

# ***STRESS REDUCTION IN STAFF AND STUDENTS***

## **INDEPENDENT STUDY *A FIVE CREDIT CLASS***

Course # HE401m/HE501m

INSTRUCTOR:

DR. MICHAEL SEDLER

Email: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)

(509) 443-1605

THE HERITAGE INSTITUTE

**Please Do Not send in no more than 2 to 3 assignments at a time and I will send you back comments. Send them in numerical order (#1, #2, #3...).**

Thank you for signing up for my independent study classes. You may take up to six months to complete this course and may obtain an additional 3 month extension. DO NOT send in any completed papers unless you have registered for the class!

The checklist in the manual is to help you plan your schedule to successfully complete this course. The last page of the manual includes a General Bibliography. If you prefer, you may choose an alternate book not on the suggested list.

On the following page, I have given you a brief biography/resume of my background. You will see that I have a Masters Degree in Social Work; my K-8 Teaching Certification and am a Licensed Social Worker with the State of Washington. My current primary role is as a consultant and trainer for schools, businesses and agencies. I also worked in education for 15 years as a Director of Special Education, a Behavior Intervention Specialist, School Social Worker, and Teacher.

I teach classes and seminars throughout the United States and in Canada. I am an adjunct professor through two Universities in Washington. I am available for on-site training, classes, and in services for agencies and schools. I anticipate this class will be enjoyable and full of learning. Please contact me if you would like me to be involved directly with your school or business.

Thank you, once again, for signing up for it and I look forward to working with you over the next weeks/months.

Sincerely,

Michael Sedler  
(509) 443-1605  
E-mail: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)  
Website: [www.michaelsedler.com](http://www.michaelsedler.com)  
P.O. BOX 30310 - Spokane, WA. - 99223

**\*\*** For those working in groups (400/500 level only!)- be sure to go to The Heritage Institute website at [www.hol.edu](http://www.hol.edu) and click on the "group collaboration" icon.

1. Each group member must pick a book to read (you may all choose the same book).
2. Each group member must read the entire manual.
3. Final evaluation/integration paper must be individually authored.

Please share about my classes with others. It is my main form of advertising.

## MICHAEL SEDLER

(509) 443-1605 (w); (509) 939-6302 (c)

Email: mike@communicationplus.net or michael@michaelsedler.com

website: www.michaelsedler.com

### Education

B.A., Political Science

Master Degree, Social Work

Master Degree, Divinity

Doctorate Degree, Ministry

Teaching Certificate

### Work Experience

Consultant/Trainer/Counselor

Director of Special Education

Developmental Disabilities Administration-behavior consultant

Supervisor, Educational Services

School Social Worker (K-12)

Behavior Intervention Specialist (K-12)

Classroom Teacher (elementary and middle school)

Assistant Pastor

### Other Experiences

State Correctional Facility for Juveniles, Counselor and Supervisor

Community Mental Health Therapist

State Trainer in Autism (State of Washington)

Adjunct Professor for several Universities

Student Teacher Supervisor

Consultant for schools, business, churches throughout United States

Provide weekend marriage retreats

Interview and Speech Coach/Trainer for Miss Arizona, 3<sup>rd</sup> runner-up Miss America 2012

### Author

***When to Speak Up and When To Shut Up.*** (Jan., 2006 Revell Books, \$5.99). Book from faith-based perspective.

Communication book discussing conflict, power struggles, listening strategies, asking questions.

**(Over 400,000 copies sold).**

***What To Do When Words Get Ugly.*** (October, 2016, Revell Books, \$5.99).

Updated/edited version of "Stop The Runaway Conversation.") Two new chapters in addition to edits. Book from faith-based perspective. Importance of not listening to negative discussions and how they impact a person's attitude.

Books are available through all bookstores, at [www.bakerbooks.com](http://www.bakerbooks.com), by calling 800 877 2665, or by checking with various online book companies. Revell is a division of Baker Publishing Group. Both books are available on CD as audio books

# **INDEPENDENT STUDY COLLEGE COURSES**

THE HERITAGE INSTITUTE (credits through Antioch University, Seattle, WA)

MICHAEL SEDLER, INSTRUCTOR

Register for courses anytime. (6-month period for completion from the date you register). **Collaborate with fellow educators-only one set of assignments turned into instructor.** (Check out "Group Collaboration Guidelines" at [www.hol.edu](http://www.hol.edu)). \*\*Clock hours available for partial course completion.

The following are **3 CREDIT CLASSES** (3 quarter credits = 2 semester credits)

**1. Increasing Motivation and Self-Esteem in Students (SS401p/SS501p)**

Strategies to help students feel confident and help educators find more successful approaches with them.

**2. Parents: Adversary or Ally--A Cooperative Approach (SS401q/SS501q)**

Specific ideas on connecting with parents and helping better communication between school and home.

**3. Social Skills: A Foundation For Learning (SS401v/SS501v)**

Activities and ideas to encourage students to improve their peer and social relations.

**4. Understanding & Connecting With Aggressive Students (ED404d/ED504d)**

Each person will increase their understanding of ways to de-escalate aggression and its' causes.

**3 CREDIT COST: \$280-400/500 level; \$195-clock hours (3 quarter = 2 semester)**

The following are **5 CREDIT CLASSES**: (5 quarter credits -3.3 semester credits)

**1. Bullying Behaviors: Enough is Enough (ED437q/ED537q)**

Identification and interventions to reduce bullying behaviors and victim mentality within schools and community.

**2. Counseling Skills For Educators (ED409r/ED509r)**

Helpful ideas on listening skills, asking questions, and communicating with students.

**3. High Maintenance Behaviors & Interactions (SS409f/SS509f)**

This course investigates the many aspects of high needs people, behaviors and effective interactions.

**4. Mental Health Issues and Students (HE402n/HE502n)**

Understand various disorders (oppositional defiant, obsessive compulsive, bi-polar) and interventions.

**5. Nurturing Compassion Within Our Schools (ED434y/ED534y)**

Ideas to help adults and children learn to be more sensitive, kind, and compassionate toward one another.

**6. Organizational Teaching Skills (ED429w/ED529w)**

Increase your own organizational and time management skills as well as helping students in these areas.

**7. Stress Reduction in Staff and Students (HE401m/HE501m)**

Strategies to reduce stress, become more effective in life, and teach these skills to students.

**8. Student, Classroom and Whole-School Discipline (ED419g/ED519g)**

Focus is on negative talk, gossip and rumors within schools. Behavioral strategies for each above area.

**9. Youth Suicide (SS404u/SS504u)**

Specific discussions on signs and interventions for suicide prevention.

**5- CREDIT COST: \$415-400/500 LEVEL; \$315-clock hours (5 quarter = 3.3 semester)**

**NEXT PAGE FOR MORE CLASSES AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

# **INDEPENDENT STUDY COLLEGE COURSES**

THE HERITAGE INSTITUTE (credits through Antioch University, Seattle, WA)

MICHAEL SEDLER, INSTRUCTOR

The following are **6 CREDIT CLASSES**: (6 quarter credits - 4 semester credits)

## **1. Autism: Questions and Answers (ED445y/ED545y)**

Understanding the general areas of autism, diagnosis, and overall strategies for interventions for children with special needs.

## **2. Establishing Rules and Boundaries (ED445x/ED545x)**

Ideas to assist educators in setting up a successful work environment for children (rules, procedures, teaching tools).

## **3. Inspirational Education (ED452f/ED552f)**

This course will re-charge the batteries and create a new excitement about teaching in each person.

## **4. The Impact of Trauma & Loss in Students (ED464z/ED564z)**

Recognize the underlying function of behaviors and interventions approaches.

## **5. Why Children Act Out (ED458t/ED558t)**

Recognize the underlying function of behaviors and interventions approaches.

**6- CREDIT COST: \$495--400/500 LEVEL; \$380-clock hours(6 qtr. = 4 sem)**

**REGISTRATION:** Call The Heritage Institute--1 (360) 341-3020

*Or register on line at [www.hol.edu](http://www.hol.edu)*

**QUESTIONS:** Please call Michael Sedler at (509) 443-1605. Leave message when necessary.

**Email address:** [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)

**Website:** [www.michaelsedler.com](http://www.michaelsedler.com)

\*\*For clock hours, only complete the first section of the course. Remember, clock hours may not transfer to other districts or states. You cannot go back and acquire credits once clock hours has been obtained

**COURSE TITLE:    STRESS REDUCTION IN STAFF AND STUDENTS**

**NO. OF CREDITS:   5 QUARTER CREDITS                   CLOCK: 50**  
                          **[Semester Cr Equivalent: 3.3]       PDU'S: 50**  
  **CEU'S: 5.0 (50 hours)**  
  **PENNSYLVANIA ACT 48: 50**

**INSTRUCTOR;       MICHAEL SEDLER, D. MIN., M.S.W.**  
                          P. O. BOX 30310  
                          SPOKANE, WA. 99223  
                          (509) 443-1605  
                          E-MAIL: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)

### **ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST**

The assignment checklist will help you plan your schedule of work for this course. Check off items completed so that you can better monitor your progress. While you have six-months to complete your work, many will find a shorter time period convenient. **Complete no more than 2 to 3 assignments at a time. Do NOT send further work until you receive comments from the instructor. Grades will be submitted once all assignments and the integration paper have been sent to instructor.**

***For Washington Clock Hours, Oregon Professional Development Units, Continuing Education Credits or Pennsylvania ACT 48, please complete the first 8 assignments.***

#### **Assignment #1:**

Read the entire manual and send a **one page** summary of what you hope to learn in this class.

