

“Calgon, Take Me Away!”

A Stress Management Session

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Signs That You're "Stressed Out"



Checklist:

- Headaches
- Irritability
- Fatigue
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Sleeplessness or too sleepy
- Boredom
- Ulcers
- Frequent Colds
- Pain in neck and back
- Pain in joints and muscles
- Weight gain/ loss
- Cardiovascular problems
- Gastrointestinal problems
- High blood pressure
- Absenteeism
- Apathy
- Disregard for appearance
- Lack of energy
- Mood swings
- Paranoia
- Increased use of drugs or alcohol
- Loss of sense of humor



How To Tell If You Are A Stress-Prone Personality?

Rate yourself as to how you typically react in each of the situations listed below. There are no right or wrong answers. 4-always 3-frequently 2-sometimes 1-never

- ___ 1. Do you try to do as much as possible in the least amount of time?
- ___ 2. Do you become impatient with delays or interruptions?
- ___ 3. Do you always have to win at games to enjoy yourself?
- ___ 4. Do you find yourself speeding up in the car to get through yellow lights?
- ___ 5. Are you unlikely to indicate you need help with a problem?
- ___ 6. Do you constantly seek the respect and admiration of others?
- ___ 7. Are you overly critical of the way others do their work?
- ___ 8. Do you have the habit of looking at your watch or clock often?
- ___ 9. Do you constantly strive to better your position and achievements?
- ___ 10. Do you spread yourself "too thin" in terms of your time?
- ___ 11. Do you have the habit of doing more than one thing at a time?
- ___ 12. Do you frequently get angry or irritable?
- ___ 13. Do you have little time for hobbies or time by yourself?
- ___ 14. Do you have a tendency to talk quickly or hasten conversation?
- ___ 15. Do you consider yourself hard-driving?
- ___ 16. Do your friends or relatives consider you hard-driving?
- ___ 17. Do you have a tendency to get involved in multiple projects?
- ___ 18. Do you have a lot of deadlines in your work?
- ___ 19. Do you feel vaguely guilty if you relax and do nothing during leisure?
- ___ 20. Do you take on too many responsibilities?



How Vulnerable Are You to Stress?

Score each item either 1 (almost always), 2 (a lot), 3 (sometimes), 4 (almost never), or 5 (never) according to how each statement applies to you.

- ___ 1. I eat foods that are healthy.
- ___ 2. I get 7 to 8 hours sleep at least four nights a week.
- ___ 3. I give and receive affection regularly.
- ___ 4. I have at least one relative within 50 miles on whom I can rely.
- ___ 5. I exercise to the point of perspiration at least 3 times a week.
- ___ 6. I refrain from smoking.
- ___ 7. I take fewer than 8 alcoholic drinks a week.
- ___ 8. I am the appropriate weight for my height.
- ___ 9. I have an income adequate to meet basic expenses.
- ___ 10. I get strength from my religious beliefs
- ___ 11. I regularly attend club or social activities.
- ___ 12. I have a network of friends and acquaintances.
- ___ 13. At work I feel capable and valued.
- ___ 14. I am in good health (including eyesight, hearing, and teeth).
- ___ 15. I drink less than 3 cups of coffee, glasses of tea, or colas a day.
- ___ 16. I am able to use my sense of humor to balance my reaction to boring and stressful situations.
- ___ 17. I do something for fun at least once a day.
- ___ 18. I am able to organize my time effectively.
- ___ 19. I am able to speak openly about my feelings when angry or worried.
- ___ 20. I take quiet time for myself during the day.

TOTAL: To get your score, add the figures. Any number over 50 indicates a vulnerability to stress. You are seriously vulnerable if your score is between 60 and 75, and you are extremely vulnerable if it is over 75.



