



As a student you face many changes in your academic and personal life. Many aspects of your life are influenced by people and situations beyond your control. This loss of control and increased vulnerability require constant adjustments. Students who are anxious do not learn; they do not take in information efficiently or deal with it. Lack of time to adjust causes stress. Stress management is an important part of achieving optimal health and successful living. Below, you will find a way to evaluate your stress levels, relaxation techniques and resources on campus.

**Stressor Inventory**

Please rate the following by circling the given scale where 1 indicates that the situation gives you No Stress or Does not apply, to 5, giving you Extreme Stress. Then, add your scores to get a total and take a look at what your total score means.

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Personal appearance	1	2	3	4	5
2. Weight problems	1	2	3	4	5
3. Fear of violence	1	2	3	4	5
4. marital plans	1	2	3	4	5
5. Living arrangements with friends	1	2	3	4	5
6. Problem with boyfriend and/or girlfriend	1	2	3	4	5
7. Personal problems with your immediate family	1	2	3	4	5
8. Alcohol or other drug problems	1	2	3	4	5
9. Financial concerns (i.e., tuition, housing cost, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
10. Lack of close friends	1	2	3	4	5
11. Child care concerns	1	2	3	4	5
12. Pressures at work	1	2	3	4	5
13. Lack of personal time to yourself	1	2	3	4	5
14. Current job searching plans	1	2	3	4	5
15. Car/Transportation concerns	1	2	3	4	5
16. Membership in campus organizations	1	2	3	4	5
17. Speaking in public	1	2	3	4	5
18. Test anxiety (exams & finals)	1	2	3	4	5
19. Difficulty in scheduling classes upon entering new quarter	1	2	3	4	5
20. Competition with other students and peer groups	1	2	3	4	5
21. Grades	1	2	3	4	5
22. Difficulties with an instructor	1	2	3	4	5
23. Post graduate plans	1	2	3	4	5

Continue on back.

## Interpreting your score:

40 or below: lower stress level than most Cal Poly Pomona students report.

41-48: average stress level for Cal Poly Pomona students—do pay attention to the high stress items that you rated 4 or 5.

49-56: moderately high stress—try to make some changes.

57-66: well above stress levels of most Cal Poly Pomona students and could indicate serious stress problems resulting in illness—try to get some help soon.

## Relaxation

Balance stressful periods with intervals of relaxation. There are many healthful ways to manage stress. Take a deep breath, talk to a friend or health professional, (see resources on opposite side), use a time planner, set goals, sleep 7 to 8 hours most nights, exercise moderately most days. Harmful ways include using alcohol or other drugs to relax, and spending of money and eating excessively.

Here are four techniques you can try.

### Progressive Muscle Relaxation

1. Sit with your hands held loosely in your lap and both feet flat on the floor.
2. Loosen any constricting clothing.
3. Tense and relax each major muscle group in your body, starting with the legs and feet and working up the body to the tongue and jaw.
4. Notice the difference in feeling between tensed and relaxed muscles.

### The Relaxation Response

1. Sit quietly in a comfortable position.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Deeply relax all your muscles, beginning at your feet and progressing up to your face. Keep them relaxed.
4. Breathe through your nose. Become aware of your breathing. As you breathe out, say the word "ONE" silently to yourself. For example, breathe IN . . . OUT "ONE;" IN . . . OUT "ONE;" etc. Breathe easily and naturally.

5. Continue for 1 to 20 minutes. You may open your eyes to check the time, but do not use an alarm. When you finish, sit quietly for several minutes, at first with our eyes closed and later with your eyes opened. Do not stand up for a few minutes.
6. Do not worry about whether you are successful in achieving a deep level of relaxation. Maintain a passive attitude and permit relaxation to occur at its own pace. When distracting thoughts occur, try to ignore them by not dwelling upon them and return to repeating "ONE." With practice the techniques will come with little effort; however, wait two hours after any meals, since the digestive processes seem to interfere with elicitation of the Relaxation response.

## The Quieting Exercise

1. Sit comfortably.
2. Suggest to yourself that you have an alert mind and a calm body.
3. Breathe in and slightly tighten and raise your tongue, jaw and shoulders.
4. As you exhale, start a relaxation wave going down your body by letting your tongue, jaw, arms and shoulders go loose.
5. Look for sensations of flowing, heaviness and warmth going down your body.

## Deep Breathing

1. Sit comfortably.
2. Inhale slowly and deeply through your nose.
3. Follow with a longer exhale through your mouth.
4. Feel the differences in the temperature of the air.
5. Repeat 3 or 4 times each session.

## Resources (Services are free to students.)

Counseling Services: 706-737-1471

Student Health: 706-721-3448