#### **Assignment #2:**

Read a book from the bibliography or one of student's choice. If taking this course in a group, each person should read a book. Only one person needs to write a summary. Critique the book based on personal experiences and insights. **Write a 2-3 page paper.**

#### **Assignment #3:**

Complete assignments for:

- a) Expectations (p.16)
- b) Life Change Index (pgs. 19-20)
- c) Understanding Why Children Worry (p. 40)

**(Choose one of these pages and write a 1-2 page summary)**

#### **Assignment #4:**

Keep a written journal for 2 weeks (minimum of 3 entries per week). During this time, write out any areas that create anxiety or stress for you. Develop at least one coping strategy for each area of stress. Write a **one page summary** of one area of stress and coping strategies.

#### **Assignment #5:**

Select one area of your personal or professional life to address in the area of anxiety and stress. Using the "Stress Reduction" worksheet (p. 52), organize a plan for success. **Write a 2 page paper.**

#### **Assignment #6:**

Share your plan with another person and obtain feedback from them. Do they see areas of stress in your life? Do they have any insights into stress reduction for you? Write a **1-2 page summary**.

#### **Assignment #7:**

Observe another educator's classroom noting signs of stress/anxiety as well as support/encouragement among the students. Share your findings with the educator. **Write a 1-2 page summary of your observations.**

#### **Assignment #8:**

Complete the case study found on page 51. Write a **1-2 page summary** of your responses.

***This completes the assignments required for Washington Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, CEUs or Pennsylvania ACT 48.***

***Continue to the next section for additional assignments required for University Quarter Credit***

#### **ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED for 400 or 500 LEVEL UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

In this section you will have an opportunity to apply your learning to your professional situation. This course assumes that most participants are classroom teachers who have access to students. If you are not teaching in a classroom, please contact the instructor for course modifications. If you start or need to complete this course during the summer, please try to apply your ideas when possible with youth from your neighborhood, at a local public library or parks department facility, (they will often be glad to sponsor community-based learning), with students in another teacher's summer classroom in session, students from past years, or use one of your own children or a relative.

##### **Assignment #9: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)**

Choose one student (or class) to develop a strategy for stress reduction. Choose a particular area of focus. **Write a 1-2 page summary** of the plan.

##### **Assignment #10: You must choose either "A" or "B" (Required for 400 and 500 Level)**

Assignment #A:

- Develop a lesson to reflect what you've learned in this course.
- Implement your lesson with students in your classroom.
- Write a **2 page commentary** on what worked well and what could be improved.
- Include any student feedback on your lesson.

**OR**

Assignment #B:

Use this option if you do not have a classroom available.

- Develop a lesson to reflect what you've learned in this course. (Do not implement it.)
- Write a **2 page summary** concerning any noteworthy success you've had as a teacher with one or more students.

#### **500 LEVEL ASSIGNMENT**

##### **Assignment #11: (500 Level only)**

In addition to the 400 level assignments complete **one (1)** of the following options:

**Option A)** Mentor another individual in the concepts of this class. Have them share two or three key concepts that they would like to implement within their work or social setting. Share specific the plan and how it will be evaluated for success. **(2 pages).**

**OR**

**Option B)** Create a PowerPoint presentation for your staff based on this course and focused on perspectives or strategies you feel would be beneficial for your school. **Minimum of 15 slides.** Save this as a pdf.

**OR**

**Option C)** Another assignment of your own design, with instructor prior approval.

#### **400 & 500 LEVEL ASSIGNMENT (To be completed by all participants taking this for credit) Integration Paper**

##### **Assignment #12: (Required for 400 and 500 Level Credit)**

Write a **2 page** Integration Paper answering these specific questions:

1. What did you learn vs. what you expected to learn from this course?

- 2.What aspects of the course were most helpful and why?
- 3.What further knowledge and skills in this general area do you feel you need?
- 4.How, when and where will you use what you have learned?
- 5.How and with what other school or community members might you share what you learned?

**Must be individually authored (name and course title) for those taking in a group.**

**QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEACHING THIS COURSE:**

Mike Sedler, M.S.W., D. Min., brings over 40 year of educational experience as a special education director, social worker, behavior specialist and teacher to each of his classes. He provides consultation and seminars throughout the United States and Canada for schools, agencies and businesses. He has a graduate degree in Social Work, a Doctoral degree in Ministry, a Counseling license, as well as his teaching certification. Mike has worked with children of all ages, specifically with children exhibiting behavioral challenges, mental health concerns, and characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorder. In addition, he taught general education classes in the elementary school and middle school arenas. All of Mike's classes are practical and "field tested" in schools and classrooms. Educators have found success in implementing Mike's clear and concise approaches. All of his course material may be immediately implemented into a school or a home.

**NOTES:** You may work collaboratively and submit joint assignments on all but the Integration Paper portion which must be individually authored. Alternatives to written assignments such as a video, audio tape, photo collage, etc. are permissible with prior approval of instructor.

**Full credit will be given to each student as long as all work is turned in. If something is missing, I will be in contact with you. Failure is not an option. 😊**



Thank you for signing up for this class. Throughout this course, you will be asked to evaluate your own stress/anxiety level as well as investigate areas that may have impacted you in your past.

Remember that each quiz or questionnaire is only a tool or worksheet. However, I believe that when we carefully evaluate our own lives, the enclosed information will help in both one's personal and professional life.

Now, for those whose anxiety has increased due to this introduction ... relax. This class will be fun, informative and help you to teach others (students and adults) strategies to cope with stressors in life.

Breathe in, breathe out and begin the class.

Have a wonderful time.

Mike Sedler

**THIS**  
**IS**  
**ALL**  
**ABOUT**  
**YOU!**

## **What is stress and anxiety?**

**Let's first look at a couple of definitions of these words.**

**(From Merriam Webster Dictionary)**

**Anxiety**--a painful or apprehensive uneasiness of the mind, usually over an impending or anticipated event.

**Stress**--a physical, chemical, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension.

Anxiety and stress may be positive or negative in a life. It is anxiety or stress that gets a person to study for a test, prepare for a presentation, do wonderful lesson plans (at least during student teaching), even get dressed and lookin' good in the morning. Yes, anxiety is positive and presses toward completion of many activities and goals in life.

However, anxiety/stress may also be a barrier to leading a healthy and successful life. When our anxiety becomes paralyzing, all-encompassing and consuming, our life becomes stagnant and we begin to make poor choices.

Our goal should not be to eliminate our stress or anxiety, but to direct it in a focused direction. Too often we spend so much time trying to "control" our stress that we become stressed out. As adults, we need to learn how to identify our stress and anxiety, re-direct it in a positive direction, and allow it to motivate us toward success. For children, we can teach them to understand their emotional, cognitive, and physical reactions to stress. In addition, we can increase their coping skills for this area.

**STRESS LEVEL THERMOMETER-Place an "X" across from each statement under each category**

WORK

HOME

RIGHT NOW

Stop the world-I quit

Close to the edge

Crisis

Too high

"Just right"-normal for me

Life is a little slow

Too dull

I'm bored

Good night .... zzzzz

This is just a self-evaluation tool. Any area(s) you need to change?

## SEVEN COMMON STRESSES THAT MAY LEAD TO INEFFECTIVENESS

1. A LOSS- death, jobs, relationships (divorce). All these areas create a void in our emotions.
2. ANGER TURNED INWARD- this is often a basic definition of depression. We become overwhelmed when we allow offenses to build up, bitterness to overcome us, and we repress our anger (hold it in).
3. BLOW TO SELF-IMAGE- rejection and hurt can lead us to question our own abilities. We may fall into the trap of self-pity, one that leads us into a spiral of emotions.
4. ADJUSTMENT REACTION- situational stress is found in life. How we respond to it will impact our outlook on life. Do you adjust to various setbacks in life or do the waves of life crash down on you?
5. FALSE GUILT-self-blame, being critical, and worrying about areas you have no control over will create a sense of dread in life.
6. WRONG PERSPECTIVE- each of us only sees life through our own perspective. But, what if we are wrong? Isolating ourselves from others and their feedback will lead to ineffectiveness in life.
7. WRONG PRIORITIES- interestingly, what is most important often gets the least attention. Where are your priorities and attentions in life?

Look at your own life. Did any of the above areas stick out to you? If yes, keep it in mind as you go through this course. If not, be prepared to learn new strategies to help prevent these areas from creeping into your life.

HOW DO I HANDLE STRESS (OR DOES STRESS HANDLE ME)?  
(Circle the answer that is most like you ... scoring chart below-no peeking)

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| 1. I am a light sleeper   | True False |
| 2. I tend to be a forceful personality                              | True False |
| 3. I believe that I am moodier than the average person.             | True False |
| 4. I often become exhausted.  | True False |
| 5. I often react to anger.  | True False |
| 6. I tend to increase the number of activities when under pressure. | True False |
| 7. I am more of a perfectionist than most of my friends are.        | True False |
| 8. I usually don't pay much attention to my health.                 | True False |
| 9. When stress hits, I eat more or less than usual.                 | True False |
| 10. I sometimes feel nauseous from stress.                          | True False |
| 11. I often get a strong urge to eat, drink alcohol, or smoke.      | True False |
| 12. I generally feel moderate to strong bodily tension.             | True False |

STRESS TEST SCORING

**Give yourself "one point" for each True response**

A score of 10 to 12 points:

Your handling of stress can easily overwhelm you and impact your thought and emotional framework. It is difficult, during times of stress, to focus on the larger picture of life. It would be helpful for you to share your thought process with a friend and begin to gain a more effective perspective of life.

IDEAS: Read self-help books, relaxation strategies, exercise, social involvement.

A score of 7 to 9 points:

Your style of coping with stress and frustration is adequate, though there is room for improvement. You are in the average range of managing tough situations. If stress is prolonged and severe enough, you might suffer some reactions physically and respond to others in a way that you later regret.

IDEAS: Take time for yourself, bounce ideas off others, find a hobby for relaxation, slow down.

