

Squeeze and Release

Stress can sometimes be positive - in the right amounts.

This positive *eustress* can improve our motivation and performance - even our emotional well-being.

In fact, associating stress with negativity alone can often intensify our stress experiences, preventing us from managing them better.

This *Squeeze and Release* group activity encourages participants to experience stress in a positive form, helping them discover its energizing and potential coping benefits.

It's perfect for large groups who want to get active!

Materials:

- Squeezy stress balls

Instructions:

1. Ask participants to form groups of 5-8 people, and give one squeezy ball to each group.
2. One person begins the game by throwing the ball to another group member, keeping a mental note of who they passed it to.
3. The receiver will then toss the squeezy ball to another member who has not held it yet.
4. Whenever one participant catches the ball for the first time, they repeat the exercise, passing to another member who hasn't yet held it.
5. When the ball reaches the final participant, have them throw it back to the person who began the game.
6. Repeat the exercise, this time passing the ball to a different person first. For each round, participants must continue passing the ball to someone who hasn't received it that round.
7. Make this game more difficult by introducing another ball so that two, three, then four or five squeezy balls are circulating around the group!

Debriefing:

Once you've had enough, pose the following questions to your group as you debrief.

- *What did you find most difficult about Squeeze and Release?*
- *How hard did you need to focus on the task at hand? Did your mind wander during the exercise?*
- *When you focused on the task at hand - Squeeze and Release - did you perform better?*