

## SECTION II:

The next list contains signs of stress build-up. These symptoms may occur and continue after the stressor has passed. These symptoms may also occur due to too little stress in one's life. Read each item on the list and indicate how often this occurs for you. Use the following scale:

**0 = NEVER**

**1 = OCCASIONALLY**

**2 = FREQUENTLY**

**3 = ALMOST CONSTANTLY OR CONSTANTLY**

### PHYSICAL SIGNS:

Tension headaches	0	1	2	3
Migraine headaches	0	1	2	3
Fatigue	0	1	2	3
Change in appetite	0	1	2	3
Constipation	0	1	2	3
Diarrhea	0	1	2	3
Skin rashes or hives	0	1	2	3
Indigestion	0	1	2	3
Aching neck and shoulders	0	1	2	3
Menstrual distress	0	1	2	3
Sleeplessness/interrupted sleep	0	1	2	3
Any other signs _____	0	1	2	3

**EMOTIONAL SIGNS:**

Nervousness	0	1	2	3
Anxiety	0	1	2	3
Irritability	0	1	2	3
Depression	0	1	2	3
Anger	0	1	2	3
Boredom	0	1	2	3
Apathy	0	1	2	3
Withdrawal	0	1	2	3
Reduced motivation	0	1	2	3
Nightmares	0	1	2	3
Excessive daydreaming	0	1	2	3
Rigid or narrow point of view	0	1	2	3
Inability to remember details	0	1	2	3
A sense of inadequacy	0	1	2	3
Feeling emotionally drained	0	1	2	3
Loss of sense of humor	0	1	2	3
Excessive fantasizing	0	1	2	3
Any other signs _____	0	1	2	3

**BEHAVIORS:**

Reduced performance at work	0	1	2	3
Reduced productivity at work	0	1	2	3
Inappropriate mistrust of others	0	1	2	3
Outbursts of temper	0	1	2	3
Missing appointments or deadlines	0	1	2	3
Shirking responsibilities	0	1	2	3
Absenteeism	0	1	2	3
Increased errors	0	1	2	3
Minor accidents	0	1	2	3
Indecisiveness	0	1	2	3
Obsessively working longer hours	0	1	2	3
Romantic or sexual indiscretions	0	1	2	3
Problems with sexual performance	0	1	2	3
Use of mood-altering drugs	0	1	2	3
Excessive use of alcohol/tobacco	0	1	2	3
Any other signs _____	0	1	2	3

The next step is to analyze the three areas: **physical, emotional** and **behavioral**. Which signs do you experience the most frequently? Which signs do you experience with the most intensity? What are the circumstances surrounding these signs? List these in the spaces provided

MOST OFTEN

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CIRCUMSTANCES

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MOST INTENSELY

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CIRCUMSTANCES

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Now that this analysis is completed, examine it to look at areas of your life that you may want to change. The decision to change and the follow through is up to you. You will want to do this evaluation again in four months. Put it on your calendar now.

The next step in learning about stress is to examine coping patterns. As this area is examined, the goal is to try to determine which coping patterns are detrimental to your health, your relationships and/or to your performance. Answer the following questions:

What do I usually do when I am under pressure?

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How do I behave when I am frightened or threatened?

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How do I behave when I am angry or frustrated?

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Do I behave differently when I feel stressed? How?

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Do I always respond in the same way---almost without thinking before I react?

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How does my behavior affect my relationships?

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Would it be helpful to have a variety of responses, so I can be more flexible?

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Which of my responses are the most effective?

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Which of my responses are least effective?

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Which responses do I plan to change?

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How?

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When?

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In order to try to determine the seriousness of your stress level, answer the following questions as you think back over any changes which have happened in the past six-eight months. Think of all aspects of your life...family...work...social situations... etc. Think about the questions for 30 seconds and then give it a score from one (1) (for little or no change) to five (5) (for a great deal of change) to indicate the amount of change which you perceive. There is no right or wrong answers.

- \_\_\_1. Are you working harder and accomplishing less?
- \_\_\_2. Are you increasingly cynical or negative?
- \_\_\_3. Are people telling you that you do not look like you are feeling well lately?
- \_\_\_4. Do you tire more easily?
- \_\_\_5. Are you often overcome by a sadness you can't explain?
- \_\_\_6. Are you forgetting (appointments, deadlines)?
- \_\_\_7. Are you seeing friends/family less because you just do not have the interest or energy?
- \_\_\_8. Are you too busy to do even routine things like return phone calls?
- \_\_\_9. Are you suffering more physical complaints (colds, headaches, backache)?
- \_\_\_10. Does sex seem like more trouble than it's worth?

As you look back over your scores, note the number of times you marked a five (5) for your answer. This will give you an indication as to how stressed you are feeling and have been feeling for some time. Unresolved stress can become chronic stress and lead to burnout. With appropriate steps, however, even chronic stress can be resolved.