

# Stress Coping Resources Inventory: A Self-Assessment

**Instructions:** People differ remarkably in their responses to potentially stressful events. For instance, about one in ten hostages comes out of captivity a mentally healthier person than when entering, while the others may face extreme emotional difficulty. What are the factors associated with coping success? The questions below relate to factors most closely associated with the capacity to cope successfully with stress. Circle the letter which lists the option that you choose. Answer each question as honestly as possible.

1. How frequently do you moderately exercise?
  - a. Daily or more often
  - b. Once or twice a week
  - c. Once or twice a month
  - d. Seldom
2. How often do you get a full, restful night of sleep?
  - a. Most every night
  - b. Four to five times a each week
  - c. Two to three times each week
  - d. Seldom
3. To what extent is your energy sufficient for our work and daily activities?
  - a. to a very great extent
  - b. to some extent
  - c. to little extent
  - d. to very little extent
4. How closely does your weight approach the ideal level?
  - a. My weight is at the ideal level
  - b. My weight is close to the idea level
  - c. My weight is not close to the ideal level
  - d. I am dangerously overweight (underweight)
5. To what extent do you eat a nutritious diet?
  - a. to a very great extent
  - b. to some extent
  - c. to little extent
  - d. to very little extent
6. Which of the following best describes your use of tobacco?
  - a. In no period of my life have I had the habit of smoking or chewing tobacco.
  - b. Early in my life for a short period I smoked or chewed tobacco
  - c. I stopped smoking or chewing tobacco over the past two years
  - d. I currently smoke or chew tobacco

7. Which of the following best describes your use of alcohol?
- a. I do not abuse alcohol, and never have. (Abuse is defined as drinking more than two drinks within a short period such as an evening.)
  - b. Very occasionally I abuse alcohol.
  - c. I have a history of abusing alcohol, but am not presently abusing it.
  - d. I am presently abusing alcohol.
8. To what extent do you believe that you have a history of coping well with highly stressful situations?
- a. to a very great extent
  - b. to a great extent
  - c. to a little extent
  - d. to a very little extent
9. How confident are you of being able to control your emotions in stressful situations?
- a. I never let my emotions run away me.
  - b. I seldom let my emotions run away with me.
  - c. I sometimes let my emotions run away with me.
  - d. I often let my emotions run away with me.
10. When things are not going well, how likely are you to view the situation as being temporary rather than permanent?
- a. very likely
  - b. likely
  - c. unlikely
  - d. very unlikely
11. When something bad happens to you, how likely are you to exaggerate its importance?
- a. very unlikely
  - b. unlikely
  - c. likely
  - d. very likely
12. When stressed by a complex situation, how likely are you to focus your attention on those aspects of the situation that you can manage?
- a. very likely
  - b. likely
  - c. unlikely
  - d. very unlikely
13. When highly stressed, how capable are you of changing your thinking to calm down?
- a. very capable
  - b. capable
  - c. incapable

d. very incapable

14. When confronted with a stressful situation, how likely are you to wait passively for events to develop rather than to take charge?

- a. very unlikely
- b. unlikely
- c. likely
- d. very likely

15. Which of the following courses of action are you most likely to take when you have become thoroughly frustrated?

- a. identify an alternate goal and pursue it
- b. pursue a relaxing activity
- c. withdraw and feel sorry for yourself
- d. vent your aggression on someone weaker than you

16. If you had worn an article of clothing one day and then found it to be flawed, how likely would you be to return it and ask for a refund?

- a. very likely
- b. likely
- c. unlikely
- d. very unlikely

17. When an unexpected, negative event happens to you, how likely are you to actively seek information about the event and how to cope with it?

- a. very likely
- b. likely
- c. unlikely
- d. very unlikely

18. How much decision-making power do you have in your family?

- a. more power than any other member of my family
- b. as much power as any other member of my family
- c. less power than most members of my family
- d. less power than any other member of my family

19. How much decision-making power do you have in your working environment? (if not working outside the home at present, use your last job as a basis for answering this question.)

- a. more power than most members of my work team
- b. as much power as any other member of my work team
- c. less power than most members of my work team
- d. less power than any other member of my work team

20. To what extent do you believe that events in your life are merely the result of luck, fate,

or chance?

- a. to very little extent
- b. to little extent
- c. to some extent
- d. to a great extent

21. What is your best guess as to the extent and quality of contact you had with your parent(s) shortly after birth?

- a. was given an above average amount of contact by happy parent(s)
- b. was given an average amount of contact by happy parent(s)
- c. was given an average amount of contact by unhappy (perhaps angry) parent(s)
- d. was given a below average amount of contact by unhappy (perhaps angry) parent(s)

22. During your early childhood, to what extent was your mother both calm and generally permissive?

- a. to a very great extent
- b. to some extent
- c. to little extent
- d. to very little extent

23. How easily do you make friends in a strange situation?

- a. very easily
- b. easily
- c. uneasily
- d. very uneasily

24. When highly stressed, how likely are you to ask friends or relatives for help?

- a. very likely
- b. likely
- c. unlikely
- d. very unlikely

25. In comparison with other people, how likely are you to see others as threatening, uncooperative, or exploitative?

- a. highly unlikely
- b. unlikely
- c. likely
- d. highly likely

26. How often are you confused about the intentions of others toward you?

- a. very infrequently
- b. infrequently
- c. frequently
- d. very frequently

27. To what extent are you aware of practical, healthy ways of relaxing?
- a. to a very great extent
  - b. to some extent
  - c. to little extent
  - d. to very little extent
28. How frequently do you pursue some highly relaxing practice?
- a. daily or more often
  - b. once or twice a week
  - c. once or twice a month
  - d. seldom
29. How often do you engage in a spiritual practice such as prayer, meditation, or inspirational reading to enrich your interior life?
- a. daily or more often
  - b. once or twice a week
  - c. once or twice a month
  - d. seldom
30. How connected do you feel to your conception of a higher power or to a worthy cause?
- a. to a very great extent
  - b. to some extent
  - c. to little extent
  - d. to very little extent
31. To what extent do you believe your life has purpose?
- a. to a very great extent
  - b. to some extent
  - c. to little extent
  - d. to very little extent
32. How much contact do you have with what you would consider a spiritual community?
- a. very much
  - b. much
  - c. very little
  - d. none

## Scoring

Compute your score for each of the scales below using the following legend:

'a' = 4; 'b' = 3; 'c' = 2; 'd' = 1.

Wellness Scale	(add scores for questions 1-7 and divide by 7) ____
Thought Control Scale	(add scores for questions 8-13, and divide by 6) ____

Active Coping Scale	(add scores for questions 14-20, and divide by 7) ____
Social Ease Scale	(add scores for questions 21-26, and divide by 6) ____
Tension reduction Scale	(add scores for questions 27-28, and divide by 2) ____
Spiritual Practice Scale	(add scores for questions 29-32, and divide by 4) ____
Overall Score	(add scores above, and divide by 6) ____

### **Interpreting Your Score.**

A perfect score on each scale would be 4. With this in mind, we might construct the following interpretive key:

- An overall score of **3.5+** suggests you may be a superior stresscoper.
- An overall score of **2.5-3.4** suggests you may be an above average stresscoper.
- An overall score of **1.5-2.4** suggests you may be an average stresscoper.
- An overall score of less than **1.5** suggests you may be a below average stresscoper.

*Source: Write Your Own Prescription for Stress. Kenneth B. Matheny, Ph.D., ABPP and Christopher J. McCarthy, Ph.D. 2000.*