A score of 0 to 6 points:

You react to stress in an efficient manner. You are not likely to be overwhelmed by routine crisis situations. Your responses are helpful to others and they may see you as a resource. Be careful to not become too relaxed and casual during a serious crisis.

IDEAS: Stay involved with people, be careful to not come across as condescending, continue to enjoy life.

## **CARING FOR YOURSELF**

- **Learn about child development-** *As an educator or parent, do you know what is expected from various age ranges? Do you understand developmental stages and issues?*
- **Self-control through self-evaluation-** *Develop accountability with another person. Meet each week, discuss your frustrations and stressors, plan strategies for change. What went well, what needs to change?*
- **Positive self-talk-** *Talking to ourselves can be helpful... if we are giving good advice. 😊*
- **Learn when to walk away-** *It is good to take a time out, put your life on hold for a moment. This is also a great "role-model" for children.*
- **Figure out what is important-** *What are your goals? What behaviors are critical for your class, your family, your life? Pick and choose your battles in life.*
- **Focus on how you can change-** *Evaluate your own style of coping. Hopefully, this class will help you do this. What can you do to change, where do you need help, what can you do to make a difference in life?*
- **Forgive yourself (and students) for mistakes-** *Are you holding a grudge from one day to the next? How are you feeling about your own abilities and success? Let go ... life is too short to hold on to areas of frustration and anger.*
- **Take time for yourself, even at work-** *The word "selfish" is looked at in a negative light. However, by caring for oneself, we can be more effective when working with others. You can't give what you don't have. Be careful of running dry in life.*

**EXPECTATIONS** (connected to Assignment #3)

*High expectations for behavior and grades work together to produce a much better learning environment. Students who regulate their own behavior based on your expectations are much more likely to work harder and produce better work.*

1. What are my classroom expectations as the educator?
  
  
  
  
  
2. What are the student's expectations of me?
  
  
  
  
  
3. What are my expectations of the student?
  
  
  
  
  
4. What are the student's expectations of himself or herself?

AND JUST FOR FUN ☺

5. What are my expectations from the parents?
  
  
  
  
  
6. And yes, what are the parent expectations of me?

**If these expectations are not met, stress increases. How can you help make each expectation clearer? Go back and pick out several areas and write out a 1-2 page action plan for yourself.**



The following article gives several ideas and suggestions for minimizing stressful situations. It gives interventions for both adults and children.

## **DON'T WORRY, BE HAPPY**

It is important for teachers to take care of themselves as well as to teach the students how to do this effectively. While this is often easier said than done, there are some specific strategies that can be utilized.

### **FOR TEACHERS-**

1. Problems seldom exist at the level they're expressed. To resolve some conflicts, look for the problem that underlies what you're discussing. Ask yourself where the actual concern originates.
2. If you are involved in an argument lasting more than 10 minutes, stop and ask yourself, "Are we arguing about the core disagreement or is there a deeper issue that we're not discussing?"
3. You can't cultivate positive people with negative feedback. Give vivid, specific praise about your colleagues, and praise them in front of people who are important to them. Whatever behavior you praise, you encourage to flourish.
4. Make a habit of asking others about their interests before talking about your own. It shows respect for that person's feelings and needs.
5. Go slow to go fast. In any situation, help everyone involved feel comfortable with each other and the situation before proceeding further.
6. Keep your promises and, when possible, do more than is expected of you. The more often you give others what they need, the more often you'll get what you need.

## FOR STUDENTS-

1. Use general questions to raise the student awareness of stress. Sample questions include:
  - Think of the last thing that made you feel bad, nervous, or worried. What did you do? What made you feel better?
  - When something happens that makes you feel bad, nervous, or worried, what do you usually do that helps you the most?
  - What do you do that doesn't help much, but you do it anyway?
2. Use books as a medium to teach coping skills. After reading a "coping skills" book, ask students to identify feelings, problems and responses.
3. Teach alternative strategies to the kids. Examples would be writing in a journal, positive self-talk, positive imagery.
4. Encourage positive self-esteem by choosing a "person of the day." Have students write positive statements about one another.
5. Have students write an autobiography, sharing about their family, their interests and their friends.

This will hopefully give you insights into your life and coping patterns.

**LIFE CHANGE INDEX**  
(connected to Assignment #3)

1. Under "Number of Occurrences" indicate how many times in the past year each of the events has occurred.
2. Multiply the number under "Scale Value" by the number of occurrences of each event and place the answer under "Your Score."
3. Add the figures under "Your Score" to find your total for the past year.

This is just a guideline for stress and has many variables not taken into account such as support systems, personal impact of each incident (or impact upon mate), our own coping skills, etc. Use this as one indicator and not as a foolproof measure of anxiety or stress. And remember, many positive and exciting areas of our lives bring about stress (children, promotions, classes like this).

Life Event	Number of Occurrences	Scale Value	Your Score
Death of spouse	_____	100	_____
Divorce	_____	73	_____
Marital separation from mate	_____	65	_____
Detention in jail or other institution	_____	63	_____
Death of a close family member	_____	63	_____
Major personal injury or illness	_____	53	_____
Marriage	_____	50	_____
Being fired at work	_____	47	_____
Marital reconciliation with mate	_____	45	_____
Retirement from work	_____	45	_____
Major change in health/behavior of a family member	_____	44	_____
Pregnancy (personal)	_____	40	_____
Sexual difficulties	_____	39	_____
Gaining a new family member (birth, adoption, move in)	_____	39	_____
Major business adjustment (merger, bankruptcy, re-org)	_____	39	_____
Major change in finances (a lot better/worse off than usual)	_____	38	_____
Death of a close friend	_____	37	_____
Changing to a different line of work	_____	36	_____
Major change in the number of arguments with spouse (+/-)	_____	35	_____
Taking on a mortgage greater than \$10,000	_____	31	_____
Foreclosure on a mortgage or loan	_____	30	_____
Major change in responsibility at work (promotion, transfer)	_____	29	_____
Son/daughter leaving home (college, marriage, moving out)	_____	29	_____
In-law trouble	_____	29	_____
Outstanding personal achievement	_____	28	_____
Mate beginning or ceasing work outside of home	_____	26	_____

Beginning or ceasing formal schooling (not continuing ed)	_____	26	_____
Major change in living conditions (new home, major remodel)	_____	25	_____
Revisions of personal habits (dress, manners, friends)	_____	24	_____
Troubles with the boss	_____	23	_____
Major change in working hours or conditions	_____	20	_____
Change in residence	_____	20	_____
Changing to a new school	_____	20	_____
Major change in usual type and/or of recreation	_____	19	_____
Major change in religious activities (lot more/less than usual)	_____	19	_____
Major change in social activities (clubs, movies, visiting)	_____	18	_____
Taking on a mortgage/loan of less than \$10,000 (car, boat)	_____	17	_____
Major change in sleeping patterns (lot more/less than usual)	_____	16	_____
Major change in number of family get-togethers (+/- usual)	_____	15	_____
Major change in eating habits (more/less food intake, type)	_____	15	_____
Vacation	_____	13	_____
Christmas (or other major religious celebration)	_____	12	_____
Minor violation of the law (traffic ticket, jaywalking)	_____	11	_____

This is your total life change score for the past year.

### **SCORING INDEX**

**No peeking until you are all done with the test**

500 + = Major crisis-survival mode, hold on to life, change slowly.

300 - 499 = Moderate crisis-slow down, evaluate life, appreciate good things of life.

100 - 299 = Nice pace of life, keep going, enjoy it while it lasts.

0 - 99 = Mild crisis-stagnant, need new adventures, spice up your life a little.

(Adapted from the University of Washington, School of Medicine. Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science).

**ACTIVITY: Did the results surprise you? Do you agree? Give your general impressions of the results and the accuracy of this worksheet in 1-2 page summary.**

## **STRATEGIES TO SAYING “NO”**

1. Say no when you mean no. Avoid defending yourself. Simply say, "No, that won't work for me," or "No, I won't be able to do that."
2. Do not change your personal plans simply because someone at school or a parent asks you to attend a meeting. "I already have a commitment. Is there another time that would work for you?"
3. Do not feel obligated to be on a committee because you were on it before. "Thanks for thinking of me. I was on the committee last year and I am going to give someone else the opportunity (wink, wink) to do that service this year."
4. Be selective about extra committees, meetings, or other duties you agree to outside of your normal work time. Keep a list of those you are involved in each year.
5. If your supervisor asks you to be a part of a committee or group after you have hit your limit, tell him/her honestly that you are already committed to other areas. "At this time, I am fully committed to extra duties. I believe that further commitments would take away from my effectiveness in both my professional and personal life."
6. If someone asks you to do something when you are walking down the hall, out the door, eating lunch, or some other random time, ask the person to write it down and give it to you or put it in your box.
7. Avoid random volunteering unless you are directly asked. General "peer pressure" is not directed at you personally ... it only feels that way.
8. Keep your calendar handy at all times. Do not commit to anything without consulting your calendar. If you are going to be somewhere and want to avoid making a commitment, do not take your calendar with you. It is a built in excuse to wait and think about it.
9. If you know that an upcoming meeting will produce pressure to say yes, practice saying no. Go over situations in your mind and self-talk your way through the situation.
10. Avoid doing newsletters (unless you REALLY want to). They seem like a great idea, but they are very time consuming. If you must do one, find other people to help with the organizing and gathering of ideas.

## **SHOULD WE TREAT ALL KIDS THE SAME?**

*Answer each question and evaluate your answers. Do these issues contribute to your stress?*

1. Are all kids the same?
2. If we treat each student "different", is that fair?
3. What are some of the differences in students?

What are some of the reasons for differences?

4. How do you in your classroom (or school) treat kids the same?

How do you treat them differently?