WONDERFUL WATER

- **75% of Americans are chronically dehydrated. (Likely applies to half the world's population)**
- **In 37% of Americans, the thirst mechanism is so weak that it is often mistaken for hunger.**
- **Even MILD dehydration will slow down one's metabolism as much as 3%.**
- **One glass of water shut down midnight hunger pangs for almost 100% of the dieters studied in a U-Washington study.**
- **Lack of water, the #1 trigger of daytime fatigue.**
- **Preliminary research indicates that 8-10 glasses of water a day could significantly ease back and joint pain for up to 80% of sufferers.**
- **A mere 2% drop in body water can trigger fuzzy short-term memory, trouble with basic math, and difficulty focusing on the computer screen or on a printed page.**
- **Drinking 5 glasses of water daily decreases the risk of colon cancer by 45%, plus it can slash the risk of breast cancer by 79%, and one is 50% less likely to develop bladder cancer.**

Are you drinking the amount of water you should every day?

Some Simple Suggestions For Managing Stress:



1. **TALK TO SOMEONE.** Confide your worry to some levelheaded person you can trust; spouse, parent, friend, clergyman, family doctor, teacher, school counselor. Talking things out often helps you to see things in a clearer light and helps you see what you can do about it.
2. **BE HONEST IN IDENTIFYING THE REAL SOURCE OF STRESS.** Eliminate the source if possible. At least decide on a plan to keep it from getting the best of you.
3. **ACCEPT WHAT YOU CAN'T CONTROL.** Death and taxes are just a few of the things in life you can't avoid. Try to prepare for them as much as possible.
4. **TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOURSELF.** Eat right. Get enough sleep. Exercise. Learn a relaxation technique. Schedule recreation where you do something for pleasure, something that helps you forget about your work.
5. **GO EASY ON YOUR CRITICISM.** Don't expect so much of others and you won't be disappointed. Instead, look for the good in others. You will feel better about yourself.
6. **SHUN THE "SUPERWOMAN" or "SUPERMAN" URGE.** Don't expect so much of yourself. Nobody is perfect, or capable of doing everything. Decide what you can do well and what you like to do and put your effort into those things.
7. **DO SOMETHING NICE FOR SOMEBODY ELSE.** Then give yourself a pat on the back.
8. **TAKE ONE THING AT A TIME.** Attack the most urgent task -- one at a time. Don't overestimate the importance of what you do. Your mental and physical health are vitally important.
9. **ESCAPE FOR A WHILE.** Making yourself "stand there and suffer" is self-punishment and not a way to solve a problem. Recover your breath and balance, but be prepared to deal with your difficulty when you are composed.

10. **WORK OFF YOUR ANGER.** If you feel like lashing out at someone, try holding off that impulse for a while. Do something constructive with that energy. Cool down, then handle the problem.

11. **GIVE IN OCCASIONALLY.** No one is right all of the time. And, even if you are right, it is easier on the system to give in once in awhile.

12. **IF YOU NEED HELP, GET AN EXPERT.** These simple suggestions may not be enough to help you handle your stress. If emotional problems become so distressing that you can't cope, you need **PROFESSIONAL TREATMENT**, just as you would for any other illness.





AAA Stress Management Form

SCENARIO:

ALTER: (How could you remove the source of the stress?)

AVOID: (How could you get away from or avoid the source of stress?)

ACCEPT: (How could you live with the stress?)

Build up resistance by . . .

Change self and/or perceptions by . . .

BEST OPTION IS:

Adapted from “AAAbc’s of Stress Management,” Nancy Loving Tubesing and Donald A. Tubesing (1983).



Serenity Prayer

**God, grant me the Serenity
to accept the things
I cannot change,
Courage to change the
things I can, and
Wisdom to know the
difference.**



THOUGHTS FOR THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR

(adapted by Debbie Silver)

1. Each day make someone else's life a little brighter. Whether it is students, staff, colleagues, or administrators, make someone's day a little better because you were there.
2. Keep only cheerful friends. The grouches pull you down; avoid them.
3. Keep learning. Learn more about the computer, your subject area, your students, pedagogy, psychology, pop culture, history, or whatever interests you.
4. Enjoy the simple things. If you are a teacher that is all that you can afford!
5. Laugh often, long and loud. Laugh until you gasp for breath. Laugh so much that you can be tracked in the school by your distinctive laughter.
6. Let the tears happen. Endure, grieve, and move on. The only person who is with us our entire life, is ourselves. Be alive while you are alive! Life is not a spectator sport.
7. Surround yourself with what you love, whether it is family pictures, pets, keepsakes, music, plants, hobbies, whatever. Your classroom is your refuge.
8. Cherish your health. If it is good, preserve it. If it is unstable, improve it. If it is beyond what you can improve, get help.
9. Don't take guilt trips. Go visit another classroom, take a time-out outdoors, travel to the library, go find a friend. Trek wherever you like, but not to guilt country.
10. Tell the people you love, that you love them, at every opportunity. Remember that the most unlovable are those who most need our love.



