

# How Do You Cope With Stress?

There are many ways to deal with stress. The table below (reprinted from Wellness: Concepts and Applications\*) lists positive ways to cope. See how many you use to deal with stress. If you have trouble filling out this chart, you may want to keep a stress journal for a few days and then try again.

Check your response:	Often	Rarely	Not at
Listen to music			
Go shopping with a friend			
Watch television, go to a movie			
Read a newspaper, magazine, or book			
Sit alone in the peaceful outdoors			
Write prose or poetry			
Attend an athletic event, play, lecture, symphony			
Go for a walk or drive			
Exercise (swim, bike, jog)			
Get deeply involved in some other activity			
Play with a pet			
Take a nap			
Get outdoors, enjoy nature			
Write in a journal			
Practice deep breathing, meditations, autogenics, or muscle relaxation			
Straighten up your desk or work area			
Take a bath or shower			
Do physical labor (garden, paint)			
Make home repairs or refinish furniture			
Buy something (records, books)			
Play a game (chess, backgammon, video games)			
Pray, go to church			
Discuss situations with a spouse or close friends			
Other:			



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Now see if you use any of these negative ways to deal with stress.

<b>Check your response:</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Not at All</b>
Become aggressive			
Use negative self-talk			
Yell at spouse, kids, or friends			
Drink a lot of coffee or tea			
Get drunk			
Swear			
Take a tranquilizing drug			
Avoid social contact with others			
Try to anticipate the worst possible outcomes			
Think about suicide			
Smoke tobacco			
Eat too much or too little, drink a lot of coffee			
Chew fingernails			
Overeat or undereat			
Become irritable or short-tempered			
Cry excessively			
Kick something or throw something			
Drive fast in your car			
Other:			

**Scoring Instructions:**

Count the number of positive and negative coping techniques you use.

Number of negative techniques: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of positive techniques: \_\_\_\_\_

How often do you use negative coping strategies? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you use more positive than negative strategies or the reverse? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you recognize a need to change some of the techniques you are now using? If so, which ones? \_\_\_\_\_

What are some ways in which you can maximize your positive coping behaviors? How can you minimize your negative ones?

