

**Educational Handout #8:**

**Coping with Stress**

"Exercise helps me elevate my mood. My writing is a great distraction and helps me get my mind off the pressures of work and life in general. My sculpture also helps me to escape. Believing that there is a God and that He doesn't hate me and that I can turn to Him also helps. I also like music and find listening to it helpful.

"What helps you? God? Medication? Therapy? Art? Exercise? TV? Music? Reading? What?"

*David Kime, artist, writer, floral designer*

CS-1

## Introduction

This handout describes different ways of coping effectively with stress. In order to cope effectively, it is first important to know what situations you find stressful and what the experience of stress is like for you. Specific strategies for dealing with stress are suggested, such as using relaxation techniques, talking with others, exercising, and creative expression.

## What is stress?

"Stress" is a term people often use to describe a feeling of pressure, strain, or tension. People often say that they are "under stress" or feel "stressed out" when they are dealing with challenging situations or events.

Everyone encounters stressful situations. Sometimes the stress comes from something positive (like a new job, new apartment, or new relationship) and sometimes from something negative (like being bored, having an argument with someone, or being the victim of crime).

*Stress is the feeling of pressure, strain or tension that comes from dealing with challenging situations.*

Question: What is it like when you experience stress?

CS-2

## SOURCES OF STRESS

Stress in your life can come from a variety of sources including:

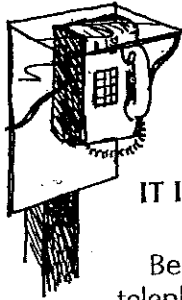
- Relationship problems
- Conflict between your goals and behaviors
- Self-imposed thoughts and behaviors like perfectionism and impatience
- Work overload
- Economic factors such as unemployment, poverty, and debt
- Threat of harm
- Increasing demands at home and in the workplace
- Divorce
- Noise and pollution
- Too many demands on your time

CS-3

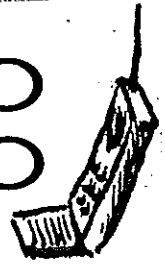
## PEOPLE WHO MANAGE STRESS WILL

- interpret the stress in their life accurately.
- anticipate and regulate stressors as much as possible.
- believe they can influence events and their reactions to events.
- maintain healthy habits (sleeping regularly, eating nutritiously, exercising) to build resistance and prevent stress.
- recognize the warning signs of physical and mental stress.
- regulate their thinking about stressful events.
- use constructive, rather than destructive, reactions to stress.
- maintain an ongoing sense of meaning in their lives.
- develop and utilize a strong support system.
- contribute to the wellness of other people, communities and organization.

CS-4



# HELP



IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO KNOW THAT WE ARE NOT ALONE AND THAT THERE IS HELP OUT THERE IF WE NEED IT.

Below are some ideas on people to call or go to for help. Look in your local telephone directory and find the numbers of the people or services listed below:

**1. Parents or guardians work:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Grandparents:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Emergency Fire or EMS**

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**Non-Emergency Fire or EMS**

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Police/Sheriff**

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Poison control**

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Juvenile Protective Services Agency**

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Local Crisis Center**

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Suicide Prevention**

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Your Doctor**

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Your Dentist**

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**11. Free Clinic**

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Your Counselor, Therapist, Case Worker, Mentor, "Big Brother or Big Sister"**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**13. Two friends or relatives**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**14. Clergy, Pastor, Youth Leader**

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**15. Local Domestic Violence Shelter**

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**16. Local support group**

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**17. Legal Aid**

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**18. To stop harassing or obscene phone calls**

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**19. Gas, electric or/and phone companies**

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**20. Time and weather**

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**21. Hearing Impaired TTY**

(EMS, Fire, Police or Sheriff)

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**22. Juvenile Justice contact person**

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**23. School**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**24. Other**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

# HELP:

## I. PURPOSE:

To develop a directory of supports and resources for those who may need help.

## II. GENERAL COMMENTS:

When feeling down and out, it is often difficult to reach out to others and give others an opportunity to help. During a perceived emergency, panic, anxiety, fear and confusion may impair one's capacity to think clearly. A visual list of available supports can be a handy resource and source of comfort when confronted with a problem where immediate assistance might be required.

## III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

A. NOTE: It is suggested to confer with librarian/information specialist to reserve library time or assistance in collecting directories required to complete this activity.

1. Distribute handouts and local phone books.
2. Explain concept to class, instruct students to divide themselves into pairs. Encourage each pair to look up and record all of the numbers of the agencies listed on handout, skipping any personal or confidential information. Those spaces can be completed in privacy with their parents/guardians.
3. Go around the room asking one student from each pair to state the telephone number found (to make sure that everyone found the correct number). If students are from different communities, allow extra time to list everyone's correct number.
4. Distribute an additional copy of the handout to each student, instructing class to recopy information neatly and accurately. Request that students complete any confidential sections of the handout with information provided by their parents/guardians.
5. Review the purpose or function for each person/agency listed.
6. Problem solve where students can place the completed handouts in home situations.

B. 1. Provide a 5" x 8" index card for each member of the class. Write the following words on a flip chart or board: depressed, isolated, withdrawn, lonely, hopeless, panicked, frustrated, defenseless, powerless and helpless.

2. Open a discussion of what it feels like to experience these strong emotions. Encourage a further discussion of awareness of possible community resources available, which can assist in times of panic or crisis.
3. Distribute handouts and index cards. Instruct students to write the following on each card:

Name of agency \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact person \_\_\_\_\_  
General resources available \_\_\_\_\_

Steps to follow if you need resources personally: \_\_\_\_\_  
Steps to follow if the resources are needed for a family member or friend: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Assign one community resource listed on the handout to each student to research by the next session. To avoid confusion, divide class geographically if students are from different communities, or provide the names of additional local agencies, which might be beneficial. Provide instruction to students on how to use local phone directories, the Internet or other community directories to locate information. Tell the students that in order to complete each index card, it is possible that they will be required to call the agency on their own and interview support personnel. Provide address of school. Instruct students to request that any additional information or literature from agency is sent to the class as part of a resource file for future reference if needed. Ask class to be prepared to present a one-minute presentation to the class describing assigned agency.
5. Reconvene as a class during next session. Ask students to provide descriptions and details about these services and the benefits one might derive from them. Class should complete appropriate sections on handout using information from presentations.
6. Ask students, "What is the best place in your home to post the handout where the information can be easily found in a time of need?"
7. As a follow-up activity, collect index cards and create a classroom resource file along with any additional literature provided by community agencies.

Activity handout and facilitator's information originally submitted for Life Management Skills V by Trish Breedlove, OTR/L, Canton, OH. Trish graduated with her OT degree in 1984 and presently works full time as an occupational therapist. She's a single mother of Bryan and truly enjoys creating and finding solutions that work!

# SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

1. Most things don't bother me	True (A)	False (B)	Score _____
2. I like to talk in front of other people	True (A)	False (B)	Score _____
3. I would not change anything about myself	True (A)	False (B)	Score _____
4. I am a good decision maker	True (A)	False (B)	Score _____
5. I often feel like a failure	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
6. I give in to other people very quickly	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
7. I blame others for what has happened to me	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
8. I often wish I had the things other people have	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
9. I make excuses when I make mistakes	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
10. I believe it is useless to worry about things	True (A)	False (B)	Score _____
11. I see no value in myself	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
12. I often say "I should have..."	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
13. I am able to evaluate what is good about myself	True (A)	False (B)	Score _____
14. I rarely know what to say to people	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
15. I have a high opinion of myself	True (A)	False (B)	Score _____
16. I am able to evaluate how I need to improve	True (A)	False (B)	Score _____
17. I rarely accept the consequences of my actions	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
18. I often exaggerate the truth in order to maintain my image	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
19. I often feel inadequate in a new situation	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
20. I am very critical of others	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____

Go to the next page.

CS-10

# SELF-ESTEEM SCALE PAGE 2

21. I normally feel friendly and comfortable with new people	True (A)	False (B)	Score _____
22. The only person I try to please is myself	True (A)	False (B)	Score _____
23. I openly voice my opinions	True (A)	False (B)	Score _____
24. I need constant approval and recognition	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
25. I am confident in new and different situations	True (A)	False (B)	Score _____
26. I am often embarrassed by the actions of others	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
27. I am concerned about what others think of me	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
28. I am hurt by the opinions and comments of others	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
29. I don't like to be with other people	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
30. Even if I don't want to, I often go along with the crowd	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
31. I often brag about myself and my accomplishments	True (A)	False (B)	Score _____
32. I am shy when I am with other people	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
33. I don't feel ashamed of myself	True (A)	False (B)	Score _____
34. I have specific goals that I work toward	True (A)	False (B)	Score _____
35. I have many friends	True (A)	False (B)	Score _____
36. I feel that I look as good as most people	True (A)	False (B)	Score _____
37. I have trouble meeting new people	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
38. I often don't speak my mind, even if I think I'm right	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
39. I am proud of the work I do	True (A)	False (B)	Score _____
40. Others often see me as a failure	True (B)	False (A)	Score _____
TOTAL =			_____

**Go to the scoring directions on the next page.**

CS-10



# SCORING

The Self-Esteem Scale (SES) is designed to help you to better understand your level of self-esteem. The SES will assist you in getting to know yourself better and provide you with insights into self-perceptions. People with high self-esteem consider themselves worthy and view themselves as equal to others. They do not think they are perfect, but they recognize their limitations and continually strive to grow and improve.

## TO SCORE THE SES:

Look at the 40 items you just completed. Focus on the "A" and "B" after each choice, rather than the "True" or "False." In the space marked "Score" for each item, award yourself ONE (1) point for every answer you circled with an "A" next to it and ZERO (0) points for every answer you circled with a "B" next to it. Then total your score on all 40 items and write that number in the blank below:

Self-Esteem Total \_\_\_\_\_

# PROFILE INTERPRETATION

Scores from 0 to 13 are low and may indicate that you have a low opinion of yourself. You probably consider yourself less worthy than others and may have difficulty reaching your personal and future goals. You tend to have a negative attitude toward yourself in academic, social, family and personal areas of experience. It may be difficult for you to recognize your weaknesses and, as a result, you may have difficulty improving and growing. People with low self-esteem generally compare themselves to others. They generally experience rejection, have little confidence in their abilities and are dissatisfied with themselves.

Scores from 14 to 26 are average and may indicate that you have a level of self-esteem similar to that of most other people. Average scores suggest that you tend to believe you have control over your own destiny, but at times you feel like you have no control.

Scores from 27 to 40 are high and may indicate that you respect yourself, consider yourself worthy, and are able to move directly and realistically toward your personal and future goals. You do not consider yourself better than other people, but you probably have a positive attitude toward yourself in academic, social, family and personal areas of experience. You do not feel you are perfect, but recognize your limitations and make a conscious effort to improve and grow.

The higher your score on the SES, the more positive your level of self-esteem.

The exercises that follow are designed to help you to increase your understanding of your level of self-esteem.

CS-b

# Getting a Handle on

Make a list of things you worry about, large and small. Be sure to include personal, relationship, family, community, school, world and general life worries.

---



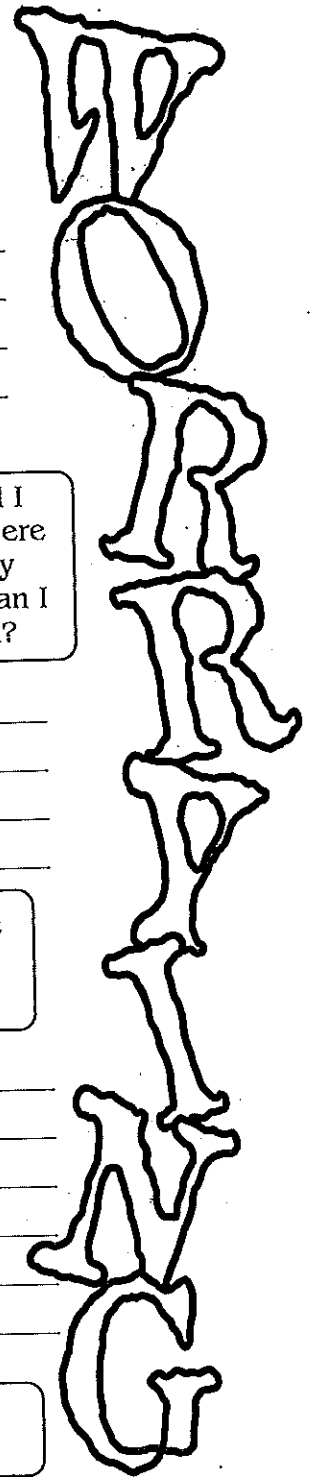
---



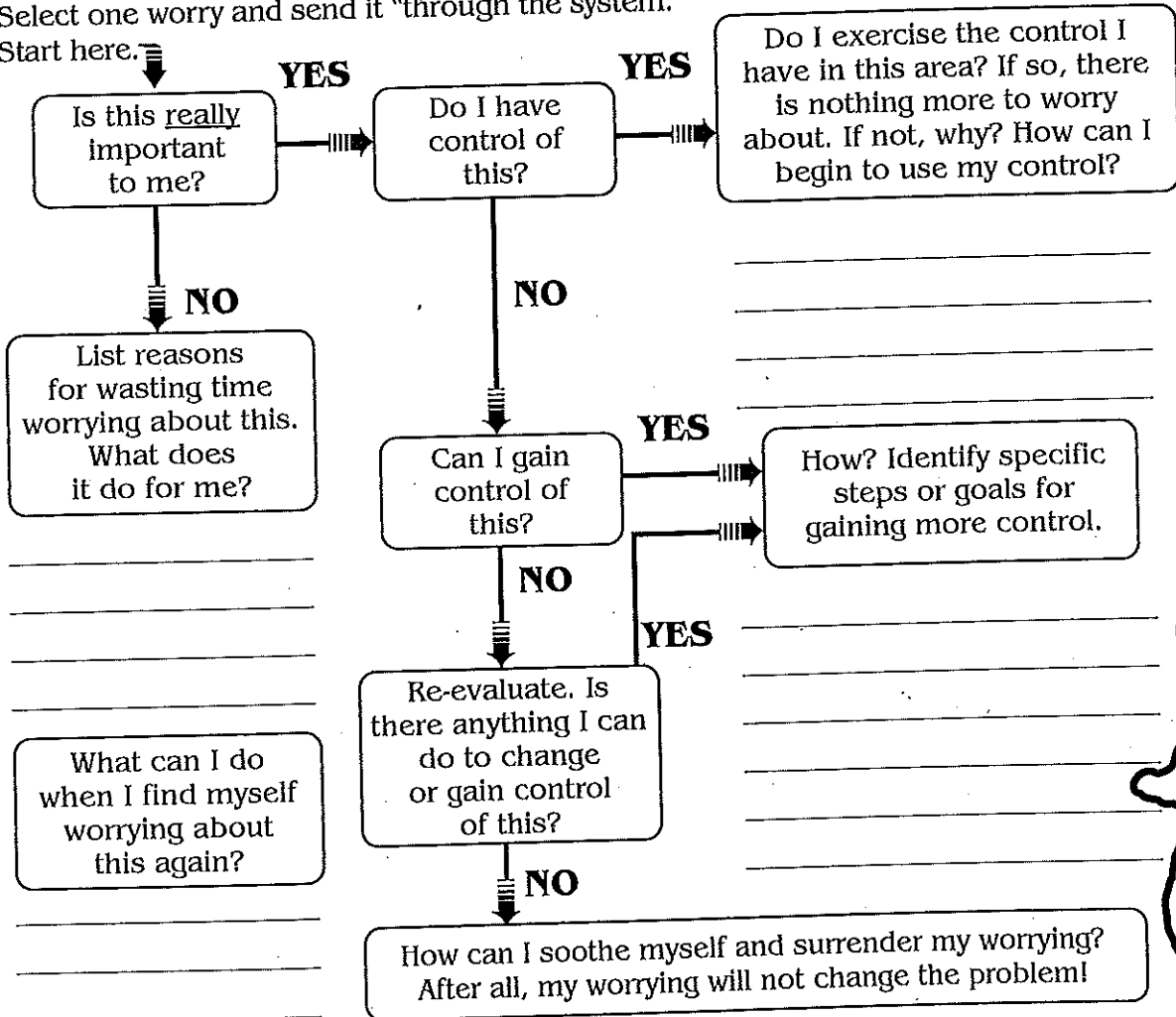
---



---



Select one worry and send it "through the system."  
Start here.



What can I do when I find myself worrying about this again?

---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---

# Getting a Handle on WORRYING

## I. PURPOSE:

To increase the ability to cope with worries.

## II. GENERAL COMMENTS:

Often people lack awareness of how many things they worry about, and the emotional and physical toll such worrying takes. It is important to evaluate worries, both in terms of their relative importance, and in terms of the amount of control we have over the worrisome situation. Adolescence can be a worrisome period due to social, family and academic pressures. Learning to dispense with the worries that aren't really important, deal effectively with those that are in our control and surrender those that we cannot change, are important coping skills.

## III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

- A.
1. Before class session, reproduce front of handout on overhead transparency or flip chart.
  2. Obtain print copies (available from library, local bookstores or via Internet) or obtain a video of 'Top Ten' lists from "Late Night with David Letterman."
  3. Ask students if they are familiar with David Letterman's 'Top Ten' lists. Invite them to share (with a reminder of appropriate classroom subject matter) examples and purpose of his work. Share two or three of your own favorites either in print or on video.
  4. Conduct discussion on what makes these lists amusing. Possible responses might include: short, concise statements, humor, sarcasm, exaggeration, understatement, elements of truth, current event, meaningfulness, appeal to audience.
  5. Instruct students that they will be creating and sharing their own 'Top Ten Things to Worry About.' Ask for a sample item to be written on board, e.g., "Imagine the worst that could happen by telling my friend who I want to go out with." Rewrite the sample as a class, encouraging students to use the guidelines in A.4., encouraging creativity, humor and exaggeration but with good taste. Possible new sample might read "Best friend blabs over PA system who I have a crush on." As soon as activity is understood, divide class into 10 small groups to write one item for the list.
  6. Select a spokesperson from each group to share with the class, writing each list item on board or overhead, then ranking list in importance from 1-10, #1 being most important. With emphasis on information in GENERAL COMMENTS, discuss results and process benefits of this part of class activity.
  7. Refocus classes' attention on topic of getting a handle on worrying. Discuss the effects of worry and the benefits of the ability to manage stress effectively. Introduce the concept of evaluating the worries in terms of importance and control. Distribute handouts.
  8. Ask for a class member to 'volunteer' a worry from the list on board to put through the flowchart system, and do this together as a class. Encourage class members to comment on whether or not the individual has control or not and whether or not the person is exercising control or if s/he gains it.
  9. Ask the class for feedback about how the worry could be surrendered or how the person might soothe his/herself if control cannot be gained.
  10. Instruct class to complete top of handout, select one worry from their personal worry list and put it through the flowchart system.
  11. Discuss results and process benefits of this activity.
- B.
1. Begin class activity by instructing class to create an analogy of a smoke alarm to worry. Discuss possible purposes, effects and benefits of both. Ask class to discuss effects/consequences when either item is malfunctioning. Introduce topic by distributing handouts and ask class members to complete the "worry lists".
  2. Discuss the effects of worry and the ability to manage stress effectively. Introduce the concept of evaluating the worries in terms of importance and control.
  3. Reproduce front of handout on overhead transparency or flipchart.
  4. Using overhead transparency or flipchart, demonstrate how flowchart system works using a hypothetical situation or worry; e.g., expressing concern to your friends when asked to drive to an evening event just as a severe weather advisory is announced.
  5. Allow 5-10 minutes for class members to complete the handouts.
  6. Divide class into pairs or triads to discuss responses and to provide each other with feedback.
  7. Reconvene as a class and discuss results. Attempt to determine similarities or trends of this class's worries (boys' worries vs. girls', relationship, financial, personal, etc.) Ask class to compare how worries might have changed over the past years. Process by discussing the value of this flowchart system for future use. Emphasize that stress management is about handling everyday worries and how this can affect one's overall health.
  8. Suggested follow-up activity might be to read a selection daily from Richard Carlson's "Don't Sweat the Small Stuff...And It's All Small Stuff" as a prompt for journalizing.

