

Coping with Job Related Stress

Healthy Means to Therapeutic Ends



“The only thing more powerful than history is hope.”

Adapted from *Coping with Work-Related Stress*, Michael J. Schultz, Ed.D and *Coping With Job Related Stress Seminar Booklet*.
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COPING WITH JOB RELATED STRESS

THE FOUR A'S

<p><u>Avoid the Stressor:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Know your limits✓ Avoid people who stress you out✓ Take control of your environment✓ Avoid hot button topics✓ Pare down your to-do list	<p><u>Adapt to the Stressor:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Reframe problems✓ Look at the big picture✓ Adjust your standards✓ Focus on the positive
<p><u>Alter the Stressor:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Express your feelings rather than bottling them up✓ Be willing to compromise✓ Be more assertive✓ Manage your time better	<p><u>Accept the Stressor:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Don't try to control the uncontrollable✓ Look for the upside✓ Control your feelings✓ Learn to forgive

Work/Life Balance Plan

DAILY ACTIVITIES YOU DO FOR YOURSELF	WEEKLY ACTIVITIES YOU DO FOR YOURSELF	MONTHLY ACTIVITIES YOU DO FOR YOURSELF	SPECIAL OCCASIONS ACTIVITIES YOU DO FOR YOURSELF

1. What prevents you from doing these activities?
2. What could you do to include more of these activities in your life?

TEST YOUR OWN COPING SKILLS

	Give yourself 10 points if you feel you have supportive family around you.
	Give yourself 10 points if you actively pursue a hobby.
	Give yourself 10 points if you belong to a social or activity group in which you participate more than once a month.
	Give yourself 15 points if you are within 10 pounds of your “ideal” body weight, considering your height and bone structure.
	Give yourself 15 points if you practice some form of “deep relaxation” at least five times a week. Deep relaxation includes meditation, progressive muscle relaxation, imagery and yoga.
	Give yourself 5 points for each time you exercise for 30 minutes or longer during an average week.
	Give yourself 5 points for each nutritionally balanced and wholesome meal you eat during an average day. A nutritionally balanced meal is low in fat and high in vegetables and whole grain products.
	Give yourself 5 points if you do something you really enjoy and which is “just for you” during an average week.
	Give yourself 10 points if you have a place in your home to which you can go to relax or be by yourself.
	Give yourself 10 points if you practice time management techniques daily.
	Subtract 10 points for each pack of cigarettes you smoke during an average day.
	Subtract 5 points for each evening during an average week that you use any form of medication or chemical substance, including alcohol, to help you sleep.
	Subtract 5 points for each evening during an average week that you use any form of medication or chemical substance, including alcohol, to help you sleep.
	Subtract 5 points for each evening during an average week that your bring work home or stay late to finish work—work meant to be completed at your place of employment during normal business hours.

Now calculate your score! A “perfect” score is 115 pts. If you score in 50-60 pt range, you probably have adequate coping skills for most common stressors. Remember, the higher your score, the greater your ability to cope with stress in an effective and healthy manner.

SELF CARE INVENTORY

RATE THE FOLLOWING AREAS IN FREQUENCY:

5 = FREQUENTLY

4 = OCCASIONALLY

3 = RARELY

2 = NEVER

1 = IT NEVER OCCURRED TO ME

	PHYSICAL SELF CARE
	Eat regularly (breakfast, lunch & dinner)
	Eat healthy
	Exercise consistently
	Get regular medical care for prevention
	Get medical care when necessary
	Take time off when sick
	Swim, walk, play sports or other enjoyable physical activity
	Take time to be sexual
	Get enough sleep
	Take vacations
	Wear clothes you like
	Take day trips or mini-vacations
	Make time away from telephones
	Other

	PSYCHOLOGICAL SELF CARE
	Make time for self reflection
	Engage in personal psychotherapy
	Write in a journal
	Do something in which you are not an expert or in charge
	Cope with stress in personal/work life
	Notice inner experiences (recognize thoughts, beliefs, etc.)
	Provide other with different aspects of self
	Try new things
	Practice receiving from others
	Improve ability to say "no" to extra responsibilities
	Other

	EMOTIONAL SELF CARE
	Allow for quality time with others whose company you enjoy
	Maintain contact with valued others
	Get self-affirmations and praise
	Love self
	Re-read favorite book or review favorite movies
	Identify and engage in comforting activities, objects, people, relationships and places
	Allow for feelings of expression (laugh, cry, etc)
	Other

	SPIRITUAL SELF CARE
	Allow time for reflection
	Spend time with nature
	Participate in a spiritual community
	Be open to inspiration
	Cherish own optimism and hope
	Be aware of non-material aspects of life
	Cultivate ability to identify what is meaningful and its place in your personal life
	Meditate/Pray
	Contribute to causes in which you believe
	Read inspirational literature (lectures, music, etc)
	Other

	WORKPLACE SELF CARE
	Allow for breaks during the workday
	Engage with co-workers
	Provide self-quiet time/space to complete tasks
	Participated in projects that are exciting or rewarding
	Set limits/boundaries with clients and colleagues
	Balance workloads/cases
	Arrange work space for comfort
	Maintain regular supervision or consultation
	Negotiate needs (benefits/raises/bonuses, etc)
	Participate in peer support group
	Other

TOP TEN EFFECTIVE AND HEALTHY WAYS OF COPING WITH WORK RELATED STRESS

Psychological trauma has been defined as the experience of stress and distress that are too much to cope with behaviorally, biologically, cognitively, emotionally, spiritually, and interpersonally, and impacts individual persons in unique ways. Like most aspects of our lives and relationships, certain considerations will be more or less relevant than others, and it is important to find your own way. Below is a list of some general considerations, skills and strategies.

- 1. Rest well, eat well, exercise well, play well and work hard**
- 2. Practice ABC's of personal, professional and organizational integration. This is with the understanding that a healthy personal life is our greatest protective factor from the intensity of our work in child protective services.**
Awareness Balance Connections
- 3. Be flexible and open to new and different options (actions, emotions, thoughts). Reframing is the heart of a strength based approach to work.**
- 4. Use your experience as a context for learning and growth, both personally and professionally.**
- 5. Plan ahead and take constructive action. Anticipate stress and try something new. This includes taking purposeful and planned time off from work.**
- 6. Remember to respond rather than react. Consider direction and not speed.**
- 7. Pay attention to your actions, feelings, reactions, and thoughts when you experience stress. Connect with healthy others to guide you and consider the use of formal and inform mentors.**

8. Listen carefully to the experiences and perspectives of others that have gone through similar situations. Develop and maintain personal and professional goals.

9. Weave together your full range of human experience, both as a human being and a professional. Some of these include appreciation, empathy, creativity, grief, humor, loss, joy, and spirituality. Experience your unique qualities with passion and compassion. Use nature as a healing force.

10. Remain mindful of the moment. Breathe, meditate, and take time to connect and reflect.

ABC's OF LIFE:

A-cept Differences	K-keep Confidences	U-nderstand
B-e Kind	L-ove Truly	V-alue Truth
C-ount Your Blessings	M-aster Something	W-in Graciously
D-ream	N-urture Hope	X-eriscape (environmental design of using various methods for minimizing the need for water use)
E-xpress Thanks	O-pen Your Mind	Y-earn For Peace
F-orgive	P-ack Lightly	Z-ealously Support a Worthy Cause
G-ive Freely	Q-uell Rumors	
H-arm No One	R-eciprocate	
I-magine More	S-EEK Wisdom	
J-ettison Anger	T-ouch Hearts	

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