WAYS OF COPING WITH STRESS INVENTORY

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 better perspective.
11. I sleep more than I really need to.
12. I take some time off and get away from my work 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.

\[1\] Inventory from The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook 5th Ed. Adapted from the “Coping Styles Questionnaire.” C 1999 by Jim Boyers, Ph.D., Kaiser-Permanente Medical Center and Health Styles, Santa Clara, Ca.

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