Activity handout and facilitator's information originally submitted for Life Management Skills V by Robin Wildbur, OTR, Royal Oak, MI. Robin has been in mental health practice over 20 years — and counting!

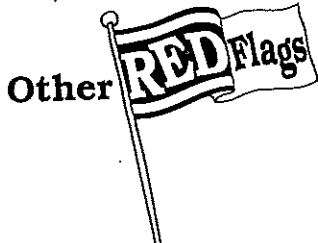
Adapted for SEALS III from LMS V by Elaine Hyla Stea, M.Ed., Euclid, OH, adaptor of SEALS+PLUS (Self-Esteem and Life Skills) and SEALS II.



are signals to alert me that I am losing control.

For example:

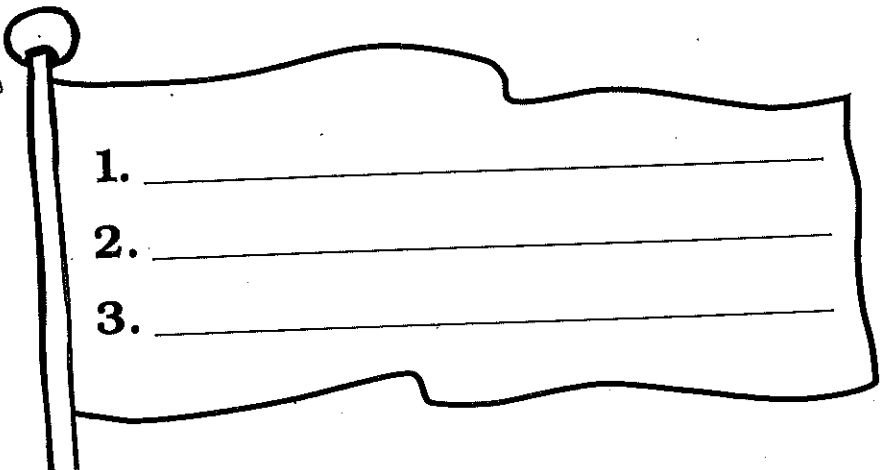
- ↳ thinking suicidal thoughts,
- ↳ not taking care of my body,
- ↳ an "I don't care" feeling,
- ↳ not as interested in being with my friends or family,
- ↳ not taking my medications,
- ↳ not caring about school, work, other responsibilities,
- ↳ weird/confused thinking.



Other

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

In this flag,  
write in your own



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

If I experience  
any of the above  
I will ...



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_




### I. PURPOSE:

To facilitate learning by identifying when one is out of control, overly committed, in a crisis or in need of support.

### II. GENERAL COMMENTS:

A self-monitoring system may assist in preventing a crisis or melt down and help in maintaining wellness. Becoming aware of and identifying 'red flags' gives a sense of control in an oftentimes over-committed, pressured life style.

### III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

- A.
1. Introduce the topic of 'red flags.' Offer a stop sign as a comparison - a halting signal to look around.
  2. Distribute handouts and pencils.
  3. Instruct students to complete.
  4. Review and discuss responses.
- B.
1. Draw a 'red flag' outline on a flipchart. 
  2. Introduce the topic of 'red flags' by listing early warning symptoms of the flu: feeling hot then cold, very tired, slight stomachaches, etc. Ask for class input and write in the 'red flag' outline.
  3. Draw a second 'red flag' on flipchart. Discuss emotional 'red flags' when one feels pressured or out of control. Write symptoms in the 'red flag' outline.
  4. Distribute handouts, pencils and red colored pencils/markers.
  5. Allow ten minutes for completion; students may color 'red flags' in red for emphasis.
  6. Draw a third blank 'red flag' outline large enough for all students' input. Ask each student to write in his/her own 'red flag' signals in collective red flag. Discuss common and unique entries.
  7. Discuss what participants will do when experiencing red flags. Support ideas, making sure that information is complete, e.g., if student writes, "Call a friend", have them identify a specific friend and their phone number.
  8. Process by asking student, "Where is the best place to put completed handout?"

Activity handout and facilitator's information submitted by Maria Yoder-Tiedt, MSW, LISW and Sandi Miller, RRT, both employed at a psychiatric hospital in Columbus, OH, with 15 years and 22 years in the mental health field respectively.

Adapted for SEALS III from LMS VI by Sandra Negley, MTRS, CTRS, Salt Lake City, UT,  
author of *Crossing the Bridge, A Journey in Self-Esteem, Relationships and Life Balance.*

## **What makes you feel under stress?**

Different people find different things stressful. For example, some people enjoy the hustle and bustle of a big city, while others don't like the crowds and noise and find it stressful. Some people enjoy going to a party and meeting new people; others find it stressful. Knowing what you personally find stressful will help you cope better.

There are two main types of stress: life events and daily hassles.

Life events refers to experiences such as moving, getting married, the death of a loved one, or having a baby. Some life events are more stressful than others; for example, getting a divorce is usually more stressful than changing jobs.

To see how many life events you have experienced in the past year, complete the following checklist:

CS-9

## Life Events Checklist

Put a check mark next to each event that you have experienced in the past year.

- Moving
- Getting married
- New baby
- Divorce or separation
- Injury
- Illness
- New job
- Loss of a job
- Inheriting or winning money
- Financial problems
- Injury or illness of a loved one
- Death of a loved one
- Victim of a crime
- Legal problems
- New boyfriend or girlfriend
- Broke up with a boyfriend or girlfriend
- Stopped smoking
- Went on a diet
- New responsibilities at home
- New responsibilities at work
- No place to live
- Hospitalization
- Drinking or using street drugs caused problems
- other: \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of life events checked off.

moderate stress=1 event

high stress=2-3 events

very high stress=more than 3 events

CS-9

Daily hassles are the small daily stresses of everyday life that can add up if they occur over time. Examples of daily hassles include dealing with long bus rides, working with unpleasant or critical people, having conflicts with family members or close friends, living or working in a noisy chaotic place, and being rushed to do things.

The following checklist will help you evaluate how many daily hassles you are dealing with:

CS-9



## Daily Hassles Checklist

Place a check mark next to each event that you have experienced in the past week:

- not enough money to take care of necessities
- not enough money to spend on leisure
- crowded living situation
- crowded public transportation
- long drives or traffic back ups
- feeling rushed at home
- feeling rushed at work
- arguments at home
- arguments at work
- doing business with unpleasant people (sales clerks, waiters/waitresses, transit clerks, toll booth collectors)
- noisy situation at home
- noisy situation at work
- not enough privacy at home
- minor medical problems
- lack of order or cleanliness at home
- lack of order or cleanliness at work
- unpleasant chores at home
- unpleasant chores at work
- living in a dangerous neighborhood
- other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Total number of hassles in the past week

moderate stress=1 or 2 daily hassles  
high stress=3-6 daily hassles  
very high stress=more than 6

*Life events and daily hassles are both sources of stress.*

Questions: What is the most stressful life event you have experienced in the past year?  
What are the most stressful daily hassles you have experienced in the past week?

CS-9

### **What are the signs that you're under stress?**

When people are under stress, it affects them physically and emotionally. It also affects their thinking, mood, and behavior. Some people show only physical signs of stress, such as muscular tension, headaches or sleep problems. Others have trouble concentrating or become irritable, anxious or depressed. Still others may pace or bite their nails. Each person's response to stress is individual.

Being aware of your own personal signs of stress can be very helpful, because once you realize that you're under stress you can start to do something about it.

You can use the following checklist to identify your own personal signs of being under stress.

CS-10

## Signs of Stress Checklist

Put a check mark next to the signs you notice when you are under stress:

- headaches
- sweating
- increased heart rate
- back pain
- change in appetite
- difficulty falling asleep
- increased need for sleep
- trembling or shaking
- digestion problems
- stomach aches
- dry mouth
- problems concentrating
- anger over relatively minor things
- irritable
- anxious
- feeling restless or "keyed up"
- tearful
- forgetful
- prone to accidents
- using alcohol or drugs (or wanting to)
- other: \_\_\_\_\_
- other: \_\_\_\_\_
- other: \_\_\_\_\_

CS-10

*Being aware of signs of stress can help you take steps to prevent it from getting worse.*

Question: Have you noticed any signs of being under stress in the past week?

CS-10

# LEVEL of STRESS SCALE

Name:

---

---

Gender:

---

Date:

---

Age:

---

CS-11

# DIRECTIONS

A little bit of stress can be stimulating and can help you to reach states of peak performance, meet challenges, and excel in emergency situations. However, too much stress can hurt your emotional, physical, cognitive, and behavioral wellness. A certain amount of stress in your life cannot be avoided, but the management of stress in your life is a critical life skill. The Level of Stress Scale (LSS) was designed to help you explore how much stress you are experiencing in your life and to help you to identify how the stress is manifesting itself.

This assessment contains 32 statements that are related to the signs and symptoms of stress that you are currently exhibiting. Read each of the statements and decide whether or not the statement describes you. If the statement is true, circle the number next to that item under the "true" column. If the statement is false, circle the number next to that item under the "false" column.

In the following example, the circled number under "false" indicates the statement is not true of the person completing the inventory.

	TRUE	FALSE
Little things rarely bother me	2	①

This is not a test. Since there are no right or wrong answers, do not spend too much time thinking about your answers. Be sure to respond to every statement.

Turn to the next page and begin.

CS-11

# LEVEL of STRESS SCALE

		TRUE	FALSE
(A)	Little things rarely bother me.	2	1
(A)	I often have difficulty making decisions.	1	2
(A)	I rarely get bored.	2	1
(A)	I don't care when plans change.	2	1
(A)	I am often thinking about other things and don't listen.	1	2
(A)	I am often unable to concentrate.	1	2
(A)	I rarely experience fuzzy, unclear thinking.	2	1
(A)	I find myself forgetting things lately.	1	2
(B)	I often have a strong urge to "run away from things."	1	2
(B)	I am excited to get up in the mornings.	2	1
(B)	I often have a strong urge to cry unexpectedly.	1	2
(B)	I rarely have emotional ups and downs.	2	1
(B)	I am rarely nervous about things in my life.	2	1
(B)	I am often fearful even when there is nothing to fear.	1	2
(B)	I rarely get depressed about anything.	2	1
(B)	I have been having feelings of hopelessness.	1	2

Turn to the next page and continue.

CS-11



# LEVEL of STRESS SCALE

		TRUE	FALSE
(C)	I rarely lash out at other people.	2	1
(C)	I often find myself talking faster than usual.	1	2
(C)	I like being around other people.	2	1
(C)	I often feel short-tempered.	1	2
(C)	I have been sleeping about eight hours a night.	2	1
(C)	I often catch myself verbally attacking others.	1	2
(C)	I do not act too quickly, but I think before acting.	2	1
(C)	I have withdrawn from people lately.	1	2
(D)	My appetite has remained the same.	2	1
(D)	I feel tired a lot of the time.	1	2
(D)	I rarely drink alcoholic beverages.	2	1
(D)	I have not experienced chest pain in the last six months.	2	1
(D)	I often have an upset stomach.	1	2
(D)	I feel nervous a lot of the time.	1	2
(D)	I find myself biting my fingernails a lot.	1	2
(D)	I often can feel my heart "racing."	1	2

**Go to the scoring directions on the next page.**

CS-11

# SCORING DIRECTIONS

The Level of Stress Scale (LSS) is designed to measure how much stress you are currently experiencing. To get your (A) Cognitive score, total the numbers you circled for statements marked (A), in the previous section. You will get a score from 8 to 16. Put that number on the line next to the (A) Cognitive Total scale that follows. Then, do the same for the other three scales: (B) Emotional Total, (C) Behavioral Total, and (D) Physical Total.

(A) COGNITIVE TOTAL	=	_____
(B) EMOTIONAL TOTAL	=	_____
(C) BEHAVIORAL TOTAL	=	_____
(D) PHYSICAL TOTAL	=	_____

Then add the four scores you listed above to get your Grand Stress Total. Total scores on this assessment range from 32 to 64. Put your Grand Total score in the space below:

GRAND STRESS TOTAL	=	_____
--------------------	---	-------

## PROFILE INTERPRETATION

SCORES FROM 8 TO 10 IN ANY SINGLE AREA, OR A TOTAL FROM 32 TO 42, indicate that you are probably experiencing a great deal of stress in your life. A low score suggests that you are probably experiencing cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and /or physical stress that is preventing you from living your life effectively.

SCORES FROM 11 TO 13 IN ANY SINGLE AREA, OR A TOTAL SCORE FROM 43 TO 53, indicate that you are experiencing some stress in your life, but not an excessive amount. Your score is similar to other people taking the scale. It may suggest that you are experiencing stress in one or two of the areas, but that you are able to manage the stress fairly well.

SCORES FROM 14 TO 16 IN ANY SINGLE AREA, OR A TOTAL FROM 54 TO 64, indicate that you are not experiencing very much stress in your life. A high score suggests that you have been effective in managing your stress and that any stress you do have is not negatively affecting your daily life.

CS-11

# SCALE DESCRIPTIONS

## SCALE A – COGNITIVE STRESSORS

People scoring low on this scale sometimes suffer from a lack of concentration, illogical thinking, confusion and lapses in memory. They are unable to think clearly or remember information well. This often results from having too many stressors in a short period of time. Cognitive distress can be related to the other forms of distress and can cause fear, anxiety, depression, and fatigue.

## SCALE B – EMOTIONAL STRESSORS

People scoring low on this scale sometimes suffer from mild emotional distress that often gives way to more harmful types of stress. In times of change that drastically alters their normal pattern of living, people become emotionally upset and experience fear, anxiety, and sometimes depression. This can often lead to severe anxiety problems, major depression, and disorientation.

## SCALE C – BEHAVIORAL STRESSORS

People scoring low on this scale sometimes suffer from difficulty remaining still, recurring interpersonal conflict, lashing out at other people, and difficulty maintaining focus on one activity very long. They tend to be compulsive and make decisions on the spur-of-the-moment. They are short tempered and find themselves verbally attacking other people.



































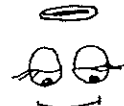


























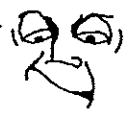

## SCALE D – PHYSICAL STRESSORS

People scoring low on this scale sometimes find themselves biting their nails, clenching their fists, and tapping their feet compulsively. This stress is conveyed in how they move and hold their body. They often find it difficult to sleep and start to lose interest in sleeping. The stress shows itself in their body in terms of neck and back pain, dryness of the mouth, nervous twitches, and constipation.

Stress can manifest itself in a variety of ways. Remember that a little bit of stress can be positive, but too much stress can affect your general wellness and your health. Regardless of your score on the LSS, the following exercises have been designed to help you manage your stress. Try doing all of the stress-management techniques that follow, then choose the ones you feel most comfortable doing.

CS-11

# EMOTIONS

 aggressive	 alienated	 angry	 annoyed	 anxious	 apathetic	 bashful
 bored	 cautious	 confident	 confused	 curious	 depressed	 determined
 disappointed	 discouraged	 disgusted	 embarrassed	 enthusiastic	 envious	 ecstatic
 excited	 exhausted	 fearful	 frightened	 frustrated	 guilty	 happy
 helpless	 hopeful	 hostile	 humiliated	 hurt	 hysterical	 innocent
 interested	 jealous	 lonely	 loved	 lovestruck	 mischievous	 miserable
 negative	 optimistic	 pained	 paranoid	 peaceful	 proud	 puzzled
 regretful	 relieved	 sad	 satisfied	 shocked	 shy	 sorry
 stubborn	 sure	 surprised	 suspicious	 thoughtful	 undecided	 withdrawn

# Motions

## PURPOSE:

To increase awareness of emotions and a variety of words to express emotions, with assistance of visual representations.

To increase usage of these words.

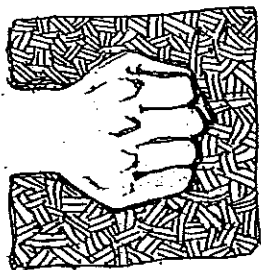
## GENERAL COMMENTS:

Identifying emotions is an effective communication skill. Everyday language can be enhanced by using the most specific word to describe feelings at any time. This allows the "receiver" to get a clearer picture of what the "sender" is trying to say and increases the chance of a more effective response.

## II. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

- A. 1. Discuss with group members the concept of emotion identification and demonstrate variety through reference to handout.
- 2. Instruct each group member in sequence to select an emotion from the handout and share it with the group using one of the following formats:  
"I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_."  
or  
"The last time I \_\_\_\_\_ was when \_\_\_\_\_."
- 3. Encourage all group members to check off the emotions from the handout as they are shared, so they will not be repeated.
- 4. Encourage this process to continue until all emotions are discussed from the handout.
- B. 1. Make a card game by cutting each of the 63 emotions out of one handout and attach each on a separate index card. Place in a "hat."
- 2. Divide group into two teams.
- 3. Encourage one group member from team #1 to choose a card and pantomime the emotion for team #2. Then team #2 guesses which emotion it is. This handout can be given to all group members to assist them.
- 4. Score by giving one point for correct response given within 60 seconds.
- 5. Repeat process with team #2 pantomiming for team #1.
- 6. Continue game until time runs out or all cards are played.
- 7. Process the importance of using specific words to express emotions.

