

Keeping a Stress Log

Keeping a stress log helps you to identify sources of stress, your reactions, and how you manage your response. Making the most of keeping a log involves:

- Recording stress-related information over a period of time,
- Reviewing the information you gather, and
- Identifying strengths, challenges, and next steps to improve how you manage stress.

Ultimately, this process will help you to manage stress and take care of yourself.



STEP 1: RECORDING STRESS RELATED INFORMATION: Review the guide/example below to understand how to record your stress experiences. Use the following page (and additional copies) to create your personal stress log.

Date/ Time	Stress/Event	My Response: Thoughts/Feelings/Actions	Rate My Response 1-3
GUIDE Indicate date and time	Describe the stress/event. Include enough information to provide a picture of what happened, who was involved, etc.	Describe your thoughts/feelings/actions related to the stress/event. Include enough information to provide a picture of what happened, who was involved, the steps you took to manage stress, what happened next etc.	Rate how you handled the stress (1- Not too well; 2-OK; 3 –well)
EXAMPLE Monday 8 AM	When I arrived at the Head Start Center, I was unexpectedly asked to do drop-off duty. This meant that I was not going to be able to do the paperwork I had planned to do before the children arrived and the full day began.	I was already feeling pressure to get to my paperwork, and this last minute change made me more anxious and frustrated. I thought - Why me? Can't someone else do it? I always seem to have to pick up when someone else has dropped the ball. So, I just held in my feelings, slammed my paperwork on my desk, and marched to the driveway – fuming, trying to welcome the children with a smile.	1

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MAKE ADDITIONAL COPIES AS NEEDED

STEP 2: REVIEW THE INFORMATION YOU GATHER: Review your complete stress log and list the types of stressors you experienced and your responses to stress. Examine this information and note any common themes.

Types of Stressors	Frequency
EXAMPLE: Paperwork and extra, unexpected demands on my time	1

My Stress Responses	Frequency
EXAMPLE: Anxiety, frustration, Holding feelings inside	1

MY MOST COMMON STRESSORS ARE: _____

MY MOST COMMON STRESS RESPONSES ARE: _____

STEP 3: MY STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, AND NEXT STEPS: All of us experience challenges in managing stress. When we are stressed, it is difficult to see our own strengths and how well we are coping. By looking at both your strengths and challenges that emerge from your stress log information, you can plan next steps for improving how you manage stress and take care of yourself.

- **MY STRENGTHS:** What I did well in managing stress
EXAMPLE: I did not let my feelings of worry and anger interfere with warmly greeting the children during drop-off.

- **MY CHALLENGES:** What are my challenges in managing stress
EXAMPLE: Holding my feelings inside is not healthy for me.

- **NEXT STEPS:** What I might include in my Individualized Action Plan
EXAMPLE: I would like to learn to take a deep breath to calm myself and communicate with my supervisor about my feelings and how to manage my paper work to do my job well.