



# Your Daily Stress Diary

All of us have stress in our lives. Some stress is actually good because it keeps you active and alert. Yet, too much stress can cause anxiety and make our lives difficult to enjoy. It can contribute to sleeplessness, loss of appetite, headaches and lots of other conditions including occasional constipation. To help you reduce your stress level, it is useful to understand the stresses we can control and those we cannot.

By jotting down the events that cause stress, you can learn to recognize your stress triggers and then find ways to reduce and/or cope with them.

Using this weekly diary, make note of each event that causes you stress during the day.

- While getting dressed in the morning, you notice that your shirt is stained, forcing you to hurriedly change, making you late for your carpool.
- Your boss tells you at 4:30pm that he needs a report done before you leave for the day to pick up your daughter at daycare at 5:30pm.
- You burn dinner while you're on the phone and also trying to keep your toddler from taking a red crayon to the wall.

Next to each of your “stressful moments” diary entries, decide whether the stress incident is one you can control or one that is out of your control. Put a “Y” next to the stressful moments that you can control and an “N” next to those that are beyond your control.

At the end of the week, find a comfortable spot and review your diary. Look at those entries you marked with a “Y” and see if you can find better ways to avoid these stress inducers. For those marked with an “N”, see if you can come up with strategies for working around these stress inducers.

For example, finding your shirt has a stain minutes before you have to leave for work is a “Y” type of stressful moment. You can find a better way to plan your wardrobe so that you don't have a crisis as you are ready to step out the door. On the other hand, a boss who makes demands on your time without including you in the planning is an “N” (not in your control) type of stress. Yet, even with stressful events you cannot control, you can find ways to work around these situations. You could let your boss know well in advance that you must leave work no later than 5pm every day. You could line up a backup person to pick up your child from daycare for those times when you need to work late. You can limit your multitasking so you don't burn dinner.

You get the picture. More of your life is in your control than you think and, the more you find ways to cope and reduce stress, the better you will feel and the better your digestive system will function. Try using with your Daily Stress Diary for two weeks to get your life back under control.

# Daily Stress Diary

**Mon**

Y

N

**Tue**

**Wed**

**Thu**

**Fri**

**Sat**

**Sun**