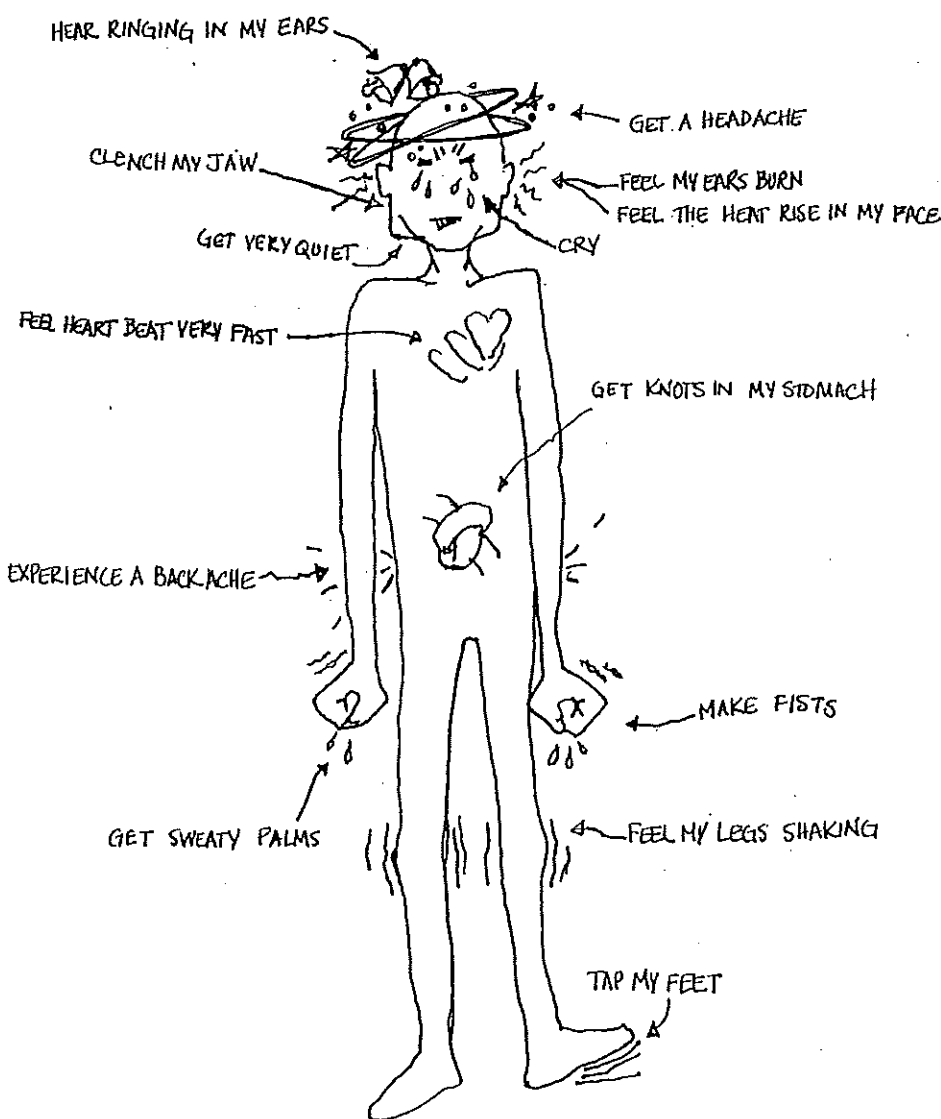
CS-12a



# Physical Cues to Anger

Anger is a normal reaction to a perceived threat. All animals have certain physiological reactions to threat which allow us to respond physically: for example, to run away from danger, to fight to protect ourselves or our family, or to "freeze" in order to avoid being seen by another creature that poses a danger.

On the illustration below, circle any physical symptoms you experience when your anger is escalating, and write in any others that are not listed.



Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

The symptoms you circled above can be used as 'cues' to let you know when your anger is escalating and you need to take control before things get out of hand. Some of these cues may take place sooner than others. If you tune into these physical cues to anger, you can learn to recognize them earlier and respond to your emotions in more planned and effective ways.

06 13

## Facilitator's Information for Physical Cues to Anger

**Purpose:** To identify the physical/physiological symptoms associated with anger.

**Background Information:** There are a number of activities in this workbook that address emotional cues to anger, which can be used in conjunction with this activity to help participants identify anger escalation early.

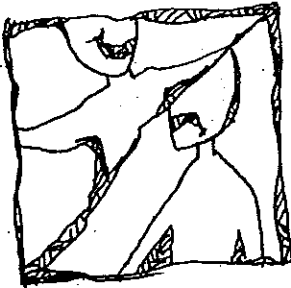
**Individual Activity:** "COLORING MY CUES"  
*Materials:* One photocopy of worksheet and colored pencils, markers or crayons.

1. Ask participant to recount a recent incident in which s/he became extremely angry.
2. Stop the participant at the point in the story where his/her anger is at a peak (just before the aggression or retreat, if there was any.) Ask him/her to tune in to and describe the physical feelings s/he experienced in each part of his/her body: hands, feet, arms, legs, head, face, mouth, eyes, chest, stomach, back, etc. Allow ample time for participant to think about and describe these physical symptoms of anger.
3. Give participant worksheet and have him/her circle any symptoms that apply to him/her, and/or use colored pencils, markers or crayons to color in the areas of the body where s/he experiences physical symptoms of anger.
4. Ask participant if s/he can identify which physical symptoms occur first, toward the beginning of the anger escalation, and which occur later, closer to the peak of anger. If possible, identify a sequence or 'early' 'middle' and 'late' cues, and use different colored pencils/markers to code where each cue falls chronologically.
5. Process with a discussion of how participant can use these cues to identify escalating anger earlier. Discuss the benefits of identifying anger earlier in order to plan effective responses.

**Group Activity:**

- "ANGRY AL"  
*Materials:* One photocopy of worksheet per participant, pencils/pens, paper large enough for a life-sized body tracing (several pieces of flipchart paper taped together will do), colored markers.
1. If the group is larger than six, split into smaller groups and have each group do the drawing portion of this activity separately.
  2. Lay paper out on floor or table. Ask for a volunteer to have his/her body traced. Have the person having his or her body traced choose another participant to do the tracing. If body tracing is too physically intimate for group participants, simply draw an outline of a human body.
  3. Write "Angry Al" or another name on the top of the paper (do not use the name of a group member) or allow the group to come up with its own name.
  4. Explain that the objective of this activity is to demonstrate through a life-sized drawing what a person experiences physically when s/he is angry. For example, some people's hearts beat very fast when they are angry, so they might want to find a way to illustrate a fast-beating heart. They should try to include every part of the body they think is affected by or affects anger.
  5. Lay the markers out and instruct participants to start drawing.
  6. After completing activity, hang the drawing(s) on the wall and ask participants to explain everything they drew.
  7. Hand out worksheets and instruct participants to circle or write in each physical symptom they personally experience when they are angry.
  8. Process with a discussion of how participants can use these cues to identify escalating anger earlier. Discuss the benefits of identifying anger earlier in order to plan effective responses.

CS-13a



# Identifying Emotions

## A Time When I Felt...

Happy

Sad

Love

Frustrated

Accepted

Rejected

Joyful

Lonely

Supported

Embarrassed

Excited

Ashamed

Proud

Humiliated

Confident

Overwhelmed

Secure

Insecure

Silly

Shy or bashful

Surprised

Jealous

Hopeful

Remorse

Brave

Afraid

Other:

Other:



## Facilitator's Information for Identifying Emotions

**Purpose:** To practice identifying both positive and negative emotions and events that trigger them.

**Background Information:** Identifying a range of emotions is the first step in learning to express those emotions in healthy and productive ways. Done early on in group or individual work, this activity may result in discussion of only more superficial examples of the emotions. The facilitator should accept whatever examples participants give, but may want to repeat the activity in a later session when a greater level of trust has been developed and more 'intense' examples of emotional triggers may be shared.

**Individual Activity:** "REMEMBERING EMOTIONS"  
*Materials:* One photocopy of worksheet, pen/pencil. Optional: Blank paper and markers.

1. Explain to participant that the purpose of this activity is to practice recognizing different emotions and times s/he has felt those emotions.
2. Read or have participant read aloud each emotion. Ask participant if s/he knows what that emotion means and if necessary, clarify the definition or meaning of the word. Ask participant to think of a time when s/he felt that emotion, and briefly write it on the line.
3. It's okay if the participant can't think of examples for each emotion. During future sessions, when emotions or memories of these emotions are triggered, the facilitator can help the participant identify those emotions and go back to fill in the blanks on this page.
4. Optional: Ask participant to choose one or more of the emotions discussed, and draw a picture of him/herself at the time s/he felt the emotion. Use this activity as a starting point for a more in-depth exploration of the events and emotions represented in the picture.

**Group Activity:** "EMOTIONS CHARADES"  
*Materials:* Index cards with one emotion written on each card, one photocopy of worksheet per participant, pens/pencils.

1. Give each participant an index card with one emotion written on it. Instruct participants that they should keep the emotions on their cards secret.
2. Ask for a volunteer to act out the emotions on his/her card. The facilitator may choose to instruct participants to act out the emotions using no words, or tell them they can use words other than the one on the card.
3. Instruct other participants to guess the emotion being demonstrated.
4. Once someone has guessed the emotion, ask participants to give examples of times they have felt that emotion.
5. Repeat until each participant has acted out his or her emotion, and other participants have given examples of times they have experienced the emotion.
6. Hand out worksheets and pens/pencils, and instruct participants to fill in a time they have felt each emotion.

**Alternate Group Activity:** "EMOTIONS CHECK-IN"  

1. This activity can be used as a check-in ritual at the beginning of each group session. Explain this check-in ritual to participants during the first group session.
2. Prior to each group session, choose one emotion to be the 'emotion of the day.' It is best to start with the more positive, less threatening emotions such as 'happy' or 'excited' during early group sessions.
3. At the beginning of each group session, the facilitator should state the 'emotion of the day' and if necessary, begin with a discussion of the meaning of the emotion.
4. The facilitator may choose to model by going first, stating the emotion of the day and giving an example of a time s/he felt that emotion.
5. Ask participants to take turns describing times they experienced that emotion.

CS-14a

# Silly Stress Strategies

Match the 15 "Silly Match-Ups" on the left with the well-known "Stress Strategies" on the right. Draw a line to connect the correct strategies.

## I

### SILLY MATCH-UPS

1. Happy Birthday to me
2. Enroll in Turtle Academy
3. Proclaim Yourself a Hero
4. Retire from the Supreme Court
5. Shoot for the Stars
6. Don't Take the Hinges off to Walk through the Door
7. Avoid Leaping Contests with Leap Frogs
8. Go to a Cave, or Lock Yourself in the Bathroom
9. Don't Take Candies from Babies
10. Make Lemonade
11. Plan for Rain on a Picnic
12. Call out Sherlock Holmes
13. Use the Gas in the Tank
14. When Lost in the Dark, Continue to Look for a Flashlight
15. Take a Vacation from your Island

## II

### STRESS STRATEGIES

- A. Give and Take
- B. Humans are Social Creatures and need each other.
- C. Make the Best of it
- D. Plan for what Might Happen
- E. Take a Time Out
- F. Under Pressure . . . Act don't React
- G. Treat Myself Special
- H. Use What you Have
- I. Get to the Bottom of Things
- J. Slow Down
- K. Don't Judge
- L. Be Proud - Don't Wait for Others to Reward You
- M. Compare Myself to Who?
- N. Reach Beyond - Have Dreams & Goals
- O. Simplify!!

# Silly Stress Strategies

## I. PURPOSE:

To increase knowledge and awareness of simple stress strategies.

## II. GENERAL COMMENTS:

Stress management often sounds like a mysterious and difficult skill to master. However, many stress management strategies are common sense and can be broken down into teachable units. Humor, also used in this exercise, goes hand-in-hand with stress management.

## III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

- A.
1. Facilitate discussion with the class around the concept of 'stress' and the importance of managing one's stress.
  2. Introduce the stress management skills on the handout as 'silly stress strategies' that are really practical well-known ways of taking care of one's self. Remind the class of the role and importance of humor in managing stress.
  3. Divide the class into pairs or triads.
  4. Distribute one handout to each sub-group. Explain that the handout has 15 stress management strategies expressed in humorous terms. The 15 'Silly Stress Strategies' are to be matched to their practical stress strategy partner.
  5. Give the sub-groups 15 minutes to match the strategies.
  6. Reconvene as a class and review each 'Silly Stress Strategy' and the answers selected. Encourage discussion about each strategy.
  7. Process benefits of remembering these strategies and re-emphasize the use of humor.
- B.
1. Introduce the stress management skills on handout as 'Silly Stress Strategies', practical well-known ways of taking care of one's self. Remind students of the role and importance of humor in managing stress.
  2. On a flipchart or white board write all of the 'Stress Strategies' (column II) listed on the handout.
  3. Take the 15 'Silly Match-ups' (from column I) and make them into 15, 3" X 5" cards. Write one per card.
  4. Place cards in a stack in the center of table, face down.
  5. Divide class into two teams, depending on size of class. More teams may be necessary.
  6. Play game as follows:
    - a. Team one draws a 'Silly Match-Up' card. They have one minute as a team to match it with a 'Stress Strategy' listed on the board. If they are unable to match strategies correctly Team 2 gets an opportunity to correctly match strategies. Each correct answer receives one point. Play the game using the idea of a familiar TV game show.
    - b. Continue sequence until each of the 15 strategies has been played. The winning team could receive some token prize to be shared with all participants.
  7. Distribute handouts and pencils reviewing and matching strategies. Discuss which strategies students feel require additional work or implementation in own lives. Elicit specific examples if possible.
  8. Process by asking questions: "What role does humor have in stress management?" "Why is it important to know and understand stress management tools?", "How can you use, or remind yourself, about these strategies?"



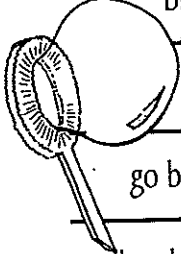



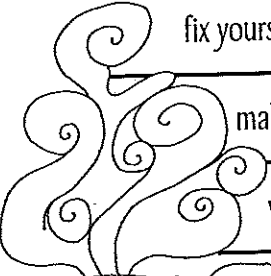
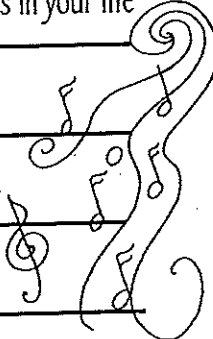

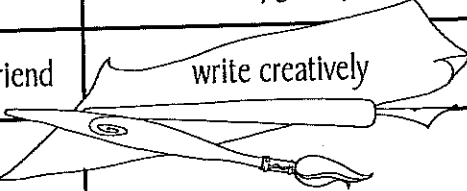
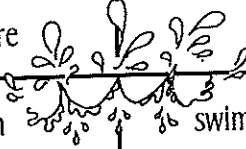

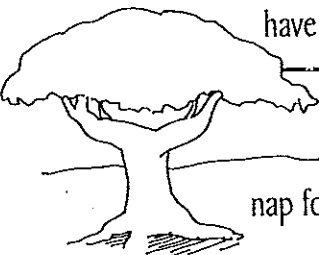

### Matching Answers:

I	II
1	G
2	J
3	L
4	K
5	N
6	O
7	M
8	E
9	A
10	C
11	D
12	I
13	H
14	F
15	B

Activity handout and facilitator's information submitted by Robin Wildbur, OTR, Royal Oak, MI.  
Robin has been in mental health practice 21 years — and counting!

Adapted for SEALS III from LMS VI by Sandra Negley, MTRS, CTRS, Salt Lake City, UT,  
author of *Crossing the Bridge, A Journey in Self-Esteem, Relationships and Life Balance.*

# Ways to Relieve STRESS

blow bubbles 	watch a sunrise or sunset	
meditate 	do deep breathing exercises	use visual imagery
go bowling 	luxuriate in a bath or shower	lie back and watch clouds
take pleasure in quiet-time 	listen to a relaxation tape	give of yourself
read a book	 prioritize	reflect on the positives in your life
fix yourself hot chocolate 	play an instrument	enjoy the weather
make an edible treat	sing or whistle a song	attend a free concert 
visit the library 	go for a jog	listen to music
write a letter to a friend	work on a jigsaw puzzle	play your favorite game
see a movie 	write creatively	tear up an old newspaper
join a club or group	draw or paint a picture 	roller-blade
window shop	take a walk in the rain 	have a good laugh
have fun with a pet	talk with a friend	swim or splash in the water
go to the park 	take a long ride	delight in your spirituality
nap for ten minutes	play a game	light a candle 
plan your dream trip	catch-up with a family member	finish something
sit under a shady tree	begin a new hobby or craft	reach out to a support
		count your blessings

# Ways to Relieve STRESS

## I. PURPOSE:

To explore multiple techniques to maintain wellness through stress management.

## II. GENERAL COMMENTS:

Stress is inevitable in our lives. Coping positively and effectively with that stress can be challenging at times. Reviewing choices, expanding options and having a ready-made list of stress-reducing ideas may prove to be helpful in managing stress.

## III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

- A.
  1. Introduce the topic of stress management as a lifelong skill, one that needs constant re-evaluating and updating.
  2. Distribute handouts, pencils and highlighters.
  3. Review the list of stress relievers on the handout, as a class.
  4. Ask each member to highlight two or three they might find helpful.
  5. Instruct students to add additional techniques to the list by writing ideas in margins.
  6. As a class, share techniques each student selected.
  7. Process by sharing benefits to overall health of effective stress management.
- B.
  1. Divide class into pairs or triads. Distribute one piece of blank paper and pencil to each sub-group.
  2. Give sub-groups five minutes to identify any stress management techniques of which they are aware. Discuss each sub-group identified and how effective members feel these techniques may be for them in relieving stress
  3. Distribute handouts.
  4. Give one point for each stress management technique they identified that is NOT listed on handout. Token gift could be awarded to winning sub-group.
  5. Prepare ahead of time by copying one handout, cutting each stress management idea apart and then gluing each one to a separate index card to create a 51-card deck. Place deck in a basket in center of table.
  6. Instruct group members to choose a card and answer... "Have you ever done this?  
If so, how did or does it work for you?  
If not, why not?  
Could you use this in the future?  
Would it be helpful?"
  7. Once the card has been discussed, leave card face up on table.
  8. After all cards have been discussed, ask students to identify at least one technique they will try the following week.

Activity handout and facilitator's information submitted by Marla Yoder-Tiedt, MSW, LISW and Sandi Miller, RRT, both employed at a psychiatric hospital in Columbus, OH, with 15 years and 22 years in the mental health field respectively. Assistance with facilitator's sheet - Lucy Ritzic, OTR/L, Product Administrator of Wellness Reproductions & Publishing, Inc.

Adapted for SEALS III from LMS VI by Sandra Negley, MTRS, CTRS, Salt Lake City, UT, author of *Crossing the Bridge, A Journey in Self-Esteem, Relationships and Life Balance*.

# DIRECTIONS

Basic broad coping resources have been identified that seem to be important in dealing effectively with a variety of stressful situations. These stressful situations take many forms in many different life roles and could include dealing with the loss of a loved one, loss of a job or divorce. We are all able to cope differently with life and career stress by calling on different types of coping resources. The Coping with Stress Scale (CSS) will help you identify the specific resources you use, and those that you neglect, when dealing with the stress in your life.

In the following example, the circled numbers indicate how much the statement is descriptive of the person completing the inventory.

4 = VERY OFTEN      3 = OFTEN      2 = SOMETIMES      1 = NOT AT ALL

When I am in a stressful situation, I manage stress by:

- 1. Seeking help from a Higher Power      4    ③    2    1
- 2. Looking for comfort in my religious beliefs      4    3    ②    1

This is not a test. Since there are no right or wrong answers, do not spend too much time thinking about your answers. Be sure to respond to every statement.

