



SELF DISCOVERY EXERCISE: ASSESS STRESS

Find out what part stress is playing in your life. React as honestly as possible to the following statements as it relates to your situation. Use this scoring system:

0 – Doesn't bother me 2 – Occasionally bothers me 4 - Usually bothers me
1 – Rarely bothers me 3 – Sometimes bothers me 5 - Always bothers me

_____ After leaving the job, I generally complete work at home that I have not had time for during the work day (W)

_____ I find it difficult to find meaning or satisfaction in my job (W)

_____ I continue to take on new job responsibilities without letting go of others (W)

_____ I often feel overwhelmed with the demands of my job (W)

_____ When I am under pressure, I tend to respond negatively (W)

_____ My job is emotionally demanding (W)

_____ I feel burnt out and want to change jobs/careers but seem unable to take the first step (W)

_____ I find it difficult to relax during work breaks/lunch (W)

_____ On my way to and from work, I tend to rehash the problems of the day (W)

_____ I feel torn between being a responsible family man/woman and being a perfect employee (W)

_____ I find it difficult to find any fulfillment, joy, or peace in my life (M)

_____ I tend to blame others for any situation I don't like (M)

_____ I wish I knew how to be more in control of my feelings (M)

- _____ I find it difficult to discipline myself so I can accomplish goals I really want (M)
- _____ I wish I felt more worthwhile and important as a person (M)
- _____ I find it difficult to remember things (M)
- _____ I feel restless (M)
- _____ I would like my life to have more meaning and purpose (M)
- _____ I want more spirituality in my life (M)
- _____ I find it difficult to laugh at myself or see the humor in some situations like others do (M)
- _____ I have difficulty maintaining a healthy weight (B)
- _____ I experience muscle tightness or aching in my shoulders (B)
- _____ I clench and/or grind my teeth (B)
- _____ I get frequent headaches (B)
- _____ I get frequent colds, cold sores, viruses, and infections (B)
- _____ I have days when I feel totally exhausted (B)
- _____ I have trouble falling asleep and/or staying asleep (B)
- _____ I do not engage in some form of enjoyable aerobic activity for minimum for 30 minutes at least 3 times a week (if true, write score of 5) (B)
- _____ I have more than 1 alcoholic drink per day (B)
- _____ I smoke or chew tobacco (B)

Total up your Assess Stress score and add up each subgroup of the self-discovery exercise.

Total _____ Work(W) _____ Mind(M) _____ Body(B) _____

HOW TO INTERPRET YOUR TOTAL SCORE

Total Score of 0 to 30 – Great stress management! Your stress management and relaxation practices enhance your health and length of life, plus help to prevent heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.

Total Score of 31 to 60 – Good stress management! Your stress management and relaxation practices mildly health enhance health and moderately help to protect you from chronic diseases.

Total Score of 61 to 90 – OK stress management! Your stress management and relaxation practices do not produce health benefits or insults to health. Your mental and physical health would benefit from taking time most every day to purposely relax.

Total Score of 91 to 120 – Poor stress management! Your lack of stress management and relaxation practices put you at risk for immune suppression, low energy, increase wear and tear on your body, and may be increasing your risk for chronic diseases. Take some time to make a list of all the things in your life that produce stress. Is there a subgroup (work, mind, body) that contributes to your stress more than the other 2 subgroups? Make note of this. Go back through the list and put a check mark by the things that you can change. Make a plan to start making changes, one at a time (see section below title *Help with Changing Stress Management Habits*). Lastly, make it a priority to take time most every day to purposely relax.

Total Score of 121 to 150 – Your gross lack of stress management and relaxation is harming your health. It is putting you at risk for chronic diseases, immune suppression, low energy, mental illness, high blood pressure, high cholesterol. It is vitally important to your physical and mental health, that you develop a plan to manage stress in your life and purposely relax every day. Take some time to make a list of all the things in your life that produce stress. Is there a subgroup (work, mind, body) that contributes to your stress more than the other 2 stress subgroups? Make note of this. Go back through the list and put a check mark by the things that you can change. Make a plan to start making changes, one at a time (see section below title *Help with Changing Stress Management Habits*).

Consider that you may need to seek help from a mental health professional. Take this seriously! Your quality of life and longevity depend on it.

HELP WITH CHANGING STRESS MANAGEMENT HABITS

Changing stress management and relaxation habits can be challenging. *Positive Patterns for Life* offers a variety of methods, skills and tools to help support you during your habit change journey. The *Master Goals Worksheet* takes you through a step-by-step process to writing successful goals.

Another helpful tool found on the website is the *Positive Patterns for Life Goals Chart*. It has blank spaces for you to write in your new stress management and relaxation habits that you want to work on adopting. It has instructions to guide you on how to best use the goals chart and includes quotes to help you stay motivated during your health improvement journey. Make sure to check out all the resources in the *Changing Health Habits* section at the bottom of the THRIVE page at <https://positivepatterns4life.com/thrive>.

If you don't find the help you need in the *Changing Health Habits* section, schedule an appointment with a Lifestyle & Health Coach by using the "Contact Us."