



As a student you face many changes in your academic and personal life. Many aspects of your life can be 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 well with it. Lack of time to adjust causes stress. Stress management is an important part of achieving optimal health and success. Below, you will find a way to evaluate your stress reduction skills. Behavioral guidelines for reducing stress are on the reverse.

**Stress Reduction Skills Assessment**

Instructions: Please answer all items below and circle the answer that best describes your response. A “6” indicates that you **Strongly Agree** while a “1” indicates that you **Strongly Disagree**.

	6	5	4	3	2	1
1. I use effective time management methods such as using a time planner, making to-do lists, and prioritizing tasks.						
2. I maintain a program of regular exercise for fitness						
3. I maintain an open, trusting relationship with someone with whom I can share my feelings and frustrations.						
4. I know and practice several temporary relaxation techniques such as deep breathing and muscle relaxation.						
5. I frequently affirm my priorities by reviewing my life purpose and goals so that less important things don't drive out more important things.						
6. I maintain balance in my life by pursuing a variety of interests apart from studying and work.						
7. I have a close relationship with someone who serves as my mentor or advisor						
8. I effectively utilize others in studying and doing class assignments and work.						
9. I encourage others to generate recommended solutions, not just questions, when they come to me with problems or issues.						
10. I strive to redefine problems as opportunities for improvement.						
11. I ease anxiety by using my imagination to recall pleasant places and events.						
12. I rehearse or practice in a safe environment speeches, test taking or reactions to take in stressful situations.						

**Interpreting Your Score**

Interpreting Your Score Add your scores for each area and for a total.

<b>Skill Area</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Subtotals</b>	<b>Total Score</b> (Max is 72)	<input type="text"/>
Eliminating stressors	1, 5, 8, 9	_____	<b>60 or above</b>	you are in the top 25%
Developing resiliency	2, 3, 6, 7	_____	<b>55 - 59</b> (51%-75%)	you are in the second quartile
Short-term coping	4, 10, 11, 12	_____	<b>50 - 54</b> (26%-50%)	you are in the third quartile
			<b>49 or below</b> (0%-25%)	you are in the bottom quartile

Guidelines for developing your skills to manage stress are on the reverse side of this sheet.

Continued on back.

## **Guidelines for Improving Stress**

### **Reduction Skills**

1. Use effective and efficient time management practices. For effective time management generate your own personal mission statement that states your vision and what you want from life and to give to life. This means that: (1) you spend time on important matters, not just urgent matters; (2) you distinguish clearly between what you consider as important versus what you view as urgent; (3) results rather than methods are the focus of what you do and (4) you now have a reason to say “no” to requests without feeling guilty. Efficiently manage time by using the Time & Stress Management selfhelp sheet.
2. Build collaborative relationships with individuals based on mutual trust, respect, honesty, and kindness. Make “deposits” into the “emotional bank accounts” of other people (make them feel comfortable and good). Form close, stable communities among those with whom you work.
3. Consciously work to improve your ability to work, play and live with others (interpersonal competency) by learning and practicing (1) supportive communication, (2) managing conflict by describing sources of conflict in terms of behaviors, consequences and feelings from the behavior and giving suggestions for a solution; (3) empowering others and (4) delegating tasks.
4. Redesign your work and academic work to increase its skill variety, importance, comprehensiveness of tasks, autonomy, and feedback. Make all your studies and work stress reducing, rather than stress inducing.
5. Reaffirm priorities and short-term plans that provide direction and focus to activities. Give important activities priority over urgent ones.
6. Increase your general resiliency (immunity to stress) by leading a balanced life. Consciously develop yourself in intellectual, social, spiritual (having a purpose in life), physical, emotional and occupational areas.
7. Increase your physical resiliency. Engage in a regular program of exercise (accumulate at least 30-minutes of physical activity most days per week). Eat at least 5 servings of fruit and vegetables every day and plenty of grains.
8. Increase your psychological resiliency and hardiness by implementing a small-wins strategy. Plan for small-wins. Gain more control in of your life. Be committed to and involved in what you do. Be challenged by new experiences.
9. Learn at least one deep-relaxation technique and practice it regularly. These usually need a quiet environment, mental focus, controlled breathing, a passive attitude and repetition.
10. Increase social resiliency by forming an open, trusting, sharing relationship with at least one other person. Get into a mentoring relationship with someone who can affirm your worth as a person and provide support during periods of stress.
11. Establish a teamwork relationship with those with whom you work or study by identifying shared tasks and structuring coordinated action among team members.
12. Learn at least two short-term relaxation techniques and practice them consistently. These are muscle relaxation, deep breathing, imagery and fantasy, rehearsal and reframing. In reframing, you optimistically redefine a situation as manageable with cues such as “I understand this situation,” “I’ve solved similar problems before,” “I can learn something from this situation,” and “There are people available to help me.”

### **Resources on Campus**

Counseling Services: 706-737-1471

Student Health Services: 706-721-3448

### **ADDITIONAL REFERENCES:**

1 Whetten, D and Cameron, K. Developing Management Skills (3rd Edition). HarperCollins College Publishers, 1995. 2 Covey, S. Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. Simon & Schuster, NY. 1989. 3 Web page: <http://www.hardinessinstitute.com> for the Hardiness Institute.