Turn to the next page and begin.

# COPING with STRESS SCALE

Name:

---

---

Gender:

---

Date:

---

Age:

---

CS-17

# COPING with STRESS SCALE

4 = VERY OFTEN      3 = OFTEN      2 = SOMETIMES      1 = NOT AT ALL

WHEN I AM IN A STRESSFUL SITUATION, I MANAGE STRESS BY:

I. SOCIAL-SUPPORT RESOURCES				
1. Asking people for their help.	4	3	2	1
2. Listening to others.	4	3	2	1
3. Using input from significant others in solving problems.	4	3	2	1
4. Spending time with helpful people.	4	3	2	1
5. Allowing people to help me during transition periods.	4	3	2	1
6. Identifying people who will support me.	4	3	2	1
7. Talking to others about my feelings.	4	3	2	1
				TOTAL = _____

II. PLANNING AND CHANGE				
8. Changing the stressful situation.	4	3	2	1
9. Developing a plan for new options and opportunities.	4	3	2	1
10. Changing my lifestyle (people I hang out with, amount of work I do, etc.).	4	3	2	1
11. Weighing the negative consequences of potential decisions.	4	3	2	1
12. Doing what needs to be done in a logical manner.	4	3	2	1
13. Identifying a plan about how to make changes in my life.	4	3	2	1
14. Implementing and executing the chosen courses of action.	4	3	2	1
				TOTAL = _____

Go on to the next page.

C.S-17



# COPING with STRESS SCALE

4 = VERY OFTEN      3 = OFTEN      2 = SOMETIMES      1 = NOT AT ALL

WHEN I AM IN A STRESSFUL SITUATION, I MANAGE STRESS BY:

III. INTERNAL RESOURCES				
15. Using my personal strengths to create opportunities.	4	3	2	1
16. Converting negative thoughts about myself into positive ones.	4	3	2	1
17. Viewing transitions as opportunities for personal and professional growth.	4	3	2	1
18. Seeing stressful situations as a normal part of life.	4	3	2	1
19. Identifying and using my personal strengths.	4	3	2	1
20. Identifying negative thoughts I have about myself.	4	3	2	1
21. Changing my irrational beliefs about myself and the world.	4	3	2	1
				TOTAL = _____

IV. STRESS REDUCTION				
22. Practicing self-relaxation techniques (meditation, deep breathing, etc).	4	3	2	1
23. Running, jogging, or aerobic exercise.	4	3	2	1
24. Engaging in relaxing leisure activities.	4	3	2	1
25. Eating and sleeping well.	4	3	2	1
26. Managing my time better.	4	3	2	1
27. Doing progressive muscle relaxation or getting a massage.	4	3	2	1
28. Listening to music to reduce the stress.	4	3	2	1
				TOTAL = _____

Go on to the next page.

CG-17

# COPING with STRESS SCALE

4 = VERY OFTEN      3 = OFTEN      2 = SOMETIMES      1 = NOT AT ALL

WHEN I AM IN A STRESSFUL SITUATION, I MANAGE STRESS BY:

V. SPIRITUALITY RESOURCES				
29. Seeking help from a Higher Power.	4	3	2	1
30. Looking for comfort in my religious beliefs.	4	3	2	1
31. Speaking with a leader in my faith.	4	3	2	1
32. Praying for guidance, strength, or wisdom.	4	3	2	1
33. Recognizing what I can or cannot change.	4	3	2	1
34. Allowing my religion or spiritual path to transcend the stress.	4	3	2	1
35. Connecting with my true purpose in life.	4	3	2	1
				TOTAL = _____

VI. STRESS AVOIDANCE				
36. Trying not to sweat the "small" stuff.	4	3	2	1
37. Going to the movies or watching television to think less about it.	4	3	2	1
38. Working more to take my mind off it.	4	3	2	1
39. Trying not to overcommit myself to too many tasks.	4	3	2	1
40. Being more assertive with friends and significant others.	4	3	2	1
41. Trying not to put myself in potentially stressful situations.	4	3	2	1
42. Reminding myself to be more content with what I have in life and career.	4	3	2	1
				TOTAL = _____

Go to the scoring directions on the next page.

CS-17

# SCORING DIRECTIONS

The Coping with Stress Scale is designed to measure the strength of your ability to cope with transitions in your life. For each of the sections on the previous three pages, count the scores you circled for each of the four sections. Put that total on the line marked "TOTAL" at the end of each section.

Then, transfer your totals to the spaces below:

TOTALS	
I. _____	= SOCIAL-SUPPORT RESOURCES
II. _____	= PLANNING AND CHANGE
III. _____	= INTERNAL RESOURCES
IV. _____	= STRESS REDUCTION
V. _____	= SPIRITUALITY RESOURCES
VI. _____	= STRESS AVOIDANCE

## PROFILE INTERPRETATION

SCORES FROM 7 TO 13 ARE LOW and mean that you often fail to use the skills from this scale in coping successfully with the stress in your life.

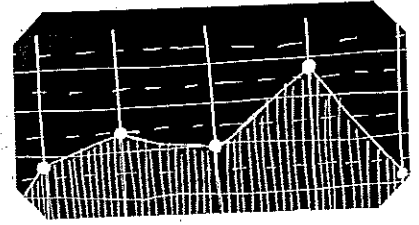
SCORES FROM 14 TO 21 ARE AVERAGE and mean that you use coping skills from this scale that are similar to those of most other people.

SCORES FROM 22 TO 28 ARE HIGH and mean that you often use the skills from this scale in coping successfully with the stress in your life.

Any scales on which you scored in the "Low" or "Average" ranges may be found on the pages that follow. Then, read the description and complete the exercises that are included. These exercises will help you develop more effective coping skills.

CS-17

# I. SOCIAL-SUPPORT RESOURCES



People scoring high on this scale tend to attempt to get advice from significant others in helping them deal with stress. In order to reduce the stress, they will attempt to share their experiences with others who have been in similar situations or have had similar types of stressful experiences. They often seek emotional support from friends and loved ones to whom they can talk about how they feel.

Who are the people who will support you in life?

---

---

---

---

How can these people help you reach your goals?

---

---

---

---

---

What social skills must you develop to cultivate your support system?

---

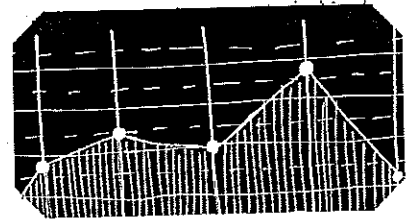
---

---

---

CS-18

## II. PLANNING and CHANGE



For people scoring high in this category, planning and change are exhibited through the decisions they make during times of stress. They may experience feelings of hesitation and anxiety about decisions, but they are able to use a rational approach to decision-making and implementing change. They concentrate their efforts on doing something about the stressful situation. They develop a strategy about what to do, make a plan of action, and then take the necessary steps to reduce the stress they are encountering.

How do you make decisions? What is your decision-making style?

---

---

---

---

What are your greatest planning skills?

---

---

---

---

How do you develop a plan for dealing with stressful situations?

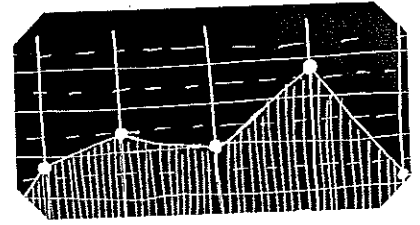
---

---

---

---

# III. INTERNAL RESOURCES



People scoring high in this category use internal self-talk to provide critical and supportive messages during a transition. They can do this by becoming more aware of the cognitive distortions and irrational thoughts that lead to feelings of frustration and depression. In addition, they can visualize themselves as they would like to be. They are able to turn threats into opportunities and look at stressful situations as learning experiences.

What are your greatest strengths?

---

---

---

---

How would you describe yourself?

---

---

---

---

How do others describe you?

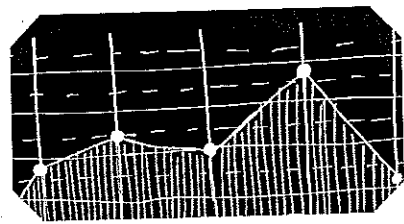
---

---

---

---

# IV. STRESS REDUCTION



People scoring high in this category are able to identify symptoms of distress and effectively respond to stress. They can use a variety of methods for managing stress including meditating, getting more sleep, eating more nutritiously, breathing rhythmically, exercising, doing self-hypnosis, setting priorities and cognitive restructuring.

How do you relax when you are in a stressful situation?

---

---

---

---

What emotions do you experience during periods of stress?

---

---

---

---

What new relaxation techniques do you want to learn?

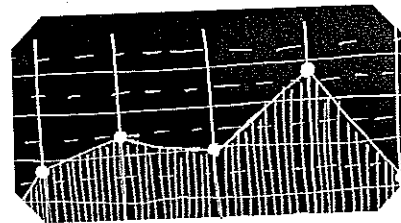
---

---

---

---

# U. SPIRITUALITY RESOURCES



People scoring high on this scale tend to seek help from their religion or spirituality. They find comfort in religion and spirituality in their attempts to cope. They are excited about what lies ahead in their lives and are not merely content with their accomplishments from the past.

What religious practices or spiritual resources do you use to help reduce stress?

---

---

---

---

What are two of your religious or spiritual beliefs?

---

---

---

---

How does your religious or spiritual practice support you in relieving stress?

---

---

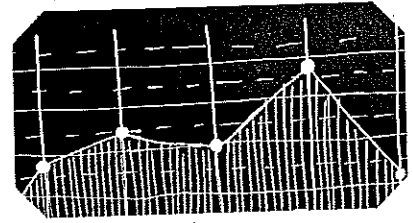
---

---

CS-22



# VI. STRESS AVOIDANCE



People scoring high in this category look for alternatives to facing stressful situations. They have the ability to avoid and reduce the effects of stress. They are skilled in finding ways to avoid the thoughts and emotions associated with stress. They tend to assess the gains and costs of dealing with the stress and often believe that the stressor is not happening to them or they act as though it hasn't happened to them. They may even look to other substitute activities to take their mind off the stress. They may engage in work and leisure behaviors to help them transcend the stressful situation.

How do you attempt to avoid stress?

---

---

---

---

What types of things do you say to yourself?

---

---

---

---

What unhealthy habits are you afraid of developing in your attempts to avoid stress?

---

---

---

---

CS-23

# GROUP ACTIVITY

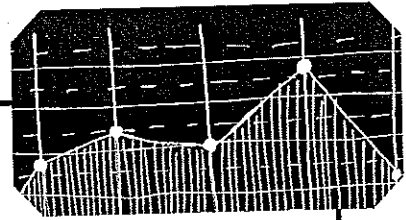
## PREPARATION:

- 1 Prepare a flipchart.
- 2 Cut out pictures of people coping with stress, using such resources as spirituality, social support, internal resources, stress reduction, planning and change and stress avoidance.
- 3 Paste these pictures on the flipchart.

## SESSION:

- 1 Explain to the group members that the ability to cope with stress is a skill that can be learned. The more resources we have at our disposal and can easily use, the better we are able to cope with stress. (3 minutes)
- 2 Show the pictures of people using the various coping skills on the flipchart. Ask group members to identify which of the coping skills is being used. Give group members a few minutes to jot down ideas. Share and write all responses on the flipchart. (5 minutes)
- 3 Break group participants into smaller groups. Within each of the smaller groups:
  - Ask people to identify which of the coping skills they use most.
  - Ask people to identify which of the coping skills they use least.
  - Have people brainstorm ways in which each person can further develop additional resources for coping with stress. (20 minutes)
- 4 Reconvene in larger group and share experiences. (10 minutes)
- 5 Process by asking one or more of the following questions:
  - a) Which coping skills were identified most?
  - b) Which coping skills were identified least?
  - c) Which coping skills would you like to develop? (10 minutes)

CS-24



## COPING RESOURCES

- Do relaxation exercises
- Curb negative self-talk
- Use your support system
- Remain optimistic
- Improve your communication skills
- Use community services
- Improve your problem-solving skills
- Look to your faith and spirituality
- Change your lifestyle
- Take your mind off the stress

### PERSONAL INSIGHTS:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## How can you cope with stress effectively?

Coping effectively with stress is a key to living a successful and rewarding life and being able to pursue your personal goals. Some examples of strategies for coping with stress include:

### Talking to someone about the stress you are experiencing

"When I was packing up my stuff to move to a new place, I started having headaches and trouble sleeping. I called my sister and told her how stressed out I felt. She told me she felt the same way when she moved the last time. She even offered to help me pack. It made a huge difference."

### Using relaxation techniques

"If I've had a stressful day, it helps me to do some deep breathing. I put on some relaxing music, and sit in my favorite chair. Then I start by taking ten deep, slow breaths. Then I let my breath out very slowly. As I exhale, I try to imagine that when I let out my breath, I'm letting out the tension in my body. Then I take about 20 or 30 more breaths. Sometimes I try to imagine a peaceful scene, like the ocean, when I'm breathing. I usually feel more relaxed after that."

The Appendix to this handout contains some relaxation techniques that you can try.

CS-26

### Using positive self-talk

"Before when I was under stress, I used to blame myself and think that there was no way out. Now I try to think more positively. I say to myself, 'This is hard, but I can do it,' or 'If I take this one step at a time, I'll be able to handle it.' It's hard to do sometimes, but it makes me feel better about myself."

### Maintaining your sense of humor

"For me 'laughter is the best medicine.' When I've been on a subway ride that lasted two hours instead of 45 minutes, I feel very tense and agitated. I have some funny videos at home, and I'll pull one out and have a good laugh. Believe it or not, it helps me to watch a Monty Python movie or one starring Adam Sandler."

### Participating in religion or spiritual activity

"I grew up in a religious home. Although I'm not sure I believe every aspect of that religion, I still find it comforting to go to services. And sometimes instead of going to services I go for a walk in the park and see how beautiful nature can be. That's very spiritual for me."

### Exercising

"I like to 'work off' my stress by getting some exercise. Sometimes I go for a run and sometimes I just do some jumping jacks until I calm down."

CS-27

### Writing in a journal

"I've started keeping a journal to write down my thoughts and feelings. I don't care about the grammar or spelling—I just write down what comes into my head. Sometimes I write about stressful things and that seems to help. Writing helps me think things through."

### Making or listening to music

"I'm a music person. I put on my headphones and blow away the stress of the day. I can even do it on the train, to distract myself on the long ride."

### Doing art or going to see art

"I like to sketch. I especially like drawing cartoons. I must admit I sometimes make some unflattering cartoons of people who are bugging me."

### Playing games or developing a hobby

"I like playing card games. When I don't have anyone to play with, I like solitaire. It's relaxing to me."

*Using coping strategies, such as listening to music, exercising, watching videos, or participating in a hobby, can help you manage stress effectively and enjoy your life.*

CS-28

Questions:

What strategies do you use to cope with stress?

What strategies would you like to try or develop further?

You can use the following checklist to record your answer to these questions.

CS-29

## Strategies for Coping with Stress Checklist

Strategy	I already use this strategy	I would like to try this strategy or develop it further
Talking to someone		
Using relaxation techniques		
Using positive self talk		
Maintaining my sense of humor		
Participating in religion or other form of spirituality		
Exercising		
Writing in a journal		
Listening to music		
Doing artwork or going to see artwork		
Participating in a hobby		
Other:		
Other:		

CS-30



## Examples of coping effectively with stress

People develop different strategies for coping with stress, depending on what works for them. The following individuals have recognized what kinds of situations are stressful to them and have worked out strategies that help them cope effectively with these situations.

### Leticia

"For me, it's very stressful to rush to get somewhere on time. I start to feel anxious and irritable. Sometimes I even get a headache. So I try to plan ahead as much as possible, and allow myself plenty of time. On the nights before I go to work, I lay out my clothing for the next day. I get up at least an hour before I have to leave the house to catch the bus. Then I don't feel anxious. I can relax on my way to work and start the day feeling fresh.

"Of course, I can't plan for everything. Sometimes the bus is late or the road conditions are bad. When I feel myself starting to get anxious, I do some deep breathing to slow myself down. Sometimes I use 'positive self-talk.' I tell myself, 'I have an excellent record at work of arriving on time and doing my job well. It's O.K. if I'm late once in a while. My boss has always told not to worry about this. Just relax.' It works for me."

CS-31

## Daniel

"Recently I've been under stress because my mother has been ill and in the hospital. I visit her almost every afternoon and I think I'm doing all I can to help her. But sometimes I have trouble sleeping. I lie in bed worrying, so it takes me longer to fall asleep. Then I end up tired in the morning and have a hard time getting up.

"It helps me to talk to someone about my worries. I talk to my sister and it helps a lot. I also try to do something relaxing in the evening, to take my mind off Mom's illness. If it's not too dark, I take a walk in the neighborhood. Or I might read a travel magazine or watch a nature show on TV. It helps me to feel more calm and to be able to fall asleep more easily."

## Ching-Li

"I feel tense when there is a lot of noise. I try to avoid those kinds of situations. But there are times when it's unavoidable, like at my apartment. I have roommates, and sometimes they watch television shows or make noise when they are cooking dinner. I like my roommates and I don't think they are being excessive. Noise is just part of having roommates.

"It helps me to take a break and go to my room. I like to listen to my music on headphones; it drowns out the noise and takes me to a more quiet place."

CS-32

*You can develop an individual plan for coping with stress that works for you.*

**How to develop a plan for coping with stress**

This handout included checklists to help you identify the following: stressful situations, signs of stress, strategies for preventing stress, and strategies for coping with stress. It may be helpful to put this information together as an individual plan for coping with stress using the following form:

CS-33

**Individual Plan for Coping with Stress**

Stressful situations to be aware of:

1.

2.

3.

Signs that I am under stress:

1.

2.

3.

My strategies for preventing stress:

1.

2.

3.

My strategies for coping with stress:

1.

2.

3.

CS-34

## **Summary of the main points about coping with stress**

- *Stress is the feeling of pressure, strain, or tension that comes from responding to challenging situations.*
- *Being able to cope effectively with stress can help you to reduce symptoms and pursue your goals.*
- *Life events and daily hassles are both sources of stress.*
- *Being aware of signs of stress can help you take steps to prevent it from getting worse.*
- *You can avoid stress by using strategies such as scheduling enjoyable activities and developing a support system.*
- *Using coping strategies, such as listening to music, exercising, watching videos, or participating in a hobby, can help you manage stress effectively and enjoy your life.*
- *You can develop an individual plan for coping with stress that works for you.*

CS-35

# PERSONAL NETWORK PROFILE

A-B-C

D-E-F

G-H-I

J-K-L

M-N-O

P-Q-R

S-T-U

V-W-X

Y-Z

Fill in the names of support people in all appropriate roles.  
 The same name may appear several times.  
 Then rate how helpful they are on a scale from 0 to 5 with 5 being high.  
 If a name does not come to mind, leave that category blank.

