



Activity

# Health Inventory

## Stress Management

Read each statement below. Decide whether it describes how you take responsibility for your decisions. Write *always*, *sometimes*, or *never* in the space to the left of each statement.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I am aware of positive and negative stressors in my life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I recognize physical, emotional, and mental signs of stress when I experience them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I recognize when my response to stress is affecting my relationships and take steps to correct it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I allow my body to recover from my response to stress.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I avoid using defense mechanisms to try to shut out distress.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I use strategies such as reframing to reduce my distress.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I eat nutritious food and get plenty of sleep.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I have a good mental attitude, such as believing problems have solutions and that goals should be reasonable and achievable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. When I am stressed, I share my emotions with someone I trust.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I take time for myself, at least 30 minutes a day.

**Score yourself: Give yourself 3 points for each *always* answer, 1 point for each *sometimes*, and 0 for each *never*. Write your score here \_\_\_\_\_.**

- 25–30: Excellent—you manage your stress very well.
- 15–25: Good—you often manage your stress well.
- 8–15: Fair—you can improve your stress management skills.
- Fewer than 8: Developing good stress management skills will help you.

8<sup>th</sup>

**Lesson: Stress—A Natural Part of Your Life**

Write a short paragraph that describes one of the most stressful times in your life.

**Lesson: How Stress Affects You**

Describe a situation in which you felt a strong positive stress. Then, describe how you felt when the stress was gone.

Activity

# Life Skills: Practicing Wellness

## Lesson: Defense Mechanisms

### LOOKING AT DEFENSE MECHANISMS

Give an example of each of the following defense mechanisms. Your examples can be things that have happened to you, your family, or friends; things that happened to characters in a book, movie, or TV show; or imaginary situations. Then tell how the situation could have been handled better.

1. Rationalization—making excuses instead of admitting mistakes

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2. Displacement—being upset with one person but taking it out on another

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3. Repression—blocking out unpleasant memories

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4. Denial—not accepting reality or pretending that nothing stressful happened

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8th

## Activity

**Enrichment Activity****Lesson: Stress: A Natural Part of Your Life**

Wouldn't it be wonderful to have a life without any stress? Imagine that everything came easily to you and that there were no new, possibly threatening situations and no challenges. Would you laze on the beach all day with nothing to worry about?

**Make two lists: one that lists the advantages of a life without stress and a second that lists the possible drawbacks of a stress-free existence. Try to put at least 10 ideas on each list. Is it healthy to have a life without stress?**

**Lesson: How Stress Affects You**

When you respond to stress your body releases epinephrine, which adds sugar to your blood and directs a "fight-or-flight" response.

**Research epinephrine and the stress response. Draw a diagram of how stress affects your body from the first moment you encounter a new, possibly threatening situation to when you have acted in some way to deal with the stress and your body returns to normal.**

**Lesson: Defense Mechanisms**

Your mother says you're late, and you blurt out, "No, I'm not" (denial) or "Who cares? It's not important." (rationalization), or shrug and think about something else (repression), or yell at your dog (displacement), or say, "You just hate me, Mom. That's why you're mad" (projection). Sometimes, the hardest thing about avoiding defense mechanisms is recognizing them.

**Take a separate sheet of paper. Set a timer for 45 seconds. For each of the defense mechanisms listed below, start the timer and take 45 seconds to write down as many examples of that kind of reaction as you can. Have a contest with other students to see who can think of the most examples in 45 seconds.**

Denial

Rationalization

Repression

Displacement

Projection