

Stress Sources Inventory

Reflexion exercise: What stressors affect your physical and psychological wellness?

Here are different categories and different examples of stressors. Take a moment to identify your stressors that impact your day-to-day by checking the examples that connect with your reality:

- **Physical stressors:**

This relates to any physical stressors, your reactions to your body's sensations on the muscular level, skeletal, sensory and on the level of your organs and your global health. Here are some examples:

- Physical pain and injuries
- Physical tensions
- Digestive issues
- Incommoding physical symptoms
- Physical disabilities or loss of mobility
- Incommoding hormonal fluctuations

- **Psychological stressors:**

The subject here is stress created by our thoughts and our emotional state, our interpretations of situations, our environment, and internal states. This type of mental activities takes a lot of our energy and amplifies angst. Here are some examples of psychological stressors, this list is not exhaustive:

- Mental health issues
- Psychological exhaustion
- Concerns and worries (financial, on health, wellness of others, etc.)
- Fear of judgement of others
- Tendency to compare ourselves to others, self-judgment, devaluation
- Self-doubts, doubts on our capacities
- Negative self talk, pessimism, tendency to dramatize
- Felling of helplessness
- Obligations and self-imposed pression ("*I have to*", "*I must*", "*I should*", etc.)
- Impact and interpretation of opinions of close ones
- Feelings of guilt, shame, grudges, and angers that we can accumulate along the years
- Perpetual contemplation or self-victimization ("*I should have*", "*This shouldn't have happened to me*", "*This is unfair*", etc.)
- High standards, perfectionism, relentlessness
- Mental load due to the organization of diverse tasks and erronds (for example: the parent that must think of everything phenomenon)
- Reliving and intrusive thoughts related to negative memories or a past traumas

- **Situational stressors:**

This category includes any life circumstance or incident that pressures the nervous system and creates a prolonged disequilibrium. These life events can be positive or negative, both will cause the nervous system to activate. Here are some examples:

- Life event (getting married, purchasing a home, birth of a child, etc.)
- Life changes/adaptations (moving, a separation, changing schools or job, going back to school, etc.)
- Traumatic events
- Incidents
- Natural disasters
- World