Support Roles	The person I turn to: (list the names)	How helpful is each person? (scale of 0 to 5)
1. For close friendship		
2. To share problems		
3. To play with		
4. For expert advice		
5. To energize me		
6. As a teacher		
7. When I just need to "chill out"		
8. As a mentor		
9. For acceptance or approval		
10. To help me try new things		
11. When I need a safe haven		
12. For a good social time		
13. When I am hurting		
14. When I need good advice with a problem		
15. When I want to be with someone who knows me well		

Look over each of the categories and circle the areas where you feel you need, or would like, more support. Which members of your network do you rely on too much, and which people might you rely on more often? \_\_\_\_\_

# PERSONAL NETWORK PROFILE

## I. PURPOSE:

- To assess personal support networks.
- To develop support systems as a method for coping with stress.

## II. GENERAL COMMENTS:

Most of us, at one time or another, will have to deal with some type of crisis in our lives (e.g., personal illness, loss of a friend/family member, relationship difficulty, etc.). Both physical and mental health are connected to the presence of helpful and supportive people in our lives, family, community, and work environment. By developing support systems day-to-day, we will have the support and friendship we need in times of personal crisis or upheaval.

## III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

A. NOTE: This activity can be used as an icebreaker at the beginning of a new term or grading period.

1. Divide class into sub-groups that allow for a small group experience. Distribute handouts. Ask students to write their names on top of handout. Assign questions equally among each small group. For example, if there were five students in each group, each student would then be responsible for three questions, and so on. Students should pair up within the sub-group, switch papers and interview each other, recording responses on each other's handout. Instruct students to ask only their assigned questions from the handout. Remind students that each question has three parts to be completed. Return papers to owner and switch partners. Repeat process until all handouts are completed. (Note: Interviewers will ask the same questions to every member of the sub-group.)
  2. Reconvene. Collect handouts. Redistribute them at random. Instruct students to read the handout carefully and then introduce fellow-student to the rest of the class. Once everyone has been introduced, ask students to return handouts to original owner.
  3. Process activity by asking students if they discovered that they had 'gaps' in their own personal network profile. If so, encourage students to use new information learned from activity to fulfill search for supports/friends in these areas.
- B.
1. Explain the importance of support people as a method for coping with the stress of life as well as crisis situations. Share and facilitate sharing of personal stories to highlight the power of supports/friends during crisis times as well as non-crisis times.
  2. Distribute handouts. To assist class in thinking beyond their own personal situation, explain that successful people oftentimes have powerful personal networks. As a class, choose a well-known character, political figure, celebrity, etc., and discuss how that person might fill out this handout (as well as the class can, with the knowledge that is available).
  3. Instruct class to complete handout about themselves.
  4. Share and discuss. Ask class which items were easiest to complete? Most difficult? Are there commonalities in the class or is every person completely different?
  5. Problem solve as a class how to improve the circled areas.
  6. Discuss methods of developing support networks.

Activity handout and facilitator's information originally submitted for Life Management Skills V by  
Nina Beth Sellner, M.Ed., Owatonna, MN.  
Nina is a Certified Personal Trainer and specializes in stress management and worksite wellness.

Adapted for SEALS III from LMS V by Elaine Hyla Sleas, M.Ed., Euclid, OH,  
adaptor of SEALS+PLUS (Self-Esteem and Life Skills) and SEALS II.



Coping Skills for Life

Skill #7

**Social  
Support**

CS-37



People need people. Although that statement seems obvious it is only in the last few years that we have come to learn just how important others are for our well being. For example, we know that people who have a close confidant(e), friend, or spouse live longer and are healthier than those who do not! People give social support to each other in ways that are both practical and emotional.

Social support includes giving and receiving encouragement, practical help, positive feedback and rewards, understanding and caring, and role modelling.

Another aspect of social support is knowing where to go to obtain the right type of social support. People's social support network usually extends to friends, family, health care workers and co-workers. It is not the number of people you know but the quality of care and support those people provide that matters.

### Benefits Of Social Support

- Sociological studies show that as part of our involvement with others, we are more likely to engage in positive health behaviours such as exercise, medical check-ups, and health screening tests.
- In a study of older people, researchers found that having a confidant(e) significantly helped people avoid psychiatric symptoms.
- Two studies of women showed that having an intimate and confiding relationship significantly reduced the incidence of depression.
- In a study of 7000 adults, a strong correlation was shown between social involvement and length of life; it was shown to be more important to health than smoking, drinking, exercise, or diet.

CS-38

*From A Medical Perspective, Social Support Helps to:*

- Maximize our resistance to disease.
- Give us the best fighting chance if we are ill.

*From A Social Perspective, Other Benefits Emerge:*

- Friends help us feel good about ourselves; they reassure us that we belong and that it's OK to be who we are.
- Friends provide emotional support—someone to talk to about our thoughts and feelings.
- Friends help us in tangible ways—help us solve problems, give us advice.
- Assist others in attaining the same benefits.

*Sources of Social Support*

Another important aspect of social support is knowing where to go to obtain the right type of social support. This exercise is to help you identify what type of support would be helpful and to know what resources are available.

List the people you would turn to for *emotional* support:

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

List the people you would turn to for *practical* help:

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

You may notice that your social network is not only comprised of your family and relatives. People's social support network usually extends to friends, health professionals, or whoever provides you with the particular type of support that you need.

This brings us to the idea of quantity versus quality of social support. As in many instances, it is not the number of people you know but the *quality* of care and support that people provide and that we come to rely on the most.

## Risks Associated With Asking For Social Support

A common fear we all share is the risk associated with asking for support. "What is the risk involved if I ask person X to help me, or if I refuse to help?" Some of the risks involved in asking for support include the following:

- threat to self-esteem
- embarrassment
- fear of being seen as dependent on others
- possibility of rejection by others
- guilt
- possible loss of confidentiality
- lack of comfort in accepting support from others

Despite the risks associated with asking for or declining support, it is important to weigh the benefits that come from receiving the help of others. In order to weigh the pros and cons of asking for social support, you may use problem-solving to help you in your decision. The important thing to remember is that YOU alone have the control to ask for or refuse support.

## Offering Social Support to Others

Another important tool for obtaining social support is by offering support to others. By making yourself available to others, you not only meet their needs but at the same time have the company and support of another person. Social support is reciprocal; i.e., both people involved in the interchange benefit from being with each other.

## Receiving support from others

Accepting help and support can be a gift that you give. Friends and family are usually doing the best that they can.

# SUMMARY

## Skill # 7

## **Social Support**

1. People need \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Social support means help that is \_\_\_\_\_ and emotional.
3. It is not the \_\_\_\_\_ of people you know but the quality of support that matters.
4. Social support is reciprocal — that is, both people in the relationship \_\_\_\_\_.

*My notes:*



Coping Skills for Life

Skill #2

**Ways  
of  
Thinking**

CS-42

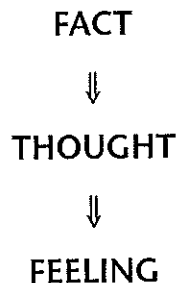
*"The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by changing their minds."*

— William James

*what kind of thinking? ... not necessarily positive, but necessarily not negative ...*

### Emotional and Thinking Ways of Coping

It is widely accepted that we function emotionally in the following way:



Most of life consist of facts over which we have little or no control. Being born with a certain colour of hair, having an accident, being transferred in your job, and getting certain diseases such as cancer are all facts that we can't control. Any fact creates a thought within us, spontaneously and seemingly without any effort on our part. From that thought comes a feeling.

Here is an example to make this concept clear.

**FACT:** A friend passes by you on the street and doesn't speak to you.

**THOUGHT:** She/he is upset at me for something.

**FEELING:** Anger or Frustration.

Note that the feeling came directly from the thought and not from the fact. We have little or no control over most of the facts in our lives but we have total control over the thoughts. The more you feel you have control in a situation, the less stress and anxiety you feel. It is usually our feelings that drive our actions. You always can have some impact and some degree of choice.

CS-43

## Practice:

Practice identifying the facts, thoughts, and feelings in your mind from time to time. Sort out one from the other. By simply identifying and labelling the facts, thoughts and feelings you can begin to change the thoughts which will change your feelings.

*Questions to ask yourself are:*

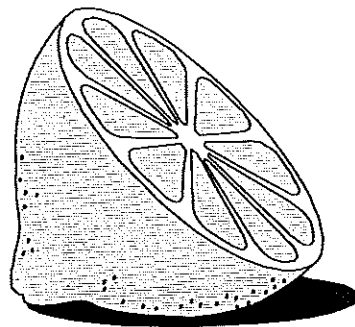
- 1) Is this a fact? Can it be changed? Do I have control over it? What thought results from this fact in my mind?
- 2) Is this a thought? If so, is it a helpful or unhelpful one to me? Can I change it?
- 3) Is this a feeling? If so, what thought did it come from? Is this a pleasant or unpleasant feeling? Do I want to change it?

Thus, a sense of personal control comes from our thoughts. This is a simple statement and it is extraordinarily powerful. It says that we have control over what and how we choose to think. The notion of choice is clear. For many of us from time to time, it is easier and less painful to believe that we have no control over our thoughts than to admit that we can take responsibility for them.

So the next step is to see if we can change our thoughts, even though we frequently do not believe that it is possible!

We do this by first understanding and accepting that although the brain is an intelligent organ, it also is very naive. It responds to whatever messages we give it whether they are true or not! Here is an example to prove that point called, "THE LEMON EXERCISE."

Changing thoughts is also called "reframing."



CS-44

## Lemon Exercise: How We Can Trick The Brain

"Close your eyes and imagine yourself in your kitchen. Find a lemon; notice the colour of it. Feel its weight in your hand, feel its size, shape and pebbly texture. Bring it to the table. Put it on a wooden cutting board, take a sharp knife and cut the lemon in half. Smell the sharpness. Now bring it up to your mouth and take a bite. What do you notice? There is no lemon but we can still feel its taste in our mouth. We can and often do trick our brain to react to things that are perceptions, by the deliberate use of thoughts."

Now refer back to the fact of the person who passed you by on the street without speaking. What different thoughts might you have about that fact? What feelings would then arise?

Here is a second example to try: "THE TRAFFIC JAM."

Imagine yourself caught in a major traffic jam that will probably make you late for work. You could choose to think: "This is terrible. I'm going to be so late — my boss will be angry." You could concentrate on frequent lane changes trying to beat the traffic and you will end up feeling increasingly distressed, anxious and angry.

You could rather choose to think of the situation as beyond your control and decide to use the enforced time to plan your day, organize your thoughts for work, enjoy the music on the radio, allowing you to feel calm, relaxed and in control.

CS-45



## Distorted Thinking

Researchers have categorized the negative thoughts (that are not helpful to us) we have about the facts in our lives and have labelled them distorted thinking. The value in labelling them is that we are then able to first, identify them and second, change them more easily into appropriate, logical and positive thoughts.

*Here is a list of illogical and distorted ways of thinking that we commonly use to our disadvantage:*

- All or nothing.
- Generalizations.
- Disqualifying the positive.
- Emotional reasoning.
- Using "should" too often.
- Personalizing events.

You have a choice! You can control the way you feel by controlling the way you think.

First you accept how you feel – emotions are neither right nor wrong. If you are aware of your illogical thinking in a non-emotional way, you will weaken your attachment to it. When you are aware of your thoughts and you are in the moment, you clear a path in your mind for your values to emerge again.

*It is important to remember...*

***Every Feeling Has a Thought Behind It.***

CS-46

A. Examples of Distorted Thinking, with the facts, thoughts and feelings that follow.

DISTORTED THINKING	FACT	THOUGHT	FEELING
I think in terms of "All-or-Nothing."	You fail an exam.	I'm a failure.	Sad
I over-generalize.	Your doctor rushes you out of his office.	All doctors care about is the number of patients.	Anger
I disqualify the positive.	A friend brings flowers.	She felt she had to.	Demeaned
I use emotional reasoning.	I'm asked to make treatment options/choices.	I'm dumb, so I can't make any right choices.	Anxious
I use the word "should" a lot.	My daughter wants me to babysit her son.	I should babysit but I made other plans.	Guilty
I personalize.	Your teenager failed his exams.	It's my fault.	Depressed

CS-47

**B. Examples of Logical and Rational Thinking and the feelings that follow.**

<b>DISTORTED THINKING</b>	<b>FACT</b>	<b>MODIFIED THOUGHT</b>	<b>MODIFIED FEELING</b>
I think in terms of "All-or-Nothing."	You fail an exam. eg.	I'll study harder.	Hopeful
I over-generalize.	Your doctor rushes you out of his office. eg.	I'll choose another doctor.	Personal control
I disqualify the positive.	A friend brings flowers. eg.	She chose to do it, regardless.	Appreciative
I use emotional reasoning.	I'm asked to make treatment options/choices. eg.	I'll get help from someone. Getting information is a smart thing.	Competent
I use the word "should" a lot.	My daughter wants me to babysit her son. eg.	I'll offer to babysit another day when I'm free.	Relieved
I personalize.	Your teenager failed his exams. eg.	He didn't study or ask for help. I'll help, but I'm not responsible.	Blameless

### What IS a positive attitude?

It's not necessarily positive, but necessarily not negative!

It is a sense of connectedness to something bigger than the self.

It is a sense of control over how we handle the events in our lives.

It is an ability to visualize a life with hope.

### Self-talk

Self-talk is another way to help modify our thoughts. Here are examples of self-talk statements for you to use. Pick a few to practice.

#### A. Preparation for Stress

I've succeeded with this before.

What exactly do I have to do?

I know I can do each one of these tasks.

It's easier once I get started.

I'll jump in and be alright.

Tomorrow I'll be through it.

I won't let negative thoughts creep in.

or \_\_\_\_\_.

#### B. Facing a Challenge

I will take it step by step, I won't rush.

I can do this, I'm doing it now.

I can only do my best.

Any tension I feel is a signal to use my coping exercises.

I can get help if I need it.

If I don't think about fear, I won't be afraid.

If I get tense, I'll take a deep breath and relax.

It's OK to make mistakes.

or \_\_\_\_\_.

**C. Coping with Fear**

Relax now !

Just breathe deeply.

There's an end to it.

Keep my mind on right now, on the task at hand.

I can keep this within limits I can handle.

I can always call \_\_\_\_\_.

I am only afraid because I decided to be. I can  
decide not to be.

I've survived this and worse before.

Being active will lessen my fear.

or: \_\_\_\_\_.

**D. Self Congratulations**

I did it!

I did alright.

I did well.

Next time I won't have to worry so much.

I am able to relax away anxiety.

I've got to tell \_\_\_\_\_ about this.

It's possible not to be scared...

All I have to do is stop thinking I'm scared.

or: \_\_\_\_\_.

**E. Affirmations**

Everyday in every way I grow stronger and stronger.

I enter this day with a peaceful heart.

or: \_\_\_\_\_.

It is important that you accept that you may not, and indeed do not have to believe in the thoughts that you substitute for the negative ones. Remember the lemon!

*Now quickly read the following:*

**OPPORTUNITY  
IS NOWHERE**

What did you read? How else can you read it?

The next 2 pages provide you with a guide to practicing the facts-thoughts-feelings way of coping.

## Exercise: Practice Identifying and Modifying Thoughts

	THOUGHTS	FEELINGS	ALTERNATIVES	
			MODIFYING THOUGHTS	MODIFIED FEELINGS
<p><i>Describe the situation:</i></p> <p>Where ?</p> <p>When ?</p> <p>Who is involved?</p>	<p><i>Describe:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your self-statements</li> <li>• Any thoughts or images that went through your mind</li> <li>• Concerns</li> <li>• Worries</li> <li>• Beliefs/Rules</li> <li>• Memories</li> <li>• Doubts</li> <li>• Meanings</li> </ul>	<p><i>Identify:</i></p> <p>Physiological sensations</p> <p>Emotional sensations (feelings)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a list of 3 other interpretations and examine each of them</li> <li>• Challenge your first impression</li> <li>• Self-talk: talk to yourself as if you were your best friend</li> <li>• How can you see this situation differently?</li> <li>• So what?</li> <li>• What resources can I use?</li> <li>• Always? No exceptions?</li> <li>• Must? Should?</li> <li>• I need to verify my hypothesis</li> <li>• Am I realistic?</li> <li>• What about nuances?</li> <li>• Bird's eye view vs worm's eye view</li> </ul>	

**Cognitive Reframing Worksheet**

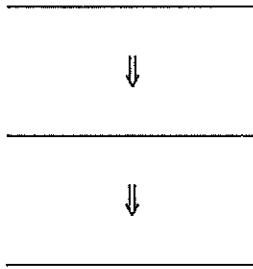
FACT	THOUGHT	FEELING	MODIFIED THOUGHT	MODIFIED FEELING
Told by doctor that I must have more chemotherapy than expected.	The chemotherapy is not working. (hopelessness)	Sad 85 %	Some people require more chemotherapy than others and my body is responding positively.	Sad 30 %



# SUMMARY

## **Skill # 2      *Ways of Thinking***

1. Facts, thoughts and feelings fit together like this:



2. The feeling comes from the \_\_\_\_\_, and not from the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. We may not have control over the \_\_\_\_\_ but we do over the \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The \_\_\_\_\_ exercise shows that we don't have to believe a thought to have it work.
5. How many times do we have to practice to learn a new skill?  
\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ times.