5. Does your ethnic/cultural/personal life perspective impact the way you relate to other people? Is this good/bad/neither?

# **OVERCOMING OBSTACLES TO SUCCESS**

## COMMON ADULT PROBLEMS THAT INTERFERE WITH SUCCESS ... AND LEAD TO INCREASED STRESS

1. Impatience-remember, progress takes time. It took the child many years to learn the behaviors and may take time to overcome the habits. We must be prepared for a process in case there is not a miracle. Establish realistic goals and timelines.
2. Too Much Reassurance-we may saturate the child with too much support in an effort to reduce the anxiety. At time, our reassurance feels like we are not listening or are minimizing the real feelings. Every fear is real to the child. While a difficult tightrope, we must find the balance between encouraging the child and allowing them to struggle.
3. Making Excuses-overprotecting the child from hurt and pain. Here comes the rescuer, the one who hates to see people struggle or in pain. Remember, the opportunity for the child to grow and mature may come out of this experience. Be careful not to cheat the child of their learning.
4. Being Too Directive-attempting to solve the problem for them and telling them what to do may short circuit their learning. Adults need to stay calm, strong, and boundary oriented. At the

same time, be careful not to dictate demands, goals, or plans to the child.

5. Becoming Frustrated and Angry-it is easy to become exasperated at the child when demonstrating a lack of progress. We are all human and may fall prey to our own frustrations. Take a time out, relax, gain a fresh perspective, talk to others.
6. Not Knowing When More Is Needed-we lose perspective and try to shove a square peg in a round hole. Be aware of when a new strategy or approach is needed. Be willing to attempt plan B, or plan C, or plan ...



## **FOUNDATION FOR HEALTHY SELF-ESTEEM**

Adapted from "The Significant Seven" by Jane Nelson and Stephen Glenn

1. PERCEPTION OF PERSONAL CAPABILITIES-I am capable. What can I personally accomplish in life? I need to set goals and decide what areas of life I want to impact.

2. PERCEPTION OF SIGNIFICANCE IN PRIMARY RELATIONSHIPS-I contribute and am genuinely needed by friends and family. Find people you relate to well. Be sure your friendships are mutual and it is growth producing for you as well as the other people in your life. At times, we have friends that "take" but don't put back into our lives. A few of these may be okay, but be careful to not surround yourself with this type of person or you will be sucked dry.

3. PERCEPTION OF PERSONAL POWER OR INFLUENCE OVER LIFE-I can control my attitude. I choose how I respond to situations. Be in charge of your life and your choices. Only "you" can change "you. "

4. INTRAPERSONAL SKILLS-The ability to understand one's own feelings and perspective on life. Be willing to hold up the mirror and evaluate yourself. Share your perceptions with others to gain further understanding.

5. INTERPERSONAL SKILLS-The ability to work with others, develop friendships, communicate effectively, and work through problem areas of life. Do you get along with others? If you have relationship problems, get help and learn how to effectively communicate with other people.

6. SYSTEMIC SKILLS-The ability to respond to the guidelines and rules of life in a positive manner. The world does not revolve around us (surprise, surprise!). Follow good social rules and develop strong morals in life.

7. JUDGMENT SKILLS-The ability to evaluate the world around you and implement effective personal values into situations. Make good choices.

## **STEPS TOWARD GAINING COMPOSURE**

1. SET PRIORITIES IN LIFE- What are your expectations in life, in your job, with friends, family? What do you want to be remembered for when you are gone?

**ACTIVITY:** Make a list (#1 is most important) of your top five priorities in life. Don't list individuals, make "friends" or "family" a group.

2. HAVE A HEART OF COMPASSION- Focus on helping others, serving others.

**ACTIVITY:** Think of one person you can support this coming week. Write out what you will do for this person (send a note, phone call, help out)

3. RECOGNIZE YOUR OWN LIMITATIONS- Introspection is important. Evaluate your own shortcomings, areas of growth, places of weakness.

4. ACCEPT IMPERFECTIONS IN OTHERS- Show compassion, empathy, understanding and forgiveness.

**ACTIVITY:** List one person you need to forgive or show more empathy. Write a sentence or two on how you can do this. You do not need to share specifics.

5. DON'T PUT ALL YOUR EGGS IN ONE BASKET- One job, one person, or situation cannot meet all your needs. Spread the wealth around... be involved in many areas of life.

6. LET OTHERS CARE ABOUT YOU- Allow others to help and be a part of your life. Don't isolate yourself.

7. TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF- If you don't—it won't happen.

## **TECHNIQUES FOR MANAGING STRESS**

You may use several of these approaches in combination. No one approach is going to work all the time. Be flexible and adept at using different strategies.

- **Assertiveness-** Be aware of your needs. Avoid impulsive comments and clearly know your feelings and thoughts. Express them to others in a considerate manner. If you have an edge to your voice or mannerisms, it will create more problems. This is aggressive, not assertive.
- **Behavioral Rehearsal-** Practice stress management strategies prior to a stressful situation. Self-talk your way through the situation.
- **Cognitive Restructuring-** Replace irrational thoughts and behaviors. Evaluate your thinking .. is it "stinking thinking" or does it have merit?
- **Conflict Resolution-** Be willing to communicate your feelings and frustrations in a positive and calm manner. Don't share until you are capable of doing so without becoming aggressive or frustrated.
- **Performance Feedback-** Obtain feedback from others. Elicit information and guidance from people you trust. Ask them questions "Am I over-reacting?" or "Does my thinking seem sound?"
- **Problem Solving-** Use of a step-by-step evaluation. Write out your thinking process. Use of a systematic, logical approach to your situation. Write out choices and options. Don't feel trapped ... make a list of various approaches.
- **Self-Talk-** Positive self-statements. "I can do this." or "I am going to be successful" are two examples. Negative comments to self usually precede an unsuccessful intervention, especially if this is your pattern.
- **Think Aloud-** It is okay to talk to yourself. Walk your mind through the process, debate the various options, and be able to state the strategies to be implemented.
- **Time Management-** Prioritize your tasks and avoid placing yourself in a time bind.

## **Professional and Personal Analysis**

Examine each item and rate your perception by marking *Usually*,  
*Sometimes*, or *Seldom*.

FROM MY PERCEPTION, I ...	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom
1. Have enough time for myself.			
2. Have enough time for my family.			
3. Have enough time for responsibilities at school.			
4. Set long-range and short-range goals in life.			
5. Achieve my teaching goals.			
6. Maintain a high level of energy in life.			
7. Maintain a high level of enthusiasm in life.			
8. Avoid postponing difficult or unpleasant tasks.			
9. Manage change effectively in life.			
10. Can say "no" tactfully and effectively.			
11. Use time wisely (professional and personal life).			
12. Control interruptions to my planned schedule.			
13. Avoid taking on too many responsibilities.			
14. Delegate responsibilities when possible.			
15. Communicate well with supervisors.			
16. Communicate well with colleagues.			
17. Communicate well with family.			
18. Listen while others share their concerns.			
19. Manage totally unexpected change effectively.			
20. Admit personal/professional weaknesses.			

Choose one area you would like to work on changing over the coming weeks. Write out an action plan (specific ideas on how to change). This is just for you!

## **USE STRATEGIES THAT REDUCE ANXIETY**

1. **REALISTIC THINKING:** When a child's thinking is skewed, irrational, or too rigid, asking them questions may be helpful. Have the child write out (or dictate):

- Do they want the situation to change?
- What they would like to change?
- What does the child need to do to change things?
- Who can help them with their problems?

2. **OBJECTIVE THINKING:** Helping the individual gather information and assimilate it into a clear and understandable rubric may help.

The following questions should be evaluated:

What am I worried about?

What is the evidence?

What happened before?

What are the facts?

What else could happen?

What is my calm thought?

What positive thing could happen?

3. **RELAXATION:** Give the child skills in relaxation techniques. They should practice the skill regularly.

- Deep breathing exercises
- Muscle relaxation exercises
- Positive thinking (self-talk) exercises
- Positive imagery

4. **PEER SUPPORT:** Encourage the child to think of one or two peers who can help when he/she begins to get anxious.

- The peer(s) can talk with them (de-briefing).
- The peer(s) can remind them of strategies to reduce anxiety.
- The peer(s) can re-direct them to other areas of thinking.

**HOW  
TO  
HELP  
OTHERS!**

# **STRESS STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS**

1. Breathing-teach students to use a "cleansing breath" approach. Slowly breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth. Teach the entire class this method. Practice it prior to a test, difficult activity, or major transition.
2. Drawing-students may use the opportunity to draw as a stress reduction activity. To facilitate this, have a stack of pages for students to color as well as a box of colored pencils, crayons, and markers. Use of geometric type designs are excellent coloring pictures (small triangles, squares, etc.).
3. Writing-students may use the opportunity to write or journal as a stress reduction activity. This could be a creative writing time, a guided writing time where they have a topic to write about, or a problem solving strategy time (see next page for example).
4. Physical Activity-when children begin to become anxious, allow them to move around. Have them stand up, line up, walk outside, breathe, and come back inside.
5. Stretching-by their desks, have students stand up. Ask them to follow basic stretching strategies ... reach hands and arms to ceiling (slowly bring down), hands to side and squeeze hands (and relax), tighten legs (then relax), tighten shoulders (relax), roll shoulders forward, backwards, slowly roll head around, etc.
6. Talking-get with a partner and share any frustration at recess (at lunch, about test, school, etc.). This gives each student a chance to verbalize frustrations.
7. Classroom discussion-utilizing a classroom meeting or discussion, facilitate a time for students to share their anxiety regarding a specific topic.
8. Designated "Quiet Area"-have a special chair, bean bag, sofa, or other area for students to go to when they feel overwhelmed. A designated time frame can be used so a student isn't over there for a great length of time. Using a timer works well for this situation.
9. Choice Board-give students a choice of any of the above activities when they may feel frustrated, anxious, or stressed.
10. Other-make a list of any other strategies that you can think of that may work with students. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **PROBLEM SOLVING PAGE**

This page may be used when a student needs an opportunity to process his/her thinking. It may also help them to direct anxiety and stress into a productive focus. For younger children, you may need to have the dictate their responses or have them draw a picture.

