

## Standard 7 Lesson 1: Assessing Level of Stress

**Time:** 45-minute class period

### **Materials:**

Scripture Reference Guide

Stress Survey

Stress Survey Worksheet/Decisional Balance

Physical Stress Reduction Exercise

### **Objectives:**

Students will be able to define “stress”.

Students will be able to list stressors, and determine the stressors that impact their lives.

Students will be able to make a list of pros and cons regarding a difficult decision they face to aid in decision-making.

### **Introductory Activity**

Define stress and ask students to give examples of stressors they experience in their lives.

### **Activities**

Remind students that everyone is different and some may have only a few stress points, yet find themselves stressed, while others may have many stress points, but they are handling it very well.

Pass out the Stress Survey and have the students take it and total their points. Then have students fill out the Stress Survey Worksheet.

Teach students about physical self-care, including deep breathing, muscle relaxation exercises, regular exercise, and good sleep and eating habits. Take students through deep breathing and muscle relaxation exercise.

Have students read Job 1 and 2 and add up Job’s stress points. Have them discuss with a partner, “On whom was Job relying when so many stress points were adding up so quickly?” “How can you tell?”

Have students write down a difficult situation they may be facing on the Decisional Balance section of their worksheet, then fill out each column. Have students share with a partner how this section may help them decide regarding the situation.

Have students memorize this lesson’s Scripture Memory Verses: **Job 23:10** *But He knows the way I take; When He has tried me, I will come forth as gold.*

**Philippians 4:6,7** *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

## Stress Point List

*Look over this list. For each item that is true of your life, write down the assigned number of points on the Stress Survey Worksheet in the appropriate box. When you have completed the list, add the total number of points for each box. Then complete the Decisional Balance Section of the Stress Survey Worksheet.*

**99 HIV +**

- 98 Getting married
  - 95 Death of a parent
  - 92 Being pregnant and unmarried
  - 83 Acquiring a visible deformity
  - 80 Victim of a serious crime
  - 77 Parent's divorce
  - 76 Parent goes to jail for a year or more
  - 76 Drug/Alcohol abuse
  - 75 Fear of pregnancy
  - 70 Experimenting with drugs/alcohol
  - 70 Death of a close friend
  - 70 Abuse at home
  - 70 Parent's mental illness or emotional problem
  - 70 Worrying about own mental/emotional problem
  - 70 Eating disorders
  - 70 Parent involved with drugs
  - 69 Parents separate
  - 68 Death of a brother or sister
  - 68 Past trauma causing serious emotional issue
  - 68 Parent harmfully involved with alcohol
  - 67 Change in acceptance with peers
  - 66 Getting sexually involved
  - 65 Gang involvement
  - 64 Unmarried pregnant teen sister
  - 63 Parent remarries
  - 62 Visible congenital deformity
  - 60 Too much responsibility at home  
(you act like the parent)
- 
- 58 Serious illness needing hospitalization
  - 56 Moving to a new school
  - 56 Failing a standard in school
  - 55 Severe guilt over something you did
  - 55 Serious illness of parent
  - 55 Suspension from school
  - 53 Breaking up with boyfriend/girlfriend
  - 53 Parent goes to jail for 30 days or less
  - 51 Beginning to date
  - 50 Feeling inferior to a sibling
  - 50 Trouble sleeping from worry/stress
  - 50 Serious concern for safety

- 50 Newborn brother or sister
- 46 Outstanding personal achievement
- 46 Family arguing more
- 46 Parent loses his/her job
- 45 Change in parent's financial status
- 41 Serious illness of brother or sister
- 38 Parent's increased absence from home
- 37 Brother or sister leaving home
- 36 Death of a grandparent
- 34 Another person moving in (grandparent, etc.)
- 27 Decrease in number of arguments between  
parents
- 26 Fewer arguments with parents
- 26 Mom begins working outside the home

**Job 23:10** But He knows the way I take; When He has tried me, I will come forth as gold.

## Stress Survey Worksheet

List your stress points according to the categories below. For example, if you are failing a standard in school, you would put 56 points in the column titled "Stress Within Last Year". Then you would decide if that stress is under your control or not and put the same 56 points in the appropriate box. When you are finished putting the points associated with each stress in the boxes, total each of the 4 boxes below to find your level of stress.

Lifetime Stress	Stress Within Last Year	Stress Not Under My Control	Stress Under My Control
<b>Total</b>	Total	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>

Less than 150 - Your life has changed little  
 Between 150 and 300 - You have experienced moderate change  
 Over 300 - Your life has changed significantly

**Philippians 4:6,7** Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

## Decisional Balance

Choose a stress under your control and fill out the decisional balance section. Consider whether this item may impact the goal you have set for yourself.

Forces for CHANGE	Forces against CHANGE
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Negative Consequences	Benefits – staying the same
1. _____	N e 1. _____
2. _____	g 2. _____
3. _____	t 3. _____
4. _____	i 4. _____
5. _____	v 5. _____
<p data-bbox="251 1197 576 1249">of staying the same</p> <p data-bbox="251 1291 795 1344">1. _____</p>	<p data-bbox="795 241 820 1186" style="text-align: center;">N e g a t i v e C o n s e q u e n c e s</p>

Negative Consequences

Negative Consequences of  
NChange

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  4. \_\_\_\_\_
  5. \_\_\_\_\_

of staying the same

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## **Physical Stress Reduction Exercise**

Relaxing the body helps reduce stress and aids sleep. A three-part exercise can be very helpful. Take the students through these steps:

**Breathing** – Have students breathe deeply, in through the nose and out through the mouth. Have them practice breathing so that their stomachs move in and out rather than having their shoulders rise and fall. Ask students to practice taking 3 deep breaths before continuing.

**Muscle Relaxation** – Muscles are relaxed by first tensing them, then allowing that tension to be released while exhaling. Have students start with their toes – tensing, then relaxing. Have students isolate each muscle (or set of muscles) individually, tense, then relax them a couple of times before moving on to the next muscle(s). Instruct students to continue to breathe in deeply, then exhale while relaxing the muscle(s). Talk students through their muscle groups – toes, feet and ankles, calves, etc. Stop periodically and have students just focus on their breathing again.

**Prayer and Meditation** – After students are relaxed, ask them to think about a cherished verse or verses of Scripture. Students may use the Scripture Resource Guide to find a verse if one does not come to mind. They can pray the verse and ask God to make it real in their lives. Explain that prayer and meditation brings peace to the mind just as the breathing and muscle relaxation bring peace to the physical body.

This exercise can be used during the day to relax or at night before going to sleep to allow a deeper, more restful night.

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**Job 23:10** But He knows the way I take; When He has tried me, I will come forth as gold.

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