*My notes:*

**COPING COMPONENTS**

attitudes, patterns, goals, activities, strength, trust

**PARTS OF A TREE**

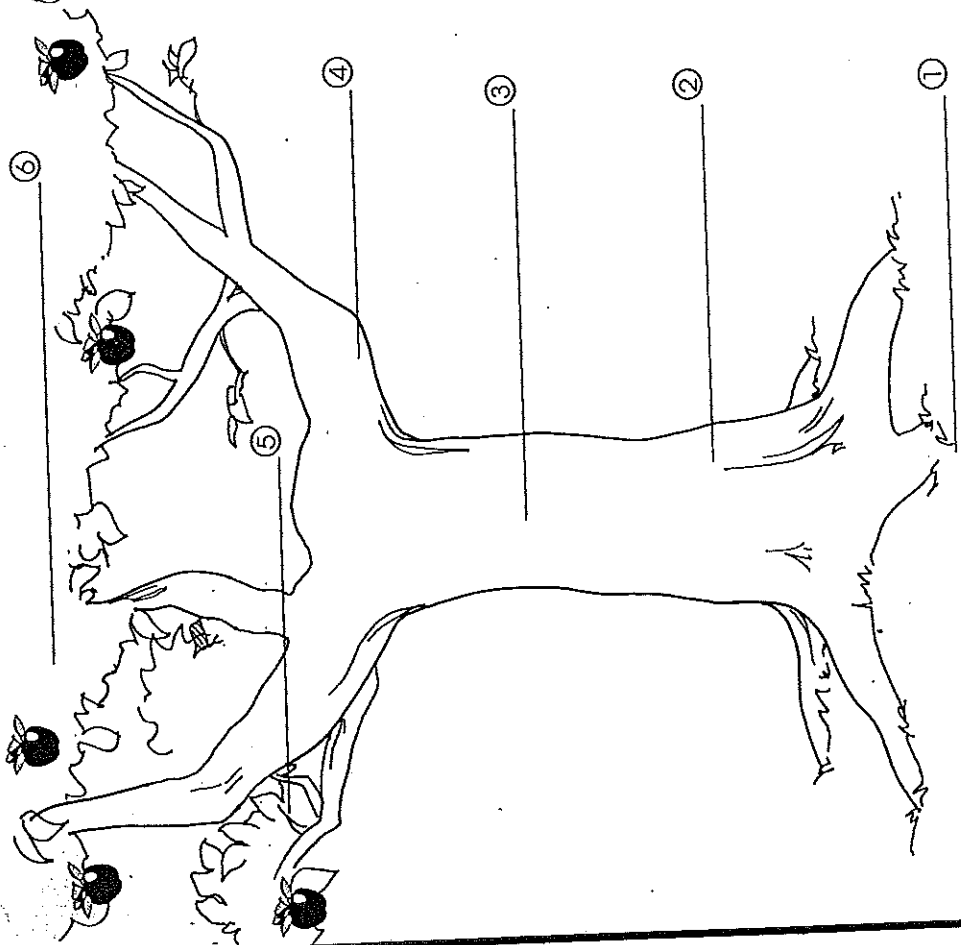
- 1. The roots .....anchor
- 2. The bark .....protection
- 3. The trunk .....support
- 4. The branches .....balance
- 5. The leaves .....lifegiving energy
- 6. The fruit .....reward

**YOUR PERSONAL COPING COMPONENTS PURPOSE**

Use Above List

- 1. Your anchor \_\_\_\_\_  
(What is keeping you "grounded"?)
- 2. Your protection \_\_\_\_\_  
(Your defense mechanisms: what works, what doesn't, what needs to be "shed"?)
- 3. Your support \_\_\_\_\_  
(Who gives you help/caring, encouragement?)
- 4. Your balance \_\_\_\_\_  
(How do you take care of yourself?)
- 5. Your source of energy \_\_\_\_\_  
(What keeps you going, gives you hope, lifts your spirit?)
- 6. Your reward \_\_\_\_\_  
(What do you want for yourself?)

# Coping tree



# coping tree

## I. PURPOSE:

To expand coping skills' repertoire by identifying specific coping components.

## II. GENERAL COMMENTS:

A familiar and universal form of a tree can be used as a metaphor. There are basically six parts of a tree; the root, bark, trunk, branches, leaves and fruit. Each part can be compared to six corresponding coping components; attitudes, patterns, goals, activities, trust and inner strength.

## III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES: It is recommended that this page be used in conjunction with COPING COSTS AND BENEFITS, page 2.

- A.
1. Draw a large, simple image of a tree (as outlined in the handout) including representative roots, trunk, branches, etc., on a wipe-off board or flip chart.
  2. Provide impetus for discussion by asking students to review information that they already know about trees. Possible answers might include: largest plant, home for animals, gives food to other animals and humans, provides shade, fuel, oxygen. Our world would be incomplete without them.
  3. Instruct the class to be specific in identifying each part of the tree along with the functions of a tree in terms of how important and inter-related each part is. Instruct the class to explain what would happen to the tree if any part of it were missing, not working or was damaged.
  4. Distribute handouts. Instruct students to label parts of tree in diagram, reviewing functions of each part.
  5. Explain to the class that for this exercise, each part of the tree has a corresponding relation to a different coping skill.
  6. Ask students to match the six questions regarding their personal coping trees with the six words in the box labeled "Coping Components." Instruct students to write the corresponding term on blank paper.
    - a. Which term from the box is your anchor that keeps you in one place emotionally? Possible response: Attitude (beliefs, thoughts about self)
    - b. Which term from the box represents what you use for protection when attitudes, thoughts, beliefs are being challenged or questioned? Possible response: Patterns (defense mechanisms/coping strategies)
    - c. Which term from the box represents who can you count on for support? Possible response: trust (support system)
    - d. Which term from the box represents how you take care of yourself in terms of managing your time/reducing undue stress? Possible response: activities
    - e. Which term from the box represents your energy source, what keeps you going, what gives you hope? Possible responses: Inner strength. (Self-awareness)
    - f. Which term from the box represents your reason/payoff, what you want for your life? Possible response: goals, (desires)
  7. Generate a discussion on the inter-relation of each coping skill or the value and importance of expanding coping skills.
  8. Process by asking students to complete an inventory of their personal coping tree by answering questions in last section labeled "Purpose."
  9. Suggested supplementary activity: Book talk using The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein.
- B.
1. Draw a large, simple image of a tree (as outlined in the handout) including representative roots, trunk, bark, branches, etc., on a wipe-off board or flip chart.
  2. Supplement with focus on separate coping skills utilizing SEALS+PLUS, SEALS II, and SEALS III handouts.
 

Attitude	- "Positive Mental Attitude"	SEALS II	- page 14
Support	- "No One is an Is-land"	SEALS+PLUS	- page 63
Protection	- "Coping Costs and Benefits"	SEALS III	- page 2
Balance	- "Balance Your Life"	SEALS+PLUS	- page 69
Activities	- "Leisure Scavenger Hunt"	SEALS II	- page 27
Inner Strength	- "Inner Voice"	SEALS II	- page 79
  3. Process with discussion of importance and challenges of specific coping skill development.

Activity handout and facilitator's information originally submitted for Life Management Skills V by Mark S. Macko, LMHC, CRC, Sarasota, FL. Mark is a program therapist and chief clinician at a mature adult counseling center of a hospital. He has a part time private practice with emphasis on depression, grief and aging issues. Mark writes songs and poems, plays 12-string guitar and is a former graphic artist.

Adapted for SEALS III from LMS V by Elaine Hyla Sea, M.Ed., Euclid, OH,  
 adaptor of SEALS+PLUS (Self-Esteem and Life Skills) and SEALS II.

### How can you prevent stress?

Putting energy into preventing stress can pay off. If you eliminate some of the avoidable stress in your life, it frees you up to enjoy yourself more and to accomplish more of your goals.

Most people find it helpful to be familiar with a variety of prevention strategies, like the ones described below and listed in the "Strategies for Preventing Stress Checklist." Choose the strategies that best suit you.

#### Be aware of situations that caused stress in the past.

If you found a situation stressful before, it will probably cause problems again. Knowing that a situation has been stressful will allow you to think of different ways to handle it so it won't be as stressful. For example, if you notice that you become irritable whenever you catch the bus at rush hour, try catching it at a less busy time. Or try practicing deep breathing if you become tense on a crowded bus.

If large holiday gatherings with your extended family make you feel tense, try taking short breaks away from the larger group. Or try getting together with family members at times other than holidays, in smaller groups.

Schedule meaningful, enjoyable activities. Having activities that you enjoy makes a significant difference in reducing stress. For some people, their work is meaningful and enjoyable. Other people look to volunteering, hobbies, music, sports

or art for meaning and enjoyment. It all depends on what the individual finds most meaningful.

Schedule time for relaxation. It's important to take time to relax each day, to refresh your mind and body from the tensions of the day. Some people find exercise relaxing, while others find reading or doing a puzzle or some other activity to be relaxing.

Have balance in your daily life. Being active and involved is important to keeping stress low. However, too much activity can lead to stress. It's important to leave time for sleep and for restful, relaxing activities, such as a reading or taking a walk.

Develop a support system. Seek out people who are encouraging and supportive, rather than critical and pressuring. It's very helpful to have relationships with people you feel comfortable with. Common support systems include, friends, family members, peer support, professionals and members of one's religious or spiritual group. See the handout "Building Social Supports" for more information on this subject.

Take care of your health. Eating well, getting enough sleep, exercising regularly, and avoiding alcohol or drug abuse helps prevent stress. These healthy habits are not easy to maintain, but they really pay off.

Talk about your feelings or write them down in a journal. Holding in your feelings can be very stressful. It helps to have an outlet for your feelings so that you don't keep them bottled up. These may be positive feelings, like being excited about a new

job or negative feelings, such as being angry at how someone else has behaved. Having someone to talk to, such as a family member, friend, or professional, can help. Or you might find it helpful to keep a journal of your thoughts and feelings.

Avoid being hard on yourself. Some people increase their stress by being critical of themselves and what they are accomplishing. Try to be reasonable about what you expect from yourself, and give yourself credit for your talents and strengths. It can be helpful to identify some positive features about yourself and remind yourself of these features when you are feeling negatively about yourself.

## Strategies for Preventing Stress Checklist

Strategy	I already use this strategy	I would like to try this strategy or develop it further
Be aware of situations that caused stress in the past		
Schedule meaningful activities		
Schedule time for relaxation		
Have a balance in my daily life		
Develop my support system		
Take care of my health		
Talk about my feelings		
Write down my feelings in a journal		
Avoid being hard on myself. Identify positive features about myself		
Other:		

0059

*You can avoid stress by using strategies such as scheduling enjoyable activities and developing a support system.*

Question: Which prevention strategies would be most helpful to you?



## **Appendix: Relaxation Techniques**

Three types of relaxation techniques are described below:

- Relaxed breathing
- Muscle relaxation
- Imagining a peaceful scene

Relaxation techniques are most effective when they are practiced on a regular basis. When you are first learning a technique, you usually concentrate on doing the steps according to the instructions. As you become familiar with the instructions, you will be able to concentrate more on the relaxation you are experiencing. Choose one of the following techniques and try practicing it daily. After a week, evaluate whether you think the technique is effective for you.

## **Relaxed Breathing**

The goal of this exercise is to slow down your breathing, especially your exhaling.

### **Steps:**

- Choose a word that you associate with relaxation, such as CALM or RELAX or PEACEFUL.
- Inhale through your nose and exhale slowly through your mouth. Take normal breaths, not deep ones.
- While you exhale, say the relaxing word you have chosen. Say it very slowly, like this, “c-a-a-a-a-a-a-l-m” or “r-e-e-e-l-a-a-a-x.”
- Pause after exhaling before taking your next breath. If it’s not too distracting, count to four before inhaling each new breath.
- Repeat the entire sequence 10 to 15 times.

## Muscle relaxation

The goal of this technique is to gently stretch your muscles to reduce stiffness and tension. The exercises start at your head and work down to your feet. You can do these exercises while sitting in a chair.

### Steps:

- Shoulder shrugs. Lift both shoulders in a shrugging motion. Try to touch your ears with your shoulders. Let your shoulders drop down after each shrug. Repeat 3-5 times.
- Overhead arm stretches\*. Raise both arms straight above your head. Interlace your fingers, like you're making a basket, with your palms facing down (towards the floor). Stretch your arms towards the ceiling. Then, keeping your fingers interlaced, rotate your palms to face upwards (towards the ceiling). Stretch towards the ceiling. Repeat 3-5 times.
- Stomach tension. Pull your stomach muscles toward your back as tight as you can tolerate. Feel the tension and hold on to it for ten seconds. Then let go of the muscles and let your stomach relax, further and further. Then focus on the release from the tension. Notice the heavy yet comfortable sensation in your stomach.
- Knee raises. Reach down and grab your right knee with one or both hands. Pull your knee up towards your chest (as close to your chest as is comfortable). Hold your knee there for a few seconds, before returning your foot to the floor.

Reach down and grab your left knee with one or both hands and bring it up towards your chest. Hold it there for a few seconds. Repeat the sequence 3-5 times.

- Foot and ankle rolls. Lift your feet and stretch your legs out. Rotate your ankles and feet, 3-5 times in one direction, then 3-5 times in the other direction.

\*If it is not comfortable to do step #2 with your arms overhead, try it with your arms reaching out in front of you.

## Imagining a peaceful scene

The goal of this technique is to “take yourself away” from stress and picture yourself in a more relaxed, calm situation.

### Steps:

1. Choose a scene that you find peaceful, calm and restful. If you have trouble thinking of a scene, consider the following:
  - at the beach
  - on a walk in the woods
  - on a park bench
  - on a mountain path
  - in a canoe or sailboat
  - in a meadow
  - traveling on a train
  - in a cabin
  - beside a river
  - next to a waterfall
  - in a high rise apartment overlooking a large city
  - riding a bicycle
  - on a farm
2. After choosing a peaceful scene, imagine as many details as possible, using all your senses.
3. What does the scene look like? What are the colors? Is it light or dark? What shapes are in the scene? If it's a nature scene, what kinds of trees or flowers do you see? What animals? If it's a city scene, what kind of buildings? What kind of vehicles?

4. What sounds are in your peaceful scene?  
Can you hear water or the sounds of waves?  
Are there sounds from animals or birds?  
From the breeze? From people?
5. What could you feel with your sense of touch? Are there textures? Is it cool or warm? Can you feel a breeze?
6. What smells are there in your peaceful scene?  
Could you smell flowers? The smell of the ocean? The smell of food cooking?
7. Disregard any stressful thoughts and keep your attention on the peaceful scene.
8. Allow at least five minutes for this relaxation technique.

# figure



Sometimes, it's hard to know when we are on the path to wellness . . . what is actually helping? Does a certain activity really work? How much? Should I continue using it . . . or should I stop?

One way to monitor possible progress is to keep a record before and after each activity. Generally it is recommended to try all symptom management techniques for 3 - 4 weeks.

Record your "BEFORE" and "AFTER" responses below.

**0-10 scale:** 0 = lousy  10 = great!

Date   /  /   Before I \_\_\_\_\_, I feel \_\_\_\_\_. After, I felt \_\_\_\_\_.

Date   /  /   Before I \_\_\_\_\_, I feel \_\_\_\_\_. After, I felt \_\_\_\_\_.

Date   /  /   Before I \_\_\_\_\_, I feel \_\_\_\_\_. After, I felt \_\_\_\_\_.

Date   /  /   Before I \_\_\_\_\_, I feel \_\_\_\_\_. After, I felt \_\_\_\_\_.

Date   /  /   Before I \_\_\_\_\_, I feel \_\_\_\_\_. After, I felt \_\_\_\_\_.

Date   /  /   Before I \_\_\_\_\_, I feel \_\_\_\_\_. After, I felt \_\_\_\_\_.

Date   /  /   Before I \_\_\_\_\_, I feel \_\_\_\_\_. After, I felt \_\_\_\_\_.

Date   /  /   Before I \_\_\_\_\_, I feel \_\_\_\_\_. After, I felt \_\_\_\_\_.

Date   /  /   Before I \_\_\_\_\_, I feel \_\_\_\_\_. After, I felt \_\_\_\_\_.

Date   /  /   Before I \_\_\_\_\_, I feel \_\_\_\_\_. After, I felt \_\_\_\_\_.

CS 107

# figure it out!

## I. PURPOSE:

To assist in developing an awareness of successful relapse prevention strategies.

## II. GENERAL COMMENTS:

Different relapse prevention tools work for different people. It is oftentimes difficult when trying one or more techniques, methods or tools, to determine how beneficial a specific activity is or is not. At times, nothing feels like it is working, but in more careful analysis, small increments of improvement may be happening. Or perhaps it's time to try something new and avoid possible frustration for all involved!

## III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

A. 1. Develop list of possible relapse prevention strategies with class. These may include...

- relaxation/guided imagery
- music
- hobbies
- art
- taking medications
- exercise
- spending time outdoors
- leisure/recreation
- meditation/prayer
- crafts
- dancing
- going to counseling
- \* assertiveness
- journalizing
- setting goals
- time alone
- eating right/sleeping well
- etc.

2. Explain to class that all strategies may be beneficial to certain people, but most likely, not all will be successful for everyone. A good way to determine effectiveness is trial periods of 3-4 weeks. This is a general rule and needs to be adapted for certain individuals. Obviously, if someone has an uncomfortable reaction in a guided imagery exercise, s/he does not need to try it daily for 3 weeks! An alternate activity may be explored.

3. Distribute handouts and explain concepts offering examples of how to complete. Use the following example or one of your own: Let's say I try exercise, walking 1 mile per day. Before the 1-mile walk, I feel like a '4' out of '10' (1-lousy, 10-great). I'm feeling lethargic, focusing on little things that bother/hurt me. After the 1-mile walk, I feel like a '6', slightly more energetic and less irritated. I record similar results 3 times/week for 3 weeks, and I see that the rating consistently went up 2 to 3 points. I figure I'll keep walking 3 times per week (maybe even more). Ask the group to develop a hypothetical scenario when a strategy was not as favorable.

4. Utilize the handout by doing a 20-minute relapse prevention tool that may be helpful for this particular class. Ask each student to complete the first two sections in the box: "Date and Before...". Encourage students to consider "I feel" in all realms-emotionally, physically, spiritually, etc.

5. After the activity, instruct students to complete the last section, "After..." and discuss.

6. Discuss the benefits of carefully analyzing which relapse prevention tools work and which ones do not.

B. 1. Distribute handouts, explain concepts and offer real or hypothetical examples to illustrate.

2. Allow each student to choose an activity that could reasonably be done in class, that each feels may be helpful in, managing their symptoms, etc. Each class member can be doing a completely different activity. Before beginning activities, instruct students to complete the first two sections of the handout, "Date and Before...".

3. Give each group member 20 minutes to complete the activity.

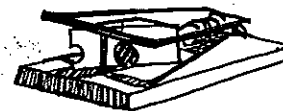
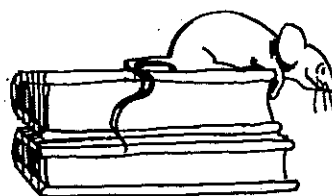
4. Reconvene after the 20 minutes, and complete the "After..." section of the handout.

5. Develop relapse prevention plans with each individual of 2-3 tools/activities that s/he is committed to trying for 3-4 weeks and record those on handout.

6. Meet one time/week for 3-4 months, calling this group "Figure-it-out." Monitor students' progress and discuss updates.

7. Make changes to plans according to findings, encouraging students to be persistent, even vigilant in determining which relapse prevention tools work and which do not.





**DON'T FALL IN THE TRAP.....**

**ASK – DON'T ASSUME!**

You have the **right** to ask questions!!

SITUATION	YOUR ASSUMPTION	YOU ASK	POSSIBLE RESPONSE(S)
<i>Friends were supposed to meet you at 6 o'clock but they arrive an hour late.</i>	1. They got in a car accident. 2. They stood me up. 3. They ran out of gas.	Why were you late?	1. We had a flat tire. 2. We got lost. 3. We <u>said</u> we'd be here at 7 o'clock.
<i>You asked to borrow the car for Saturday night and your parent says NO!</i>			
<i>A police car pulls you over and stops you!</i>			
<i>You leave your teenagers home alone for the evening. When you walk in, you smell cigarette smoke!</i>			



DON'T FALL IN THE TRAP.....

## ASK – DON'T ASSUME!

### PURPOSE:

To increase assertive skills by encouraging "asking" and discouraging "assuming."

### GENERAL COMMENTS:

The trap of ASSUMING and not ASKING frequently gets people into uncomfortable situations. Often, incorrect assumptions are made. ASKING requires thought, time, and practice and will result in increased assertiveness.