1. What feelings are you having right now?

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2. If you could change anything about the situation you are feeling, what would it be?

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3. What can your teacher (or another adult) do to help in this situation?

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4. What can you do next time to change the situation?

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## **REDUCING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STRESS**

Make a list of stresses experienced by an elementary student:

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Most stress that involves younger children surrounds emotions they don't fully understand and situations they often have little control over in life. The following 5 areas are common:

1. **ACADEMIC PRESSURES-** Will I know how to do the work? How will my parent(s) respond? What if I don't get it?
  - Assist the child in knowing how to get help. Telling them to "raise their hand" may not be sufficient for a reserved, hesitant child
  - Develop strategies for communication between home and school that offer support and guidance to the child
2. **FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN AT SCHOOL-** How will I fit in? Will I be accepted? What is expected of me?
  - Children need ongoing orientations regarding school (a map, student leaders, mentoring, question/answer sessions). Whether it is moving to a new building or new grade, we need to take time to address internal concerns for each child.
3. **LACK OF CLASSROOM STRUCTURE-** Will there be support? Will I know how to do things? Will it be better/worse than last year?
  - Clearly identify rules and boundaries. Understand about learning styles and teach in a multi-faceted manner.
  - Assist the children in knowing the proper way to voice a complaint or share frustration. If we teach them in the early years, it will benefit them as a teenager.
4. **DISCIPLINE APPROACHES-** Will they be fair? Will I be able to follow the rules? What if I get in trouble?
  - Each child should understand "what happens when ... "
  - Explain areas of positive consequences as well as negative consequences.
5. **RISK OF ABUSE BY OTHER CHILDREN/BULLYING-** What if they don't like me? Will I be safe? How do I make friends?
  - Help children feel safe by developing a framework of security throughout the school

## **REDUCING HIGH SCHOOL STRESS**

Make a list of stresses experienced by a high school student

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Help the child development the Emotional Quotient (EQ) in life: awareness of emotions, strengths and areas of growth, self-esteem, taking responsibility, empathy, self-management, setting high standards, and overcoming obstacles.

### **STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING THE "EMOTIONAL QUOTIENT."**

- 1) ***Learn to balance demands on time.*** Plan in advance, avoid procrastination.
  - Make a list of tasks that need to be complete
  - Put time lines next to each task
  - Prioritize the tasks
  - Get help from others
- 2) ***Practice effective worrying.*** List stresses and develop solutions for each one. Change your attitude to success not failure.
  - Understand stress symptoms (headaches, insomnia, stomach pain)
  - Learn relaxation techniques (music, video games, skateboarding, etc. are all relaxation, but teens don't view it that way. Help them see it)
  - Remind them that coffee, alcohol, drugs will only increase symptoms of stress and depression
- 3) ***Accurately evaluate your situation.*** How bad is your situation really? Realize that situations are usually temporary and therefore, it won't last forever. Learn from your mistakes.
  - On a scale of one to ten, how bad is the situation?
  - Find a way to relax (exercise, laughter, friends-laugh at friends 😊)
  - Volunteer to help others-reduce focus on self.
- 4) ***Increase effective communication skills.*** Assertiveness, listening, resolving conflict, and dealing with difficult people and situations.
  - Get input from others as to how you can handle stress
  - Read books/articles
- 5) ***Know your support systems.*** When overwhelmed, who can you talk to in life?
  - Make a list of those you feel comfortable to talk to about issues
  - Who increases your stress? Can you minimize contact?
  - Prepare mindset before engaging the difficult situation

## **DEPRESSION: SIGNS AND INTERVENTIONS**

### **Risk Factors for Depression**

Sadness, depressed mood, irritability, agitation, defiance, or sullenness; Lack of pleasure in daily activities; Withdrawal or crying; Poor concentration or inability to make decisions; Poor academic performance; Negative thoughts about one-self, the world, and the future; Self-blame, guilt, and failure to recognize one's success; Excessive sleeping; Increased-risk behaviors (e.g., sexual risk-taking or abuse of drugs and alcohol); Suicide ideation or attempts.

### **INTERVENTION IDEAS FOR SCHOOLS**

- **Educate**
- **Develop caring, supportive environment**
- **Develop suicide prevention/intervention plan**
- **Note at-risk students**
- **Develop community resources**
- **Develop in-school support system**
- **Encourage parent cooperation**

OTHER IDEAS:

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**DEPRESSION**, particularly in teenagers, is often described as the invisible illness. Its' symptoms can easily masquerade as part of the normal tumult of adolescence, a time not noted for level moods or stable behavior. Rapid changes in hormonal balance, physical and cognitive development, response to peer pressure, and perceptions of the world, combined with conflicting desires to be independent but free of responsibilities, make adolescence a time of emotional turmoil and behavioral extremes.

Most middle level and high school students experience brief, sometimes intense, episodes of the blues, irritability, or rebellion. Even common adolescent behavior such as fads, body piercing, erratic sleep habits, and cyber socializing-can seem pathological to adults. How, then, can educators and parents differentiate between characteristics that are "just being a teenager" and those that suggest serious clinical depression? What is the responsibility of schools to do so?

Depression is the most common mental illness among adolescents. Statistically, in a school of 1,000 students, as many as 100 may be experiencing depression or mood swings severe enough to warrant a psychiatric diagnosis. Approximately 13 of those students will attempt suicide in a single year, making suicide the third leading cause of death among teens. Fortunately, most will not succeed.

Schools are an essential first line of defense in combating mental health problems, such as depression, because adolescents spend much of their time in school with skilled, caring professionals who have the opportunity to observe and intervene when a student exhibits signs of a problem. Principals can work with staff to strengthen protective factors in the school and to educate students, staff, and parents about depression and the hope offered by effective treatment.

Schools can also provide early identification, intervention, and referral services. Failure to do so has serious consequences besides suicide. Without treatment, depressed teens are at increased risk for school failure, social isolation, unsafe sexual behavior, drug and alcohol abuse, and long-term life problems. Conversely, virtually everyone who receives proper, timely intervention can be helped.

Depression is not a personal weakness, a character flaw, or the result of poor parenting. It is a mental illness that affects the entire person, changing how they feel, think, and act. A depressive disorder is generally defined as a persistent sad or irritable mood; a loss of the ability to experience pleasure in nearly all activities. It is more than just feeling down or having a bad day, and it is different from normal, healthy feelings of grief that usually follow a significant loss, such as divorce, a breakup with a boyfriend or girlfriend, or the death of a loved one.

Depression affects people of all ages and backgrounds. However, post-pubescent girls are twice as likely to suffer from serious depression as boys. Girls are twice as likely to attempt suicide but boys are 10 times more likely to succeed because they tend to choose more lethal methods of attempting suicide (such as using guns).

# WHEN YOUR WORLD TURNS UPSIDE DOWN

Kerri Dowd, Current Health I

(THIS IS A GOOD ARTICLE FOR CHILDREN. MAY BE HELPFUL TO PARENTS, COUNSELORS, TEACHERS WHEN WORKING WITH AREAS OF DEATH AND GRIEF).

One minute you feel like you could die of sadness, and the next you're pretending nothing has changed. Everyone goes through loss. What's normal, and how can you feel better?

Everyone suffers loss. It can come in many ways, such as having to move to another city and leave friends behind, dealing with your parents' divorce, losing an important friendship, or facing the death of a loved one.

Feelings of loss can also come from seeing and hearing stories about tragedies such as earthquakes, tornadoes, and the horrible acts of terrorism on September 11<sup>th</sup> and the Boston Marathon. You may feel just as sad and upset as if those events happened to you. That's because unexpected violent events are really scary and can make the whole world seem unsafe. It's also because of empathy. That means being able to feel the pain other people feel.

When something big changes in your life, it can help to know that all kinds of feelings are normal. Different people react in different ways. Here are some of the things that could happen if you experience a loss:

**\*\*You might scream out loud.** It is normal to be angry. You might even find yourself yelling at someone who didn't do anything at all, like a parent, teacher, or good friend.

**\*\*You might lose your appetite.** If you're very sad and upset, you might not be hungry-even for your favorite foods.

**\*\*You might try to make a deal.** You may say things like "I promise I'll be good if we can just move back to our old house," or "I'll never fight with my sister (or brother) again if you and Dad will just get back together."

**\*\*You might take the blame.** It's normal to feel guilty even when something is not your fault.

**\*\*You might pretend everything is still the same.** For example, you might keep talking about a person who has died as if he or she is just away on vacation. Or you might keep telling yourself, "This can't be happening."

**\*\*You might cry a lot or not at all.** Some people can't seem to stop the tears. Others can't seem to make them come. If you're a non-crier, some adults might worry that it means you don't care about what happened. It doesn't. Your emotions may need more

time to come out, or you might be someone who needs to run or play hard to get the sad feelings out.

**\*\*You might not want to talk about it.** That's what happened to Tony when his best friend, Sam, was hit by a car and killed. Tony was with him when it happened, and it was several months before he could talk about it.

**\*\*You might feel really lonely.** This can happen even if there are lots of people around who love you. It's just that none of them can replace what you have lost.

**\*\*You might experience all these feelings again.** Trying to get through a major loss takes time. Just when you think you're feeling better, you'll hear a song, or smell a smell, or remember something that brings all those feelings back again.