Important Life Lessons to Reduce Stress

To learn that what is most valuable is not what we have in our lives, but who we have in our lives.

To learn that it is not good to compare ourselves to others. Always there will be those who are greater and those who are lesser than we.

To learn that a rich person is not the one who has the most, but is one who needs the least.

To learn that it only takes a few seconds to open profound wounds in persons we love, and that it takes many years to heal them.

To learn to forgive by practicing forgiveness.

To learn that there are persons that love us dearly but simply do not know how to express or show their feelings.

To learn that money can buy everything but happiness.

To learn that two people can look at the same thing and see it totally differently.

To learn that a true friend is someone who knows everything about us . . . and likes us anyway.

To learn that it is not always enough that we be forgiven by others, but that we have to forgive ourselves.



THE OLD MULE

Once there was a farmer who owned an old mule. One day the mule fell into the farmer's well and the farmer heard the mule "praying" or whatever mules do when they fall into wells.

After carefully assessing the situation, the farmer sympathized with the mule, but decided that neither the mule nor the well was worth the trouble of saving. Instead, he called his neighbors together, told them what had happened and enlisted them to help haul dirt to bury the old mule in the well and put him out of his misery.

Initially, the old mule was hysterical! But as the farmer and his neighbors continued shoveling and the dirt hit his back, a thought struck him. It dawned on him that every time a shovel load of dirt landed on his back he could shake it off and step up!!

This he did, blow after blow. "Shake it off and step up...shake it off and step up...shake it off and step up!" He repeated this to encourage himself. No matter how painful the blows, or how distressing the situation seemed, the old mule fought "panic" and just kept right on shaking it off and stepping up!

It wasn't long before the old mule, battered and exhausted, stepped triumphantly over the wall and out of that well! What seemed like it would bury him actually helped him . . . all because of the manner in which he handled his adversity.

THAT'S LIFE! If we face our problems and respond to them positively, and refuse to give in to panic, bitterness, or self-pity . . .

THE ADVERSITIES THAT COME ALONG TO BURY US
USUALLY HAVE WITHIN THEM THE VERY REAL POTENTIAL TO
BENEFIT US!



..... A REAL FRIEND



- (A)cccepts you as you are**
- (B)elieves in "you"**
- (C)alls you just to say "HI"**
- (D)oesn't give up on you**
- (E)nvisions the whole of you (even the unfinished parts)**
- (F)orgives your mistakes**
- (G)ives unconditionally**
- (H)elps you**
- (I)nvites you over**
- (J)ust "be" with you**
- (K)eeps you close at heart**
- (L)oves you for who you are**
- (M)akes a difference in your life**
- (N)ever Judges**
- (O)ffers support**
- (P)icks you up**
- (Q)uiets your fears**
- (R)aises your spirits**
- (S)ays nice things about you**
- (T)ells you the truth when you need to hear it**
- (U)nderstands you**
- (V)alues you**
- (W)alks beside you**
- (X)-plains thing you don't understand**
- (Y)ells when you won't listen and**
- (Z)aps you back to reality**



How to Be Happy

- 1. Make up your mind to be happy. Learn to find pleasure in simple things.**
- 2. Make the best of your circumstances. No one has everything, and everyone has some sorrow intermingled with the gladness of life. The trick is to make the laughter outweigh the tears.**
- 3. Do the things you enjoy, but stay out of debt.**
- 4. Don't take yourself too seriously. Don't think that somehow you should be protected from misfortune that befalls other people.**

You can't please everybody. Don't let your neighbors set your standards. Be yourself!



I Wish You Enough . . .

