
games

Watch TV

Eat more

Smoke

Eating
unhealthy
things

Quitting
(leaving the
team, quitting
the job)

Go out

Comer
cosas poco
saludables.

Play sports

Work harder

Complain

Worrying

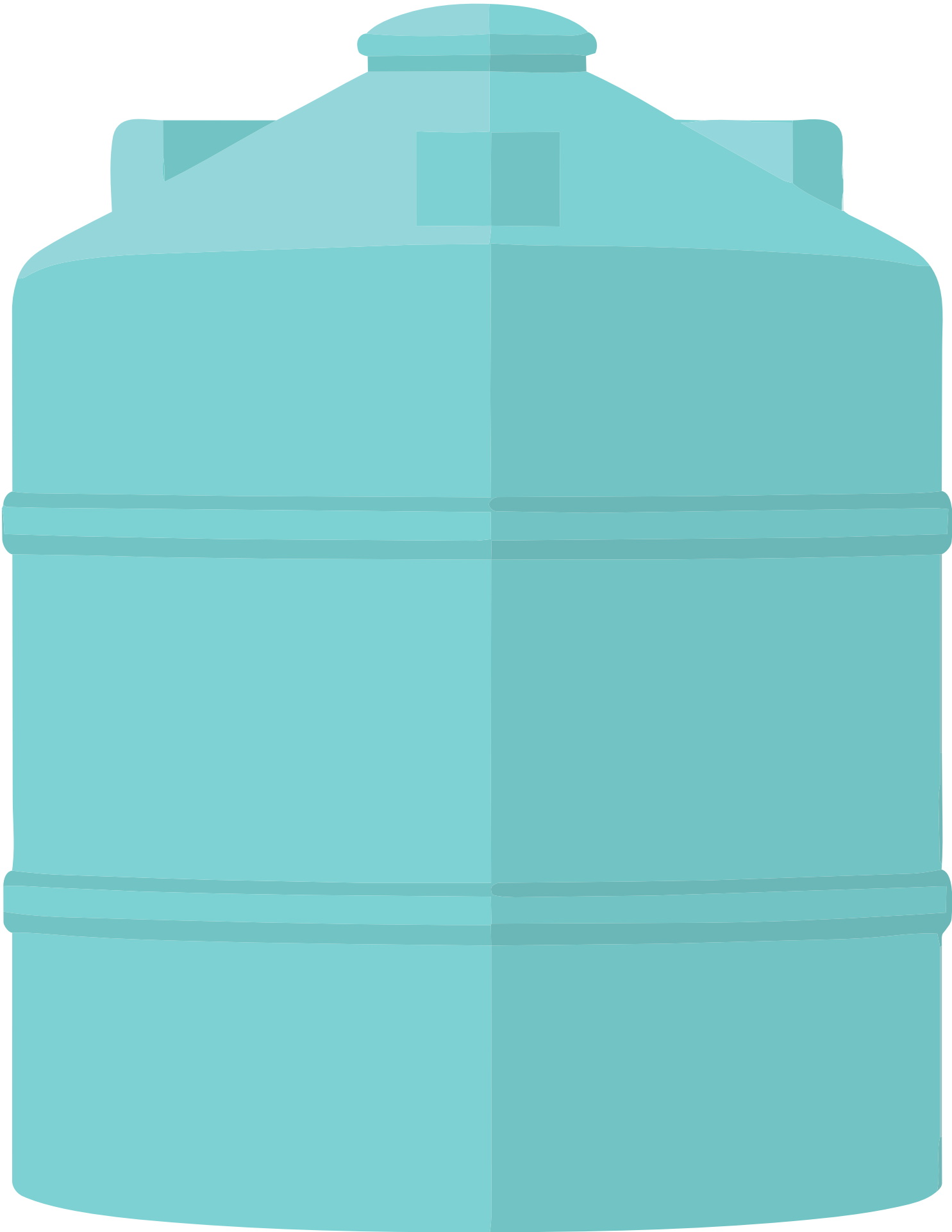
Go to bed
early

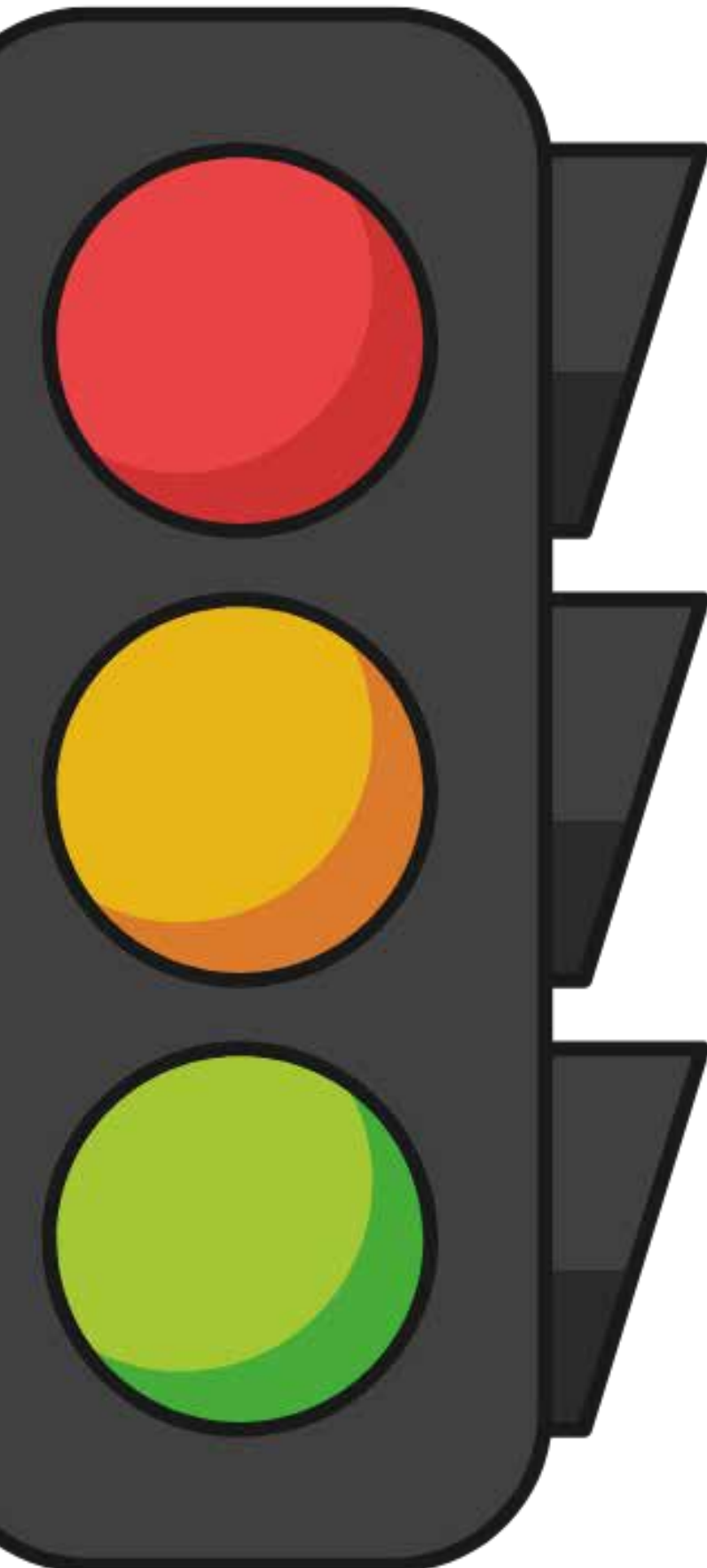
Deep
breathing

Dropping out
(leaving
school,
abandoning
studies)

Set priorities
(giving priority
to important
things)

Planning
(thinking
about what
you want to
do and how
to do it)





Blocked, irritable, racing heart, high anxiety

Starting to feel tense, nervous, difficulty concentrating

I am doing well, focused, and stable



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Enriching lives, opening minds.