Even though all these feelings (and more) are normal, sometimes people just can't seem to feel happy again. If that is ever true for you, there are people who know how to help you. There are adults who have been trained to talk with people about their sadness and grief.

When something really sad happens in your life, you can't just magically wish it away. But here are some things that may make you feel better while you adjust to the change in your life.

Help someone else. Lots of people have turned really tragic situations into ways to help other people. When Candy Lightner's daughter was killed by a drunk driver, she started an organization called Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) that has now helped millions of people. When Trevor Ferrell was 11, he was sad when he saw homeless people in his town. He started to collect food and blankets to help them. Before long, other people began to help, and he started a homeless shelter.

--Try something new. Playing a new sport or getting involved in an activity or hobby can give your mind something else to focus on.

--Paint a picture or write a story or poem about your feelings. Sometimes getting your pain down on paper can take it out of your heart.

--Make a memory book. You wouldn't be sad if there weren't lots of good memories tied to the person or place that you lost. Put together a scrapbook or photo album to help you remember the happy times.

-- Write about your loss. Finish these sentences and then write some more:  
My first thoughts when I heard the news were...  
The thing that makes me feel the saddest is...  
If I could talk to the person who died, I would say...  
My happiest memory of the person is...

## **GRIEF FOLLOWING DEATH**

*The following ideas will help you to prepare general guidelines and strategies when working with a grieving individual.*

### **CONCEPTS**

Simple Explanations- make it easy to understand.

Honesty- be real with the child.

Emotionally Candid- let them know how you feel

Open Communication- touch base regularly with the child

### **GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS**

- \*\* Communicate with child immediately
- \*\* Reassure the child
- \*\* Share positive feelings and memories
- \*\* Allow the child to see you grieve
- \*\* Validate feelings
- \*\* Encourage questions, explain feelings, death, life issues
- \*\* Teenagers may grieve differently
- \*\* Encourage family togetherness, express love

### **EDUCATORS**

- \*\* When appropriate, use the above guidelines
- \*\* Allow extra free time (this is very cathartic)
- \*\* Counseling may be helpful
- \*\* Allow private time with student to talk
- \*\* Keep routines normal (with flexibility)
- \*\* Don't over-emphasize "schoolwork," but encourage effort and attempts

## **UNDERSTAND WHY CHILDREN WORRY**

(connected to Assignment #3)

**PHOBIAS-** fear of a specific object or situation. Common childhood phobias include animals, water, heights, being alone and doctors.

**SEPARATION ANXIETY-** fear or excessive distress when separated (or anticipated). This is most common in 14 to 18 month old children and usually decreases as the child gets older.

**SOCIAL ANXIETY-** concerns about performing, interacting, or being embarrassed in social situations. Performance anxiety may also be a part of this area (talking in front of a class, trying out for a team or event).

**PANIC-** physical or emotional reactions to an anxiety-provoking situation or object. Parents and children may reflect a strong biological component to this area, though it may be much stronger in the child.

**STRESS-RELATED ANXIETY-** occurs when someone has experienced or observed a traumatic event. Car accidents, violent crimes, excessive fear, or horror are examples. This may also be referred to as post-traumatic stress.

**GENERALIZED ANXIETY-** referred to as "worry warts." Tendency to worry about all types of things and issues.

**ACTIVITY:** Think of one student (or person) you know that fits into one of the above categories. Make a list of their behaviors or actions that indicate this area. Share any interventions that you think might help. Write a 1-2 page summary.



## **IDENTIFYING ANXIETY AND WORRY IN CHILDREN**

### **1. Affecting the body:**

What it looks like: increased heart rate, changes in breathing, sweating, shaky legs, muscular tension, darting eyes.

What to do: a) Compare tension to an animal being scared. b) Ask the child about his/her own body and responses. c) Have the child draw a picture or discuss areas of the body that are anxious.

### **2. Affecting the mind:**

What it looks like: scattered thoughts, irrational thinking, lack of concentration, over-reactions, exaggeration.

What to do: a) share situations with the child, asking him/her what they think will happen. b) Ask the child what he/she would feel in each of the situations. Then link the two together (thoughts and feelings). c) Ask the child to share a time when he was happy-how did he think and how did he feel. d) Finally, think of a time when 'you were upset (sad, angry, alone), what were you thinking and feeling?

### **3. Affecting the behavior:**

What it looks like: withdrawal, acting out, aggressive words, defensiveness, passivity.

What to do: a) Ask the child what he/she needs from you. b) Ask the child what he/she needs from others.

### **4. Affecting relationships:**

What it looks like: broken friendships, "pity-party," aggressive, victim mentality.

What to do: a) Be honest and share what you see happening in his/her life. b) Isolate the child for a short period of time. Allow them to think and be alone. c) Problem solve with the child and find solutions for the relationships. d) Help the child find a way to implement strategies.

## **SEVEN STEPS TO HELP A CHILD WORRY LESS**

### **1. UNDERSTAND WHY CHILDREN WORRY.**

What is their motivation and purpose of anxiety and worry?  
Make a list of struggles that children experience. Can you pinpoint an area that a particular child is going through?

### **2. KNOW WHEN CHILDREN NEED HELP.**

Understand signs and symptoms of anxiety. Know about nonverbal cues and subtle signs of anxiousness. Evaluate the behavior of a child without reacting to the behavior.

### **3. CREATING AN ALLIANCE WITH THE CHILD.**

Connecting with the child is important. De-mystify anxiety and worry by talking with the child about it. Explain the way our bodies react to anxiety, the way minds respond to worry. This will help a child to see the reactions as part of a process in life.

### **4. USE STRATEGIES THAT REDUCE ANXIETY.**

Step-by-step guidelines to reduce anxiety are helpful. Evaluate how and when to use these strategies.

### **5. HELP THE CHILD UNDERSTAND FAILURE.**

Failure is a part of life and does not mean the person is a failure. Help each child to understand that we may "fail" in an attempt at something, but we learn and move forward.

### **6. OVERCOME OBSTACLES TO SUCCESS.**

Examine common problems that interfere with success. Avoid a re-occurrence of the problem by developing strategies to minimize future occurrences.

### **7. INSTILL A RESILIENT MINDSET IN THE CHILD.**

Teach children how to bounce back from events (emotionally, psychologically, socially).

## **HELPING CHILDREN COPE WITH STRESS**

Karen Fallin, Charlotte Wallinga, Mick Coleman  
Childhood Education

Stress is a part of even the youngest students' lives, making the concept of a carefree childhood nearly obsolete. Many school-age children are subject to school related stressors such as falling grades, overly demanding classroom environments, athletic requirements, peer relationships, tests, and conflict with teachers. Teachers witness many of these stressors and their effects on the classroom. Academic problems, behavioral problems, children's complaints of stomachaches or headaches, and drug use all may be related to excessive levels of stress in children's lives.

A stressor is any event in which environmental demands, internal demands or both exceed the adaptive resources of an individual. Stressors may be divided into major life events (e.g. the death of a parent or the birth of a sibling), chronic strain (e.g. living in poverty, ongoing abuse, or chronic illness), and daily stressors (e.g. taking a test or arguing with a sibling). This article will focus on daily stressors.

Daily stressors are the irritating, frustrating, distressing demands that to some degree characterize everyday transactions with the environment. For the school age child, daily stressors may include anxiety about school, conflicts with teachers, competition with peers or siblings, lack of parental interest, personal injury or loss, poor grades, fear of success or failure, and fear of medical visits and procedures. The occurrence of daily stressors in childhood appears to be related to the adaptational outcomes such as depression, sense of self-worth, and overall health status.

Children use a variety of coping strategies in response to daily stressors. Some strategies are directed at changing stressors, while others are directed at managing the

emotions triggered by stressors. When a stressful event occurs, children mobilize their resources in response to the situation.

Classroom teachers can play a vital role in helping students manage daily stress effectively. Because so many stressors are directly related to the school environment and because stress related problems affect students' performance in school, topics of stress and coping should be considered part of the curriculum. Lessons about stress and coping can be incorporated into various subject areas. For example, biological responses to stress can be taught in science, and skills for coping with stress and for enhancing social support can be taught in health and wellness classes. Children read and write about stressors in language arts, and can express their feelings about stressors through artwork.

Teachers should familiarize themselves with the stressors that commonly affect children, keeping in mind that what is stressful for one child may not be stressful for another child. Identifying stressors in the classroom is the first step teachers can take in helping their students manage stress. Teachers can accomplish this through graffiti boards, group discussions, and behavioral observations.

**A graffiti board** is a bulletin board covered with paper. It can be useful for assessing stressors by providing students with an opportunity for self-expression. Label the paper with a title like "Things that are stressful for me," and encourage the children to anonymously describe their stressors. Students will feel some release by writing down their problems, and they will learn what their classmates find stressful. A graffiti board may be used in conjunction with lessons on stress and coping, especially during particularly stressful times of the school year. In a similar technique, teachers provide a box in which children can anonymously submit stressors they would like to hear discussed in class. Teachers will gain a general sense of the types of stressors experienced by the students.

A **large group discussion** is an effective classroom dialogue that can generate conversation around specific questions such as:

- What makes you feel bad, nervous, or worried?
- How often has this happened in the last (time frame)?
- How did this make you feel?

This questioning technique will likely elicit comparable responses from different children. It can be reassuring for children to know that their peers also find certain events to be stressful.

Some children may not be comfortable sharing their stressors in a group setting. As an alternative, have children submit written responses. For younger children, they can draw pictures. Teachers then can lead a group discussion and share the student stressors without identifying anyone. A fun activity to complement such a group discussion is to have children draw, decorate, and cut out pictures of bugs. On their pictures, they can write down the things that "bug" them.