**I wish you enough sun to keep your
attitude bright.**

**I wish you enough rain to appreciate
the sun more.**

**I wish you enough happiness to keep
your spirit alive.**

**I wish you enough pain so that the
smallest joys in life appear much
bigger.**

**I wish you enough gain to satisfy
your wanting.**

**I wish you enough loss to appreciate
all that you possess.**

**I wish enough "Hello's" to get you
through the final "Good-Bye."**



I Believe
(Author Unknown)

I believe ~ that our background and circumstances may have influenced who we are, but we are responsible for who we become.

I believe ~ that no matter how good a friend is, they're going to hurt you every once in a while and you must forgive them for that.

I believe ~ that just because someone doesn't love you the way you want them to doesn't mean they don't love you with all they have.

I believe ~ that true friendship continues to grow, even over the longest distance. Same goes for true love.

I believe ~ that it's taking me a long time to become the person I want to be.

I believe ~ that you should always leave loved ones with loving words. It may be the last time you see them.

I believe ~ that you can keep going, long after you can't.

I believe ~ that we are responsible for what we do, no matter how we feel.

I believe ~ that either you control your attitude or it controls you.

I believe~ that heroes are the people who do what has to be done when it needs to be done, regardless of the consequences.

I believe ~ that money is a lousy way of keeping score.

I believe ~ that my best friend and I can do anything or nothing and have the best time.

I believe ~ that sometimes the people you expect to kick you when you're down, will be the ones to help you get back up.

I believe ~ that sometimes when I'm angry I have the right to be angry, but that doesn't give me the right to be cruel.

I believe ~ that maturity has more to do with what types of experiences you've had and what you've learned from them and less to do with how many birthdays you've celebrated.

I believe ~ that it isn't always enough to be forgiven by others. Sometimes you have to learn to forgive yourself.

I believe ~ that no matter how bad your heart is broken the world doesn't stop for your grief.

I believe ~ that just because two people argue, it doesn't mean they don't love each other. And just because they don't argue, it doesn't mean they do.

I believe ~ that you shouldn't be so eager to find out a secret. It could change your life forever.

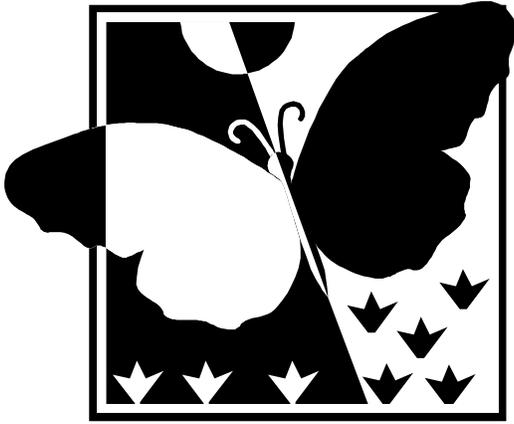
I believe ~ that two people can look at the exact same thing and see something totally different.

I believe ~ that your life can be changed in a matter of hours by people who don't even know you.

I believe ~ that even when you think you have no more to give, when a friend cries out to you, you will find the strength to help.

I believe ~ that credentials on the wall do not make you a decent human being.

I believe ~ that the people you care about most in life are taken from you too soon.



Butterflies

author unknown

A family in my neighborhood once brought in two chrysalides that were just about to hatch. They watched as the first one began to open, and the butterfly inside squeezed very slowly and painfully through a tiny hole that it chewed in one end of the chrysalid. After lying exhausted for about ten minutes following its agonizing emergence, the butterfly finally flew out the open window on its beautiful wings.

The family decided to help the second butterfly so that it would not have to go through such an excruciating ordeal. So, as it began to emerge, they carefully sliced open the chrysalid with a razor blade, doing the equivalent of a Caesarean section. The second butterfly never did spread its wings. Instead of flying away, it quietly died.

The family asked a biologist friend to explain what had happened. The entomologist said that the difficult struggle to emerge from the small hole actually pushes liquids from deep inside the butterfly's body cavity into the tiny capillaries in the wings, where they harden to complete the healthy and beautiful adult butterfly. By interrupting the process they family had ensured that the butterfly would never be able to fly.

In other words,

WITHOUT THE STRUGGLE, THERE ARE NO WINGS.