

Do You Have Some Stress-prone Habits?

[Put the correct number 1 through 4 in the blank.]

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 the car to beat the red light?
- _____ 5. Are you unlikely to ask for or 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 in the office?
- _____ 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 lots of deadlines in your work?
- _____ 19. Do you feel vaguely guilty if you relax and do nothing during leisure time?
- _____ 20. Do you take on too many responsibilities?

_____ **TOTAL**

Interpretation

- 20—30 = Stress underload; life lacks stability
- 31—50 = Good balance in ability to handle and control stress
- 51—60 = Marginal stress levels to being excessively tense
- 61—80 = Stress prone



Stress Management and Self Care

Keeping large classes of students productively engaged while managing all the paperwork, administrative jobs, and extracurricular activities involved with teaching can give anyone stress. Everyone has stress and a little stress is actually good for us—motivating us to organize and perform our duties. Too much stress is debilitating. So, the key is stress management—being able to balance the stresses in our lives and our jobs.

1. To reap the benefits from supportive family, colleagues, and friends, be a supportive family member, colleague and friend. Doing something for some one else will make you feel even better about yourself.
2. Assess the stress that you feel. When does your body revolt and tell you that something is wrong? A constant pain in our shoulder or back may be from stress and so may a recurring sore throat.
3. Try this time management activity. Draw a circle and make a pie chart of how you spend your day. If you sleep eight hours a night, mark one third of your circle “sleep.” If you leave the house at 7:30 and return at 5:30, then allow nine hours for work. If you bring two hours worth of work home, add a section for that. Then, draw a circle of how you want to spend your time. How can you change your first circle and make it more like your second circle?
4. Do the same activity listed above, except do the pie chart for a seven-day week. If you are not spending your time the way that you want—with family, going out, etc.—you will have more stress. How can you change your time circles?
5. Make a list of what you spend too much time doing at work and what you need to spend more time doing. Prioritize your day to fit this new pattern of time.
6. Do your toughest work when you are strongest. Decide if you will arrive at work early, stay late, or take work home, but do not try to do all three.
7. Make your workplace less stressful with a plant, a comfortable chair, and a hot pot for making decaffeinated tea or coffee.
8. When the students are with another teacher, close your door and take a few minutes to yourself.
9. Exercise. Walk over the lunch break.
10. Exercise some more. Bike to work. Bowl on Thursdays. Shoot hoops with the kids.
11. Eat a balanced diet. Potato chips are not really leafy vegetables.
12. Plan time into your schedule for “down time.” Stop. Rest. Watch a sitcom on TV or take a bubble bath.
13. Enjoy your weekends.
14. Practice stress management with the same regularity with which you would brush your teeth. De-stress at least twice a day!
15. Read. Try *Inspiring Tranquility: Stress Management and Learning Styles in the Inclusive Classroom*, Rebecca Nunn and Janet Gallaher.