**Observations** may be used by teachers to detect signs or symptoms of stress, such as regressive behaviors, withdrawal, irritability, inability to concentrate in school, and difficulty getting along with peers. If a teacher finds that a child is demonstrating ongoing stress related symptoms, it may be useful to document firsthand observations and seek the observations of other school professionals. Communication with the student and parents about the observed behavior is vital.

One way to reduce the severity of stressors is to change or remove them, although this is not always possible. Educators can help a student who complains that he is bored by assignments that are too easy, for example, by providing more challenging ones. Also, teachers may be able to intervene in peer related stress by separating children who persistently tease or annoy one another, or who compete with one another.

Another way to reduce the severity of stressors is to help change children's perceptions of stressors. Such a process is difficult and may require the child to undergo counseling. Within the classroom, teachers could ask the children to role-play their perceptions of various stressful situations. Scenarios of different stressors may be read to children (e.g. Imagine you have a spelling test the next day and you forget your book at school). Children state their perceptions of such a situation and describe how it would make them feel (e.g., My day would be ruined. I would be afraid I would be in trouble). A group discussion could generate alternative ideas to such a situation.

And finally, children's appraisals of daily events can help them focus on positive experiences. This may be accomplished by having children brainstorm the people, places, times, and events in their lives that make them happy. The teacher can facilitate the brainstorming session and write down all the suggestions on a colorful display.

## **HELP THE CHILD UNDERSTAND FAILURE**

This is very difficult for many children (and adults). While failure is a natural part of life, some people take failure so personally that it will distort their life perspective. We must teach our students that failure (or being unsuccessful) does not mean we can't succeed next time. Also, the child may need help to see that anxiety is a part of successfully preparing for a situation.

1. Read stories or show films of people that have had to overcome adversity or struggles. Utilize speakers in your own building or community. Actors, actresses, sports figure, rock stars, and other high profile people are great. However, be sure to include some people that are more typical of the general population as well.
2. Bring clarity and definition to success and failure. "Successful people are those who got back up after failing." Often times we see failure as "bad" and success as "good". Can you think of a time when you didn't succeed, but it turned out good? Or a time you succeeded, but it was not a positive experience?
3. Ask the child to think of a time they were not successful in life.
4. Help the child see failure as temporary. Part of the emotional and mental barriers has to do with a sense of permanency. How long does failure last? How often do people bring issues up? What do the people who care about you say?
5. Allow the child the opportunity to choose when they will begin to work toward success. They may need a day or so to re-charge their mental batteries.
6. Find a time for the child to share with the class, with a parent, with another adult what they have learned about being successful in life.

ADDITIONAL  
WORKSHEETS  
AND  
SELF-EVALUATION



# A WELLNESS TEST

Most people think of themselves as "well" if they don't have a cough, an ulcer, a fever or a broken toe. But wellness includes more than just physical well-being. It is also measured in terms of the social, emotional, intellectual, occupational and spiritual dimensions of our lives.

Assess your degree of wellness by completing the following questionnaire. Read each sentence and circle the letter that represents your response. Instructions for scoring appear at the end of the test.

## PHYSICAL—Fitness

- I exercise vigorously for at least 20 minutes two or three times a week.
- I determine my activity level by monitoring my pulse rate.
- I avoid the extremes of too much or too little exercise.
- I approach exercise in a relaxed manner.
- I stretch before exercising.
- I stretch after exercising.
- I walk or bike whenever possible.
- I stop exercising before I feel exhausted.
- My exercise program is well-rounded.
- If I am not in shape, I avoid sporadic, strenuous exercise.

Almost always  
Very frequently  
Frequently  
Occasionally  
Almost never

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

Total Number:

Multiply by:

Add:

× 10	× 8	× 6	× 4	× 2	
+	+	+	+	+	

## PHYSICAL—Nutrition

- When choosing non-vegetable protein, I select poultry, fish and lean cuts of meat.
- I minimize my intake of salt.
- I eat fruit and vegetables.
- I eat breakfast.
- I intentionally include fiber in my diet.
- I drink enough fluid to keep my urine light yellow.
- I plan my diet to insure an adequate amount of vitamins and minerals.
- I minimize foods in my diet that contain large amounts of refined flour.
- I minimize my intake of fats and oils.
- I minimize my intake of table sugar, pre-sweetened foods, processed and fast foods.

Almost always  
Very frequently  
Frequently  
Occasionally  
Almost never

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

Total Number:

Multiply by:

Add:

× 10	× 8	× 6	× 4	× 2	
+	+	+	+	+	

## PHYSICAL—Self-Care

- I maintain an up-to-date immunization record.
- I examine myself on a monthly basis.
- I minimize my exposure to tobacco smoke.
- I brush my teeth after eating.
- I floss my teeth after eating each meal.
- My resting pulse rate is 60 or less.
- I get an adequate amount of sleep.
- I try to keep my blood pressure low.
- I monitor my blood cholesterol level.
- When I am ill or injured, I take the steps necessary to correct the problem.

Almost always  
Very frequently  
Frequently  
Occasionally  
Almost never

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

Total Number:

Multiply by:

Add:

× 10	× 8	× 6	× 4	× 2	
+	+	+	+	+	

## PHYSICAL—Drugs and Driving

- I avoid operating vehicles when I am under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.
- I avoid riding with drivers who are under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.
- I stay within the speed limit.
- I maintain a safe driving distance between cars.
- I keep my motor vehicle(s) well maintained.
- I avoid the use of tobacco.
- I consume no more than two alcoholic drinks per day.
- I follow the instructions provided with medication that I take.
- I understand the expected effects of the drugs I take.
- I consider alternatives to drugs.

Almost always  
Very frequently  
Frequently  
Occasionally  
Almost never

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

Total Number:

Multiply by:

Add:

× 10	× 8	× 6	× 4	× 2	
+	+	+	+	+	

## SOCIAL—Environment

- I try to conserve energy in my home.
- I try to make everyone in my family feel as if they are an important part of the whole.
- When I see a safety hazard, I take action by warning others or correcting the problem.
- I avoid unnecessary radiation.
- I contribute time and / or money to community projects.
- I participate in volunteer activities.
- I offer support to members of my family.
- When possible, I choose an environment that is free of air pollution.
- I do my part to promote clean air.
- When possible, I choose an environment that is free of noise pollution.

Almost always  
Very frequently  
Frequently  
Occasionally  
Almost never

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

A B C D E

Total Number:

Multiply by:

Add:

× 10	× 8	× 6	× 4	× 2	
+	+	+	+	+	

## EMOTIONAL—Awareness

I am comfortable in my relationships with others.  
I feel positive about myself.  
I feel there is an appropriate amount of excitement in my life.  
My emotional life is stable.  
When I make mistakes, I learn from them.  
I feel enthusiastic about my life.  
I find it easy to laugh.  
I enjoy my life.  
I have plenty of energy.  
My sleep is restful.

Almost always  
Very frequently  
Frequently  
Occasionally  
Almost never

A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E

Total Number: 

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Multiply by: 

× 10	× 8	× 6	× 4	× 2
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Add: 

+	+	+	+	+
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## EMOTIONAL—Control

I can express my feelings of anger.  
I can say "no" without feeling guilty.  
I make decisions with a minimum of stress and worry.  
I accept constructive criticism.  
I relax as part of my daily routine.  
I am able to develop close, intimate relationships.  
I set realistic objectives for myself.  
I can relax my body and mind (without using drugs).  
I accept responsibility for my actions.  
I am willing to take the risks that come with making change.

Almost always  
Very frequently  
Frequently  
Occasionally  
Almost never

A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E

Total Number: 

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Multiply by: 

× 10	× 8	× 6	× 4	× 2
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Add: 

+	+	+	+	+
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## INTELLECTUAL

I keep abreast of social and political issues.  
I am interested in learning about scientific discoveries.  
I maintain and improve my verbal skills.  
I maintain and improve my writing skills.  
I am satisfied with the entertainment choices I make.  
I carefully select my movies and television choices.  
I maintain a continuing education program relative to my career.  
I am satisfied with what I read.  
It's easy for me to apply knowledge gained in one situation to a new situation.  
I listen to the perspectives of others.

Almost always  
Very frequently  
Frequently  
Occasionally  
Almost never

A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E

Total Number: 

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Multiply by: 

× 10	× 8	× 6	× 4	× 2
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Add: 

+	+	+	+	+
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## OCCUPATIONAL

I enjoy my work.  
I learn new skills in my work.  
My work is challenging.  
My job responsibilities are consistent with my values.  
I look forward to doing my job.  
I am satisfied with the balance between my work time and leisure time.  
I am satisfied with my ability to plan my workload.  
I am satisfied with the work I do.  
I try to create an environment that minimizes my stress.  
I believe I am competent in my job.

Almost always  
Very frequently  
Frequently  
Occasionally  
Almost never

A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E

Total Number: 

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Multiply by: 

× 10	× 8	× 6	× 4	× 2
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Add: 

+	+	+	+	+
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## SPIRITUAL

I seek spiritual fulfillment.  
Prayer, meditation, and /or quiet personal reflection are important parts of my life.  
My values guide my daily life.  
I feel a sense of compassion for others in need.  
I am concerned about humanitarian issues.  
I participate in discussions about spiritual values.  
I contemplate my purpose in life.  
I am satisfied with the degree to which my job is consistent with my values.  
My leisure time activities are consistent with my values.  
I am tolerant of the values and beliefs of others.

