

BUBBLE PACKING WRAP STRESS RELIEF

Since COVID-19 started and physical distancing became a reality, many of us have turned to Amazon and other mail order services to get the things we need to keep our lives going and get them quickly. As an added bonus, when the package comes, it often comes with another useful, yet often overlooked, freebie: BUBBLE PACKING WRAP!!!!

Some of you may be reading this and thinking, what the freak are you talking about? Those bubble package things are bulky (they can be the size of small pillows sometimes), a pain in the butt to break down and throw out, AND they are bad for the environment! Well, those points are valid, yet only if we close our minds to unlocking their true hidden potential....FREE AND QUICK STRESS RELIEF!!! Wait....what? Yes that's right! Currently, and it is only going to get more so, we are under an unending waterfall of stressors whether it is the election, COVID-19, going into a new school year not knowing how online classes are going to work, having to balance childcare during the school day with working at home, worrying about the safety of loved ones, being stuck with more boredom, and the list goes on.

This post is going to explore ways that you can turn those free bubble package packets into quick, fun (HAVING A GOOD LAUGH IS ALWAYS GREAT STRESS RELIEF) and easy-to-use stress relievers. Most important, the ideas in this post are meant to provide discussion and empathy building opportunities to discuss how you experience stress/anxiety and how you can work with it, not against it. You won't have to spend a dollar on stress-relievers again; you only have to grab a packet and open your creative mind!!!!

If you have packets lying around, yet not sure how to make them work for your stress-relieving needs, here some ideas that kids and adults I work with have come up with during our sessions:

-Please note, that unless otherwise stated, these activities are best suited to the rectangular/square shaped bubble packing packets and not traditional bubble wrap.

Slow-Pops-practice popping a packet very slowly by gradually (slowly) squeezing the packet harder and harder until it pops. This one is great for building mindful awareness of your stress/anxiety, especially around tense physical energy and developing controlled release

Bubble Creator-take a large air packet and hold it in both hands at one end. Slowly, squeeze the packet so that a bubble bulges at the other end of the packet. Do not try to pop the packet-this is a great activity for people who don't like popping sounds

Bubble Pack Sandwich-take a air packet and put one hand either side of it's widest/longest sides. Practice squeezing the packet as hard as you can; you will not be able to pop it. This is great for deep pressure as well as practicing mindful transfer of anxious energy out from your body

Destructor-for those who have a great deal of aggressive energy to release, setting a timer and popping as many as possible before the timer goes off. You can turn this into a fun competitive game with friends and family members

Pass The Squeeze-A fun activity for multiple people where you take turns squeezing the air packet firmly without trying to pop it. Pass the squeezed air packet to the person sitting next to you and keep passing it around until it pops

The Whoopi Cushion Game-Take a couple of large air packets and try sitting on them without popping them. Great for a laugh

Don't Let It Drop!-a fun game you can do by yourself or with others where you try to keep the air packet in the air without letting it touch the floor

Air Packet Pit-if you have a large box and lots of packets, you can full the box and let your kids play as if it were a ball pit. For many kids, experiencing overload of any kind, having a sensory catered, safe environment that is private, is a must. The air packets provide the sensory tactile and auditory needs, while the box symbolizes boundaries. Safety is a must!

Two People Push-this is a version of bubble-pack sandwich, except this one involves two people with each of them putting a hand on opposite sides of an air packet as described above. At an agreed time, both people push on the packet and try to pop it without letting the other person push you. This activity can be great for creating room for discussion around listening issues parent-child conflict (represented by the pushing)

Rolling Pops-for kids who are sensory seeking and enjoy loud sounds, you can take regular bubble wrap and lay it on the ground. If you have a wheeled chair, sit in the chair and roll it over the the wrap. You can also incorporate a more physical, body awareness aspect by having your child role over the wrap with their bodies

Traditional-use air packets to practice using calming tools you already have. This provides a cheap stress-relief tool that can take the place of traditional stress relievers.

There are limitless possibilities! As long as you have a supply of bubble package packets, imagination, and a way to guarantee consistent flow of supply (this is guaranteed if you order a lot from Amazon and other companies) you will have ALWAYS quick stress relief tools available. Good luck and have fun!