

Tactics for Coping with Stress Inventory

Before you embark on a program of change, it is important to consider how you are currently managing your stress.

Instructions: Listed below are some common ways of coping with stressful events. Mark those that are characteristic of your behavior or that you use frequently.

- _____ 1. I ignore my own needs and just work harder and faster.
- _____ 2. I seek out friends for conversation and support.
- _____ 3. I eat more than usual.
- _____ 4. I engage in some type of physical exercise.
- _____ 5. I get irritable and take it out on those around me.
- _____ 6. I take a little time to relax, breathe, and unwind.
- _____ 7. I smoke a cigarette or drink a caffeinated beverage.
- _____ 8. I confront my source of stress and work to change it.
- _____ 9. I withdraw emotionally and just go through the motions of my day.
- _____ 10. I change my outlook on the problem and put it in a better perspective.
- _____ 11. I sleep more than I really need to.
- _____ 12. I take some time off and get away from my working life.
- _____ 13. I go out shopping and buy something to make myself feel good.
- _____ 14. I joke with my friends and use humor to take the edge off.
- _____ 15. I drink more alcohol than usual.
- _____ 16. I get involved in a hobby or interest that helps me unwind and enjoy myself.
- _____ 17. I take medicine to help me relax or sleep better.
- _____ 18. I maintain a healthy diet.
- _____ 19. I just ignore the problem and hope it will go away.
- _____ 20. I pray, meditate, or enhance my spiritual life.
- _____ 21. I worry about the problem and am afraid to do something about it.
- _____ 22. I try to focus on the things I can control and accept the things I can't

Evaluate your results: The even-numbered items tend to be more constructive tactics and the odd-numbered items tend to be less constructive tactics for coping with stress. Congratulate yourself for the even-numbered items you checked. Think about whether you need to make some changes in your thinking or behavior if you checked any of the odd-numbered items. Consider experimenting with some even-numbered items you haven't tried before. This workbook will assist you in making these changes.

Adapted from the "Coping Styles Questionnaire." © 1999 by Jim Boyers, Ph.D., Kaiser-Permanente Medical Center and Health Styles, Santa Clara, Calif.