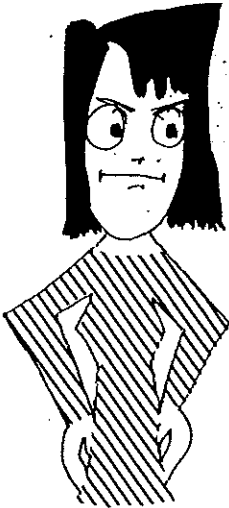
### I. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

- A.
  1. Use the example provided to explain the concept.
  2. Encourage the group members to fill in the blank boxes.
  3. Encourage role-playing for the remaining situations.
  4. Process the right to ask questions and possible benefits.
- B.
  1. Divide the group into teams of 3 members. Member #1 writes reply in "Your Assumption" column and passes it to member #2 who writes reply in "You ask" column and passes it to member #3 who writes reply in "Possible Responses" column.
  2. Instruct members to rejoin the entire group.
  3. Encourage each team to share one or two favorites.

# Aggressive • **ASSERTIVE** • Passive

Meet

**AGNES AGGRESSIVE:**

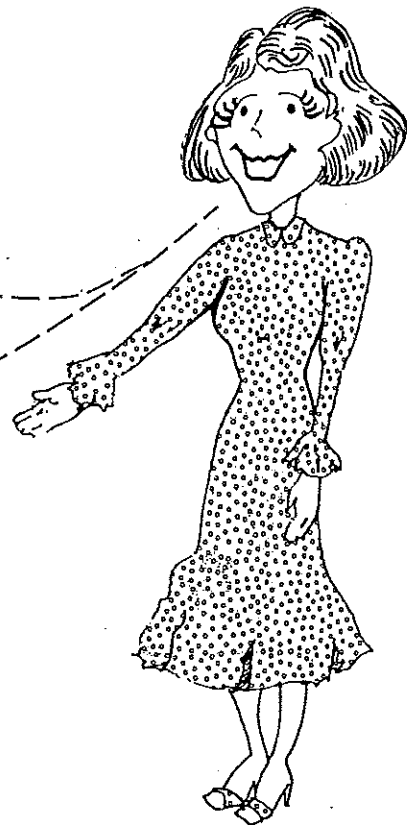


I'm loud, bossy and pushy.  
I dominate and intimidate people.  
I violate other's rights.  
I "get my way" at anyone's expense.  
I "step" on people.  
I react instantly.

Meet

**ALICE ASSERTIVE:**

I'm firm, direct and honest.  
I respect the rights of others and recognize the importance of having my needs and rights respected. I speak clearly and to the point.  
I'm confident about who I am.  
I realize I have choices about my life.



Meet

**PATSY PASSIVE:**



I'm unable to speak up for my rights.  
(I don't even know what my rights are!)  
I get "stepped on" often.  
I'm meek, mild-mannered and very accommodating.

Aggressive • **ASSERTIVE** • Passive

PURPOSE:

- To recognize these three types of communication styles.
- To increase awareness of the advantages of being assertive.
- To recognize how these styles present themselves in women.

I. GENERAL COMMENTS:

This is an overview of the three basic communication styles, including nonverbal communications, view of rights, and implications of these behaviors. Communication is most effective when assertive.

III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

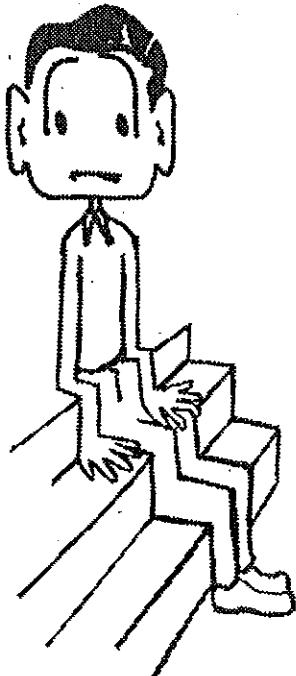
- A. Pursue discussion of the socialized role of women to be passive from childhood to adolescence to adulthood, and the consequences. (This is a particularly good handout for a women's group.)
- B. This activity is designed to be used in conjunction with page 3 when both men and women are in the group. Divide group into 2 teams.
  1. Instruct volunteers from team #1 to role-play one style and team #2 to guess which style was being presented.
  2. The teams can repeat the process with team #2 role-playing and team #1 guessing.
  3. Continue alternating.

# PASSIVE

Hi... I'm

**PETEY PASSIVE.**

I talk softly  
and give  
"cold-fish"  
handshakes.  
I don't  
stand up  
for my rights.  
I tend to  
avoid conflicts  
and  
disagreements.  
People take  
advantage  
of me!  
I have trouble  
saying "no,"  
and then I'm  
angry  
and  
resentful.

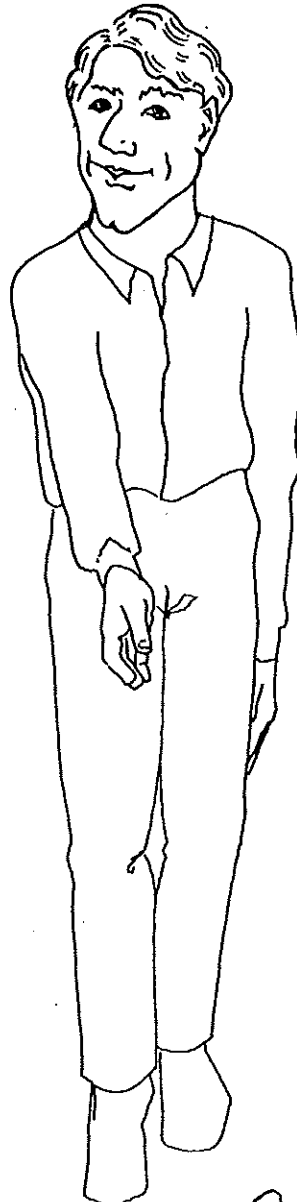


# ASSERTIVE

Hello! I'm

**ALEXANDER ASSERTIVE.**

I am an effective communicator,  
able to express my needs and  
thoughts. I'm honest, direct and  
confident. I make good eye-contact  
and speak with a firm voice!

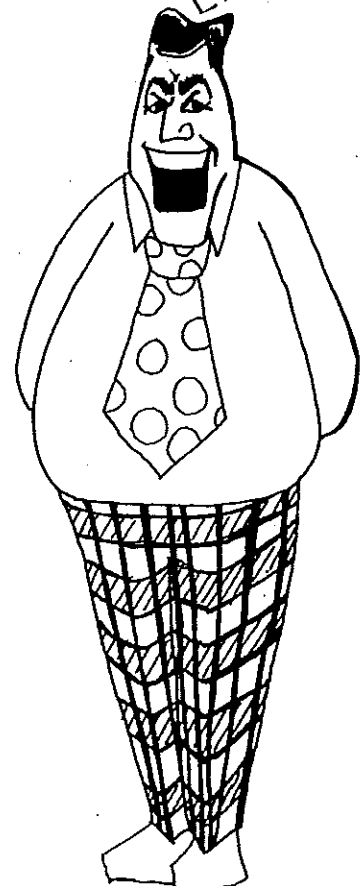


# AGGRESSIVE

**YEAH!  
ATTILA  
AGGRESSIVE**

here!

I OFTEN VIOLATE  
OTHERS BY USING  
MY POWER,  
POSITION  
AND LANGUAGE.  
I ALWAYS GET  
MY WAY, EVEN IF I  
NEED TO STEP ON  
PEOPLE TO GET THERE.  
I SPEAK IN A LOUD  
VOICE AND DON'T CARE  
WHERE OR WHEN I  
"BLAST" SOMEONE!  
I CAN BE ABUSIVE. I  
GIVE VICE-LIKE  
HANDSHAKES. I LIKE  
TO GET EVEN!



PASSIVE

ASSERTIVE

AGGRESSIVE

I. PURPOSE:

- To recognize these three types of communication styles.
- To increase awareness of the advantages of being assertive.
- To recognize how these styles present themselves in men.

II. GENERAL COMMENTS:

This is an overview of the three basic communication styles, including nonverbal communications, view of rights, and implications of these behaviors. Communication is most effective when assertive.

III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

- A. Pursue discussion of the socialized role of men to be aggressive from childhood to adolescence to adulthood, and the consequences. (This is a particularly good handout for a men's group.)
- B. This activity is designed to be used in conjunction with page 2 when both men and women are in the group. Facilitate role-playing of the 3 communication styles using the following examples:
  1. A friend needs to borrow \$100.
  2. You want a raise.
  3. Your spouse has been away from home too much.
  4. You're waiting at a restaurant for a half-hour and no one is helping you.

# SAYING "NO"

## YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO SAY NO!

DO YOU HAVE TROUBLE SAYING "NO" TO....

- \_\_\_ A. your mother? (e.g., who continuously needs rides to the doctor/pharmacy/beauty salon) \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ B. door to door people? (e.g., Girl Scouts selling cookies/salespeople/fundraisers/religious enthusiasts/charity solicitors) \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ C. a friend? (e.g., who wants you to use drugs/alcohol with him or her/wants to borrow money) \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ D. a neighbor? (e.g., who wants you to watch her five children "just for an hour") \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ E. your children? (e.g., who want... new toys/more allowance/the car) \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ F. a fellow worker? (e.g., asks you to help him fix his car/go shopping with her/contribute for a gift) \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ G. your spouse? (e.g., who wants to buy his or her "dream car" which you feel is too much money at this time) \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ H. your boss? (e.g., asking you to stay late) \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ I. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ J. \_\_\_\_\_

### GUIDELINES TO SAYING "NO":

Be honest, open and direct.

Don't make excuses.

By saying "no" you're gaining self-respect.

### EXAMPLE FORMATS...

No, I am unable to do that today. Maybe you can...

No... to be honest. I don't want to...

## SAYING "NO"

### I. PURPOSE:

To increase assertiveness by recognizing certain situations in which it is difficult to say "no," and rehearsing and listening to "no" in an assertive style.

### II. GENERAL COMMENTS:

A nonassertive communication style often results in a reluctant "yes," a mixed message, and/or a hostile "no."

### III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

- A.
  1. Instruct group members to read the situations and rank them from easy to difficult (1-9).
  2. Discuss.
  3. Review guidelines and example formats.
  4. Role-play.
- B.
  1. Review handout.
  2. Distribute strips of paper and have members write personal examples in which they have difficulty saying "no." Put in "hat."
  3. Ask members to choose one and role-play.





Coping Skills for Life

Skill #6

# **Communication**

CS-72

Here is a quote that sums up the importance of communication in our lives.

*I see Communication as a huge umbrella that covers and affects all that goes on between human beings. Once a human being arrives on earth, communication is the largest single factor determining what kinds of relationships he/she makes with others and what happens to him/her in the world.*

— Virginia Satir

Did you know that Communication is:

- 7 % Verbal
- 35 % Facial Expression
- 35 % Body Language
- 23 % Tone Of Voice

Communication is simply the sending and receiving of messages, intentional and unintentional, verbal and nonverbal. Being able to communicate well is a skill that most of us have not learned about and yet it is an essential part of good coping. It affects our feelings and our health. In dealing with cancer, it can affect the treatment we receive and our quality of life. No wonder then that communication is basic to every human relationship.

## **Tools For Successful Communication**

- 1. Being Committed**
  - Wanting to develop a clear and healthy relationship.
- 2. Allowing Growth**
  - Realizing that every relationship is changing and growing.
- 3. Feeling Equal In The Relationship**
  - Feeling as if you share a common goal, with equal responsibility and authority.

## Assertive Communication

Another step to good communication involves knowing how to be assertive. There is a clear difference between being assertive and being aggressive. Assertive communication is expressing yourself — your needs, your feelings, perspectives — in a manner which is clear, direct and neither threatening nor attacking.

### *Basic rights*

- Your feelings are legitimate.
- You have the right to ask questions, state feelings.
- It is OK to negotiate for change.
- It is your right to set boundaries, to say "no."
- You know better than anyone what you think, feel, and want.

## About anger

There is always another feeling behind anger. An old proverb says that if you can be patient in one moment of anger, you will escape 100 days of sorrow. Anger is an off-the-mark judgment that affects everyone around in a negative way. When you are angry count to 10; when you are very angry, count to 100. Compare being angry to being assertive.

Here is a specific technique for good communication in a situation where the other person is disagreeing with you — it may be a child, a spouse, a nurse or doctor, etc.... It works !

- Step 1.** Listen and find some truth in what the other person is saying.
- Step 2.** Listen and put yourself in the other person's shoes and try to see the world through his or her eyes.
- Step 3.** Listen and ask gentle, probing questions to learn more about what the other person is thinking and feeling.
- Step 4.** Find something positive to say to the other person.
- Step 5.** Express your feelings with "I" statements.
- Step 6.** Real listening is active listening – not waiting to talk.

*Note how important listening is and how often it is used.*

The most important step in good communication is being able to use "I" statements.

"I" messages have 3 parts:

- I think.
- I feel.
- I want.

"I" Messages Are Used To:

- A. Disclose thoughts, feelings and wants.
- B. Assert self: say yes/no.
- C. Prevent disappointment in the future.

"I" messages are a healthy way, as Shakespeare wrote, "to give sorrow words."

On the next page is an example of how you can turn a message into an "I message" that communicates how you think, and feel and what you want.

Try to avoid blaming others. Try not to use "you" messages.

### A. Disclosing thoughts, feelings, wants

eg: "I am frustrated when I trip over school bags in the entrance hall..."

"I need help carrying in the..."

"I want to have 10 minutes to myself before..."

*Exercise: Using "I" messages*

SITUATION	"YOU MESSAGE"	"I MESSAGE"
	Blame	Ownership
Your mother calls everyday to ask you how you are doing.	"You are driving me crazy, — stop asking how I feel."	"Mom, I feel frustrated having to report about my health everyday. I'm really trying to live a normal life."

*Fill in an example of your own here:*

SITUATION <i>example</i>	"YOU MESSAGE" <i>example</i>	"I MESSAGE" <i>example</i>

The scenarios with "I" messages let us avoid problems by telling others what our needs are, and how others can best help. You will notice that the message is given in a clear and non-threatening way.

## B. Asserting self: yes/no

How many people say "yes" when they really want to say "no"?  
What is our "yes" worth if we never say "no"?

### Making And Refusing Requests

When making requests be clear, specific and factual. In order to appear confident, expect your requests to be accepted. Avoid long apologetic statements...  
"Do you suppose... Kind of... Maybe... Perhaps..."

### Saying "No"

**Brevity is crucial.** Be as brief as possible, i.e. give a legitimate reason for your refusal, "I don't have the time". Avoid long elaborate explanations, justifications.

**Actually say the word "no" when declining.** The word "no" has more power and is less ambiguous than "well, I just don't think so..." ,  
"I really can't just now..." etc.

**Broken record technique.** Repetition and persistence may be necessary. You may have to decline several times before the person "hears" you. It's not necessary to come up with a new explanation each time; you can use your original reason over and over again.

**Shake your head when saying "no".** Often people unknowingly nod their heads and smile when they are attempting to decline or refuse ... this is a double message. Make sure your non-verbal gestures mirror your verbal messages.

**Limit the words "I'm sorry" when saying "no".** Try to be conscious about using this phrase to excuse your refusal or to otherwise weaken your credibility. (Habitual use of this phrase can be distracting to your real intent.)

**Buy time for yourself.** Say, "let me get back to you on that," or "I'll think about it."

#### *Practice:*

Turn to your neighbour or friend and practice declining:

- an invitation to dinner
- being on a committee
- buying something

C. Preventive I messages: to prevent disappointment in the future

"I am going out tonight and do not want to find dirty dishes in the sink when I return."

"I would be so happy to celebrate my birthday next Wednesday by going out to dinner."

"I would really appreciate getting an early morning phone call on Mother's Day."

## Family Communication

How families function is important to health and coping. Good communication is one of the best ways to have a family that functions well.

What is important to you and your family?

---

---

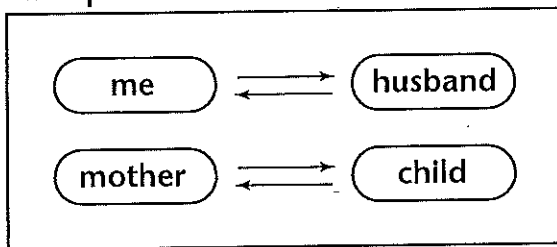
What are your strengths as a family?

---

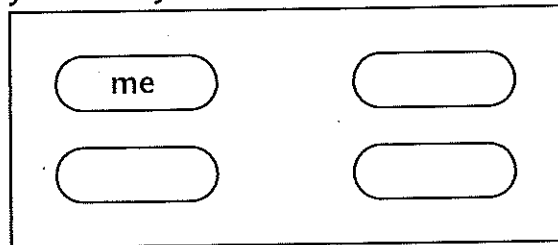
---

How do you communicate with each other?  
Read the example, then complete your own diagram.

example:



your family:



"me" and my husband talk freely to each other. I don't communicate as easily with my mother or my child, but there is good communication between the two of them.

Who in your family is most supportive to you?

---

---

Family functioning is determined by three factors:

- how cohesive or "together" the members of the family feel, and how they support each other.
- how members can express what they feel and think.
- how problems are talked about together and solved.

Good family communication is an important part of good coping.

*Practice your communication skills at home too!*



## Doctor-Patient Communication

Remember to use the strategies in this section in the important relationship between your doctor and you !!! Here are more tips;

1. Write down a few questions or make a list of what you want to talk about. This can be your "prompt sheet."
2. Let the doctor know what is most important to you. He/she needs to know to help him/her choose the best treatments with you.
3. Ask a friend or family member to be with you to take notes.
4. Ask your most important questions first.
5. If you don't understand, ask your doctor to repeat in a way that is clearer to you.
6. Take a small tape recorder with you and tell your doctor you would like to record the visit to help you remember.
7. Regard your doctor as your ally and partner.

*Following are some assertive rights which we have:*

## Assertive Bill Of Rights

*I have the right...*

To be responsible for my own life.

To accept and respect myself and others.

To feel happy, satisfied, and to allow inner peace.

To take good care of my whole being; my body, my mind and my spirit.

To be imperfect.

To be aware of and to fulfill my own needs.

To have dreams, goals and ideals... and to make them happen.

To have and to express all my emotions.

To tell others how I want to be treated.

To allow people to help me without feeling guilty, unworthy or dependent.

To set my own priorities about my use of time, money, space and energy.

To get what I pay for.

To have healthy, life-enhancing relationships, where clear communication is valued and to make conscious decisions to change relationships.

To change, emerge, expand in new directions.

To have my own beliefs, ideas, values without apology to anyone.

To live in the present moment, free of guilt about the past and worry about the future.

To relax, to let go... and "DO NOTHING."

...and to remember that when I accept these as my rights,  
I also accept them as rights of others!