Almost always  
Very frequently  
Frequently  
Occasionally  
Almost never

A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E

Total Number: 

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Multiply by: 

× 10	× 8	× 6	× 4	× 2
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Add: 

+	+	+	+	+
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## TO SCORE

- Add the total number of As, Bs, Cs, Ds and Es in each category.
  - Multiply the number of As by 10, Bs by 8, Cs by 6, Ds by 4 and Es by 2.
  - Total your scores.
  - Determine your overall wellness index by adding the scores in each category and dividing by 10:
- |                              |                                   |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Physical — Fitness           | _____                             |
| Physical — Nutrition         | _____                             |
| Physical — Self-Care         | _____                             |
| Physical — Drugs and Driving | _____                             |
| Social — Environment         | _____                             |
| Emotional — Awareness        | _____                             |
| Emotional — Control          | _____                             |
| Intellectual                 | _____                             |
| Occupational                 | _____                             |
| Spiritual                    | _____                             |
| TOTAL =                      | _____ - 10 = <input type="text"/> |

## IF YOU SCORED:

**90-100**, your wellness index is **excellent**. You are leading a very healthy lifestyle.  
**70-89**, your wellness index is **very good**. But with regular commitment you could improve your rating.  
**50-69**, your wellness index is **fair**. It could be better if you began to reassess your present living style and habits.  
**Less than 50**, your wellness index is **OK**. There is a lot you could learn and do to improve the quality of your life both now and in the future.  
Scan each of the ten wellness categories to identify your strong points and weak points. This quick check will give you a good idea about where to concentrate your efforts to improve your wellness index.

## **CASE STUDY** (connected to Assignment #8)

Mr. Shaky (or Mrs., Ms., or ... your choice) works at a school as a teacher. He says that he enjoys his job, except for a few areas. These areas create quite a problem for him and have led to an upcoming conference with his principal (one of "the problems")

The Shakester (as called by his students) does not get along well with several of his colleagues. He thinks they are too loud, too boisterous, and don't take their jobs seriously. When asked to be a part of a planning committee, he refused. When asked to join in on a social function, he refused. When asked to help organize a curriculum change, he refused. Due to this, his colleagues spend little time interacting with Mr. Shaky. They see him as complaining and being very uptight.

The Shakemiester (as called by his colleagues) is not always well received by the students. He is often impatient and does not seem to understand the need for his students to "enjoy" life. He reacts to their playfulness in a negative fashion, often escalating a situation.

His Shakiness (as called by his family) has resorted to sending emails and comments to his administrator, his administrator's administrator, and other people in authority. It is this action that has prompted a meeting with his principal.

On the other hand, Stanley (as called by his Mom) is a caring individual who truly wants his students to be successful. He is very conscientious and spends many hours preparing exciting and valuable lessons. The parents appreciate him and feel he prepares their children for further education. This has been proven true by test scores and the success of former students in classes.

You are the administrator and need to address the issues.

1. How would you start this conference?

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2. Name two areas that you would address.

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3. Share at least two suggestions that may help him in the future.

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Other thoughts:



## STRESS REDUCTION WORKSHEET

READ ENTIRE MANUAL FIRST

(To be used for assignment #5)

*A SAMPLE WORKSHEET HAS BEEN FILLED OUT ON THE NEXT PAGE.*

1. List one area of focus where your stress/anxiety does not have a positive direction (personal or professional). \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(STOP!) Have you read the manual first?.. just checking.

2. How does this impact you? (Emotionally, physically, socially, mentally).  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Where is this stress/anxiety coming from (take responsibility) and can you change it? How?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you want to change it? (For example, a job may be giving stress, but you may not want to change jobs).  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Make a plan to minimize the negative impact on two areas of your life (i.e. family, friends, health, job, etc.).  
A. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **SAMPLE**

### **STRESS REDUCTION WORKSHEET**

1. List one area of focus where your stress/anxiety does not have a positive direction (personal or professional). *I am frustrated with a friend of mine who seems to always be negative. We have been friends for a long time.*

2. How does this impact you? (Emotionally, physically, socially, mentally). *It impacts me in all areas. There are times I dread being with him. However, our families are friends and I feel forced to endure. I find myself getting anxious before seeing him and mentally being negative. I also become impatient with people prior to our visits.*

3. Where is this stress/anxiety coming from (take responsibility) and can you change it? How? *It is coming from my reaction to my friend. I am in charge of my attitude and need to decide whether to continue the relationship, confront my friend, or let it not impact me so greatly.*

4. Do you want to change it? (For example, a job may be giving stress, but you may not want to change jobs). *I want to change our relationship, but I don't want to lose my friend. We have a good time together when this area doesn't overwhelm me.*

5. Make a plan to minimize the negative impact on two areas of your life (i.e. family, friends, health, job, etc.).

A. *Attitude: before meeting with my friend, I will choose to be positive. When he makes a negative statement, I will counter it with a positive, point out a positive, make a light joke, or re-direct the conversation. I won't let it dwell on the negative.*

B. *Family: I won't blame my spouse for the situation. At times, I have been frustrated with family because we are going over to their house. If I don't want to go, I will be honest and share with my family. I will also ask for their suggestions as to how I can cope with this issue (which has been going on for 20 years) better. It never use to bother me this much and I think I have built it up in my mind.*

## **EVALUATING YOU!**

1. My friends choose me as a friend because:
  
2. My greatest assets as an educator (or person) are:
  
3. I contribute \_\_\_\_\_ to the staff in my building (district/ office).
  
4. The most influential person in my life was/is \_\_\_\_\_ because:
  
5. One thing I did for myself in the past week was:
  
6. Name a support person in your life (not a spouse or significant other):
  
7. Tell (or write) an individual how special they are in your life.

## Turkey Story

When I was a young turkey, new to the coop,  
My big brother Mike took me out on the stoop.

Then he sat me down and he spoke real slow,  
And he told me there was something that I had to know.

His look and his tone I will always remember,  
When He told me of the horrors of... Dark November.

"Come about August, now listen to me,  
Each day you'll get six meals instead of just three."

"And then one morning when you're warm in your bed,  
In'll burst the farmer's wife, and hack off your head."

"Then she'll pluck out all your feathers so you're bald and pink,  
And scoop out all your insides and leave ya lyin' in the sink."

"And then comes the worst part, he said not bluffing,  
She'll spread your cheeks and pack your rear with stuffing."

Well, the rest of his words were too grim to repeat,  
I sat on the stoop like a winged piece of meat.

And decided on the spot, that to avoid being cooked,  
I'd have to lay low and remain overlooked.

I began a new diet of nuts and granola,  
High roughage salads, juice and diet cola.

And as they ate pastries, chocolates and crepes,  
I stayed in my room doing Jane Fonda tapes.

I maintained my weight of two pounds and a half,  
And tried not to notice when the bigger birds laughed.

But twas I who was laughing under my breath,  
They chomped and they chewed ever closer to death.

And sure enough, when dark November rolled around,  
I was the last turkey left in the entire compound.

So now I'm a pet in the farmer's wife's lap,  
I haven't a worry so I eat and I nap.

She held me today, while sewing and humming,  
And smiled at me and said "Christmas is coming..."

## STRESS REDUCTION IN STAFF & STUDENTS BIBLIOGRAPHY

You may choose a book from this list or one of your own choosing that is compatible to this course. Please let the instructor know if you choose a book that is not on this list.

**Alter, Robin and Clarke, Crystal.** *The Anxiety Workbook For Kids*. New Harbinger Publications, 2016. Illustrations and activities for children (grades P-6<sup>th</sup>.) [www.newharbinger.com](http://www.newharbinger.com) 800 748 6273.

**Blaustein, Margaret.** *Treating Stress in Children and Adolescents*. Guilford Press, 2018. The impact of trauma on anxiety and attachment. (grades P-12). [www.guilford.com](http://www.guilford.com)

**Chansky, Tamar.** *Freeing Your Child From Negative Thinking*. Da Capo Lifelong Books, 2020. Help to change negative thinking habits. (grades P-12.) [www.dacapopress.com](http://www.dacapopress.com)

**Coyne, Peter.** *The Unbreakable Mind: Overcoming Anxiety, Stress, and Overthinking*. Independently Published, 2023. Avoiding obstacles of negative habit patterns. (P-12) [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

**Huebner, Dawn.** *What To Do When You Worry Too Much*. Magination Press, 2024. Strategies to reduce stress and anxiety in children (grades K-6.) [www.maginationpress.com](http://www.maginationpress.com).

**Merrell, Kenneth.** *Helping Students Overcome Depression and Anxiety*. Guilford Press, 2013. Intervention techniques to reduce anxiety (grades P-12.) [www.guilford.com](http://www.guilford.com) 800 365 7006.

**Reed, Joss.** *Anxiety Management For Kids*. Joss Reed Publishing, 2024. Helping children understand their stress. (P-12). [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

**Tierney, Jeff.** *Teaching Social Skills to Yourth*. Boys Town Press, 2022. An easy to follow guide to teach life skills and prosocial skills. (P-12). [www.boystownpress.org](http://www.boystownpress.org)

**Tompkins, Michael.** *Social Anxiety Relief For Teens*. Instant Help, 2021. A simple 5 step process to help reduce anxiety and fears. (P-12). [www.newharbinger.com](http://www.newharbinger.com)

**Trenton, Nick.** *Stop Overthinking: 23 Techniques to Relieve Stress and Negative Spirals*. How to get out of the loop of negative thinking and patterns. Independently published, 2021. [www.nicktrenton.com](http://www.nicktrenton.com)

**The following two books are written by your instructor and contain a faith based perspective and biblical references.** These are available on line or through bookstores. Both books are available in CD format as audio books.

*What To Do When Words Get Ugly*. Michael Sedler. Revell Books, 2016 (edited/revised edition). Examines the topic of gossip and how it impacts people. (Adult) [www.bakerbooks.com](http://www.bakerbooks.com) 1-800-877-2665

*When to Speak Up and When to Shut Up*. Michael Sedler. Revell Books, 2006. Communication book discussing conflict and encouragement. (Adult) [www.bakerbooks.com](http://www.bakerbooks.com) 1-800-877-2665 **(over 400,000 copies sold).**