



PERSONAL STRESS PROFILE

²⁸ Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

— MATTHEW 11:28-29

IDENTIFYING MOST CRITICAL ISSUES

Do you control stress in your life or does stress control you?

Stressors are events that cause an emotional and/or physical reaction. Stress can be positive (wedding, job promotion) or negative (loss of job, car accident, major illness). But what is important is to be able to manage the many stressors in your life.

One way to manage stress is to prioritize the issues that are most important to you. Another is to decide what issues can be changed or resolved and which ones cannot. This exercise will help you focus on the high priority issues and those that can be changed (Box 1).

Couple Exercise:

1. You will each select **four issues** that are the most stressful for each of you from the Computer Report.
2. Review each issue and put it into one of the four cells below.
3. Box 1 contains the "Most Critical Issues."

	Able to Change	Difficult to Change
High Priority	<p>Box 1: Most Critical Issues</p> <p><i>What changes can you each make?</i></p>	<p>Box 2</p> <p><i>How do you plan to cope?</i></p>
Low Priority	<p>Box 3</p> <p><i>Are you spending too much time on low priority issues?</i></p>	<p>Box 4: Least Critical Issues</p> <p><i>Can you accept or forget about these issues?</i></p>

COUPLE DISCUSSION:

Select one issue from Box 1 that you will work on together as a couple.

Work together as a team to achieve your goals.

1. Communicate about the issue.
2. Use good conflict resolution skills.
3. Be flexible with one another.



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My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak, but God remains the strength of my heart; he is mine forever.

— PSALM 73:26

BALANCING YOUR PRIORITIES

First, indicate how much time you “Now” spend on each of these areas. Next, decide on the amount of time you would ideally spend—“Your Goal.” Then decide how you can achieve your goal.

	NOW (Hours per week)	YOUR GOAL	How will you move toward your goal?
WORK:			
Time on job/school	_____	_____	_____
Bringing work home	_____	_____	_____
Commuting	_____	_____	_____
PERSONAL:			
Exercise	_____	_____	_____
Television	_____	_____	_____
Computer/video games	_____	_____	_____
Hobby/Recreation	_____	_____	_____
Reading	_____	_____	_____
Friends	_____	_____	_____
Religious activities	_____	_____	_____
Volunteering	_____	_____	_____
Sleep (hours per night)	_____	_____	_____
MARRIAGE: (Couple)			
At home together	_____	_____	_____
Activities/Dates	_____	_____	_____
Discussions (minutes per day)	_____	_____	_____
HOME:			
Cleaning	_____	_____	_____
Cooking	_____	_____	_____
Grocery shopping	_____	_____	_____
Errands	_____	_____	_____
Lawn/Garden	_____	_____	_____
Home maintenance	_____	_____	_____
FAMILY: (if children at home)			
Number of meals together	_____	_____	_____
Family activities	_____	_____	_____
Transporting children	_____	_____	_____
Helping with homework	_____	_____	_____
At home together	_____	_____	_____

COUPLE DISCUSSION:

- What areas feel out of balance to each of you?
- What steps must you take in order for your goal to become reality?