*Adapted from POSITIVE ALTERNATIVES  
123 Queen St. West, Brampton, Ontario, L6Y 1M3*

# SUMMARY

## Skill # 6 **Communication Skills**

1. "I" messages start with "I" \_\_\_\_\_, or "I" \_\_\_\_\_, or "I" \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Being assertive means \_\_\_\_\_ yourself in a clear, non-aggressive way.
3. Two tips to use when visiting your doctor are:
  - \* Write down a few \_\_\_\_\_ before your visit  
and \_\_\_\_\_ them with you.
  - \* Let the doctor know what is most \_\_\_\_\_ to you.

*My notes:*

# DIRECTIONS

The question has always arisen about why people react differently to stressful events. Some people are able to stay relatively stress-free during periods of a lot of personal change. This ability is referred to as resiliency. Resiliency is a pattern of qualities that determine who will succeed in surviving change and stress without illness. The Resilient Personality Inventory is designed to help you identify how hardy you are in times of transition.

This booklet contains 32 statements that are divided into four sections. Read each statement and decide how close the statement is with your beliefs about yourself and about the world.

Circle 3 if the statement is - A Lot Like My Beliefs

Circle 2 if the statement is - A Little Like My Beliefs

Circle 1 if the statement is - Not Like My Beliefs

3 = A Lot Like My Beliefs

2 = A Little Like My Beliefs

1 = Not Like My Beliefs

It is natural for things to change

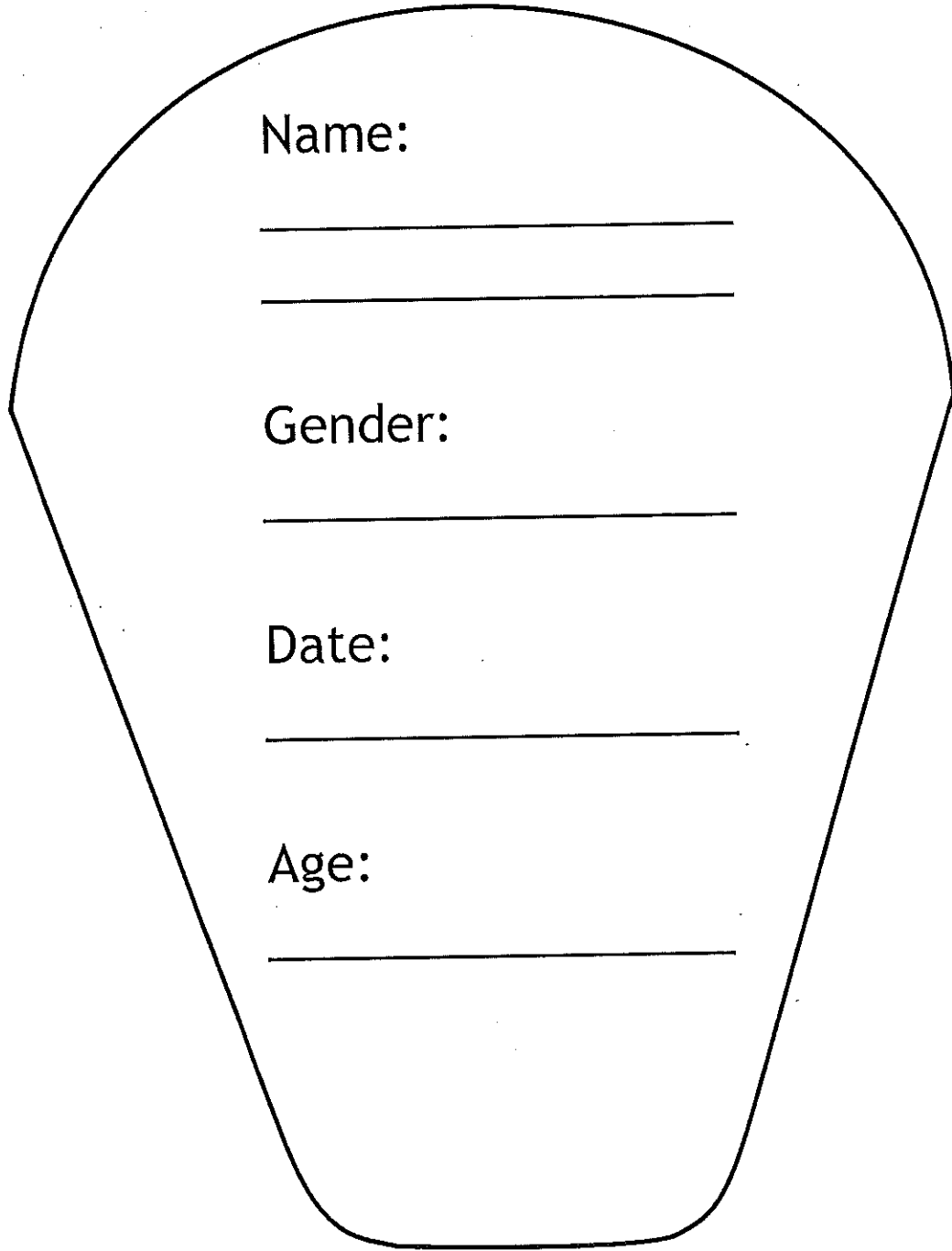
3 (2) 1

In the above statement, the circled 2 means that the statement is a little like the beliefs of the test taker. Ignore the TOTAL lines below each section. They are for scoring purposes and will be used later.

This is not a test. Since there are no right or wrong answers, do not spend too much time thinking about your answers. Be sure to respond to every statement.

Turn to the next page and begin.

# RESILIENT PERSONALITY INVENTORY



Name:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Gender:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Age:  
\_\_\_\_\_

CS-84

# RESILIENCY PERSONALITY INVENTORY

3 = A Lot Like My Beliefs      2 = A Little Like My Beliefs      1 = Not Like My Beliefs

I. CHALLENGE			
It is natural for things to change.	3	2	1
Change is an opportunity for creativity.	3	2	1
I thrive under conditions of difficulty and adversity.	3	2	1
I can turn change into opportunity.	3	2	1
I am able to rise to the occasion in stressful situations.	3	2	1
I view stress as lessons to learn in life.	3	2	1
Stressful events are necessary for personal growth.	3	2	1
I view problems as challenges.	3	2	1
			TOTAL = _____

II. COMMITMENT			
I find it easy to be contented in what I am doing.	3	2	1
I do what I love and love what I do.	3	2	1
I am rarely at a loss for things to do.	3	2	1
I am committed to my friends and family.	3	2	1
I always make maximum effort.	3	2	1
I am committed to life and to my interests.	3	2	1
I work because I enjoy it rather than feeling compelled.	3	2	1
I am committed to being successful at all I do.	3	2	1
			TOTAL = _____

**Go on to the next page.**

CS-84

# RESILIENCY PERSONALITY INVENTORY

3 = A Lot Like My Beliefs      2 = A Little Like My Beliefs      1 = Not Like My Beliefs

III. CONTROL			
I believe I can influence events in my life.	3	2	1
I can influence my reactions to events in my life.	3	2	1
I think about how to turn difficult situations into opportunities.	3	2	1
I have a strong sense of initiative.	3	2	1
I rarely give up on a challenge.	3	2	1
I usually take positive action to reduce stress.	3	2	1
I can control negative thoughts during times of stress.	3	2	1
I react optimistically to transitions in my life.	3	2	1
			TOTAL = _____

IV. CREATIVITY			
I am an intuitive thinker.	3	2	1
I often think imaginatively.	3	2	1
I tend to be very curious about people and things.	3	2	1
I have a positive vision of what is possible.	3	2	1
I have a childlike ability to amuse myself.	3	2	1
I have fun with activities and ideas.	3	2	1
I am playful and spontaneous.	3	2	1
I can visualize and see mental pictures.	3	2	1
			TOTAL = _____

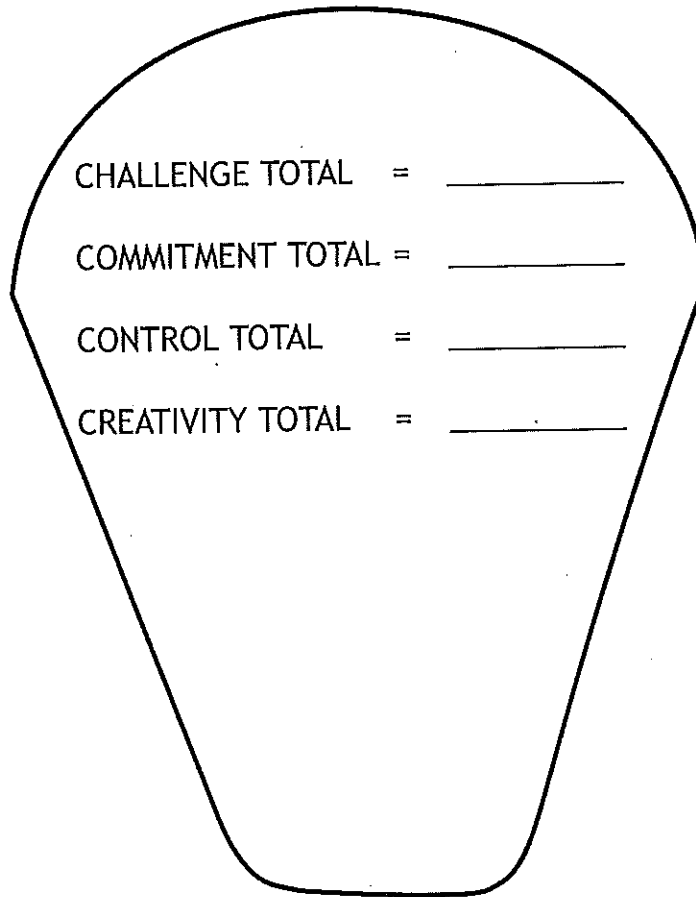
Go to the scoring directions on the next page.

CS-85

# SCORING DIRECTIONS

People who are resilient do not become stressed under conditions of rapid and clustered change, and they actually thrive in the situation. A combination of attitudes is critical in determining whether people under stress get sick or not. The concept of resiliency involves a sense of challenge, commitment, control, and creativity. The Resilient Personality Inventory is designed to measure how resilient you are during times of change. Add the numbers you have circled for each of the four sections on the previous pages. Put that total on the line marked TOTAL at the end of each section.

Then, transfer your totals to the spaces below:



CHALLENGE TOTAL	=	_____
COMMITMENT TOTAL	=	_____
CONTROL TOTAL	=	_____
CREATIVITY TOTAL	=	_____

CS-86



# PROFILE INTERPRETATION

As society continues moving at a faster pace, we live with more stress and thus are at a greater risk to become mentally or physically disabled. People with resilient personalities are able to give up distorted or obsolete ways of looking at issues important in their lives and adapt to change. In addition, they are able to integrate new perspectives and patterns of behavior in their approach to coping with stress. People with resilient personalities gain confidence as they experience success, are proud of their accomplishments, are aware of their passions, engage in self-examination, and are able to express their unique talents.

**SCORES FROM 19 TO 24 IN ANY SINGLE AREA ARE HIGH** and indicate that you have been able to develop hardiness in those areas.

**SCORES FROM 14 TO 18 IN ANY SINGLE AREA ARE AVERAGE** and indicate that you have been able to develop some hardiness in those areas, but still need some additional assistance.

**SCORES FROM 8 AND 13 IN ANY SINGLE AREA ARE LOW** and indicate that you need to take a more active role in developing hardiness in those areas.

In the areas in which you score in the "Low" or "Average" range, you should make efforts to increase your resiliency in those areas. Since this is not an easy thing to do, the following pages contain ideas and activities for you to complete in order to help you handle change with less stress. Read each description and then complete the exercises to improve your resiliency.

CS-87

# SCALE I – CHALLENGE



CHALLENGE is defined as the ability to view life changes and potentially stressful situations as opportunities rather than threats. Challenge relates to your ability to effectively manage stress. People who are resilient are able to perceive stressful situations as opportunities. They are able to positively view the challenges of a stressful situation and even look at it as a learning experience. They see themselves as having many different options in these types of situations.

In what ways is your life changing?

---

---

What problems are you currently experiencing?

---

---

How can you view these problems differently?

As a challenge? \_\_\_\_\_

As excitement? \_\_\_\_\_

Finding some pleasure in it? \_\_\_\_\_

What major stress have you had in the last six months?

---

---

How have you handled the stress during this time?

---

---

Did you respond effectively?

---

---

How could you have handled the stress better?

---

---

# SCALE II – COMMITMENT



COMMITMENT is defined as one's sense of involvement and meaning in what is occurring in life. People exhibiting resiliency feel a sense of commitment toward themselves, their relationships, work, hobbies, community, and spirituality, to name a few areas. They tend to give their full attention to interests in their lives. They have a pervasive sense of direction and they are committed to follow this path. People who are resilient work hard because they enjoy it, not because they feel compelled to do it. It is important that you explore the types of things that you enjoy doing and do well.

## WHAT I DO WELL

List what you like to do, and do well, in the various roles you play:

---

---

In my role as a worker, I am good at:

---

---

In my role as a friend, I am good at:

---

---

In my role as a student, I am good at:

---

---

In my role as a parent, I am good at:

---

---

In my role as a child, I am good at:

---

---

In my role as a person who enjoys leisure, I am good at:

---

---



**SCALE II – COMMITMENT (CONT'D)**

# MY DREAM JOB



The following questions will provide you with insights into your dream job:

What would you do during your perfect day?

---

---

If you could have any job, what would it be?

---

---

What were your childhood dreams and fantasies?

---

---

As a child, what did you love to do?

---

---

As an adult, what do you love to do?

---

---

## SETTING GOALS

By making a strong commitment to your dreams, you create your own motivation, rather than relying on external circumstances to do so. Now you must set purposeful goals to help you maintain your motivation. Write a list of short-range goals that will act as stepping-stones to attaining each of your long-range goals.

Long-range goal #1 and short-range goals:

---

---

Long-range goal #2 and short-range goals:

---

---

Long-range goal #3 and short-range goals:

---

---

# SCALE III – CONTROL



**CONTROL** is defined as the belief that an individual has influence over his or her life. Resilient people are able to identify what they do and do not have control over. They tend to control their thoughts about the stress they are encountering, their feelings about the situation, how they behave, and their choices. It is the firm belief that they can influence how they will react and the willingness to act on that belief.

What types of activities can you successfully complete that will help you gain control in your life (e.g., paint your house, complete a project, etc.)?

---

---

---

---

Learning to relax is one way of controlling stress. What are some different ways that you can relax more?

---

---

---

---

List everything that is causing you stress:

---

---

---

---

---









# SCALE IV – CREATIVITY



People who are resilient see change as a stimulus for creativity. They are able to turn stressful situations and transitions into opportunities. Creativity can expand your awareness and open doors to new points of view. Resilient people are able to generate many points of view and new patterns, identify undetected relationships between ideas or events, and find unusual combinations for familiar elements.

Under what types of circumstances do you find your creative self awakening?

---

---

---

What talents do you naturally have?

---

---

---

Where and when do you create or want to create?

---

---

---

What activates your creative energies?

---

---

---

What drains your creative energies?

---

---

---

SCALE IV – CREATIVITY (CONT'D)

# IMAGINATION EXERCISES to BUILD CREATIVE THINKING



Here are thought-provoking questions that force you to engage in critical and creative thinking.

What if there were no televisions?

---

---

What if people were immortal?

---

---

Would you rather be a door or a window? Why?

---

---

Would you rather be a cat or a dog? Why?

---

---

What kind of car would you like to be? Why?

---

---

What would happen if people could fly?

---

---

If you had two heads on your shoulders, what would you do with them?

---

---

(Continued on next page)

**SCALE IV – CREATIVITY (CONT'D)**

**IMAGINATION EXERCISES  
to BUILD CREATIVE THINKING (CONT'D)**



What if people could become invisible....what would happen?

---

---

What if you could read other people's thoughts?

---

---

If you could become any age again, what age would you want to be? Why?

---

---

What type of animal would you want to be? Why?

---

---

What kinds of things could you do if you were ten feet tall?

---

---

Would you rather be Batman, Superman, or Wonder Woman? Why?

---

---

What would happen if all people looked alike?

---

---

# GROUP ACTIVITY

## PREPARATION:

- 1 Prepare flipcharts and markers.
- 2 Write on the flipchart the words "Challenge," "Commitment," "Control," and "Creativity."
- 3 Give each group member a piece of paper and pen.

## SESSION:

- 1 Ask group members to think about words that describe each of the four words written on the flipchart. (1 minute)
- 2 Ask group members, "What are several words that mean the same thing as Challenge?" and write this question on the flipchart. Give group members a few minutes to jot down ideas. Share and write all responses on the flipchart. (3 minutes)
- 3 Ask group members, "What are several words that mean the same thing as Commitment?" and write this question on the flipchart. Give group members a few minutes to jot down ideas. Share and write all responses on the flipchart. (3 minutes)
- 4 Ask group members, "What are several words that mean the same thing as Control?" and write this question on the flipchart. Give group members a few minutes to jot down ideas. Share and write all responses on the flipchart. (3 minutes)
- 5 Ask group members, "What are several words that mean the same thing as Creativity?" and write this question on the flipchart. Give group members a few minutes to jot down ideas. Share and write all responses on the flipchart. (3 minutes)

Break group participants into smaller groups based on their personality type. Have each group identify the major advantages and disadvantages of their personality type. Then have them identify the major advantages and disadvantages of the other personality types. (10 minutes)

Reconvene in larger group and share experiences. (10 minutes)

7 Process by asking one or more of the following questions: (5 minutes)

- 8
  - What did you learn about your own resiliency personality type?
  - What was most effective about each type of resiliency personality?
  - What was least effective about each of the resiliency personality types?



## PEOPLE with HARDINESS:

- 💡 work hard because they enjoy it.
- 💡 react to change optimistically.
- 💡 take positive action in life.
- 💡 view stress as interesting.
- 💡 see stress as important.
- 💡 see stress as a potential for growth.
- 💡 believe they can influence stressful events.
- 💡 consider stress to be a natural part of life.
- 💡 see stress as an opportunity for creativity.

## PERSONAL INSIGHTS:

- 💡 \_\_\_\_\_
- 💡 \_\_\_\_\_
- 💡 \_\_\_\_\_



## CHARACTERISTICS of HARDINESS

- 💡 CHALLENGE – The ability to thrive under conditions of challenge and difficulty
- 💡 COMMITMENT – The ability to commit to what you love and give it your very best effort
- 💡 CONTROL – The ability to influence events and your reactions to the events
- 💡 CREATIVITY – The ability to see stress and change as opportunities for creative expression

### PERSONAL INSIGHTS:

- 💡 \_\_\_\_\_
- 💡 \_\_\_\_\_
- 💡 \_\_\_\_\_



## EFFECTS of HARDINESS

- 💡 Greater self-esteem
- 💡 More energy when you need it
- 💡 Higher quality of life
- 💡 Greater optimism
- 💡 Fewer feelings of sadness and depression
- 💡 Better general health
- 💡 Greater sense of meaning
- 💡 Greater sense of life direction and purpose
- 💡 Fewer days absent from work / school

### PERSONAL INSIGHTS:

- 💡 \_\_\_\_\_
- 💡 \_\_\_\_\_
- 💡 \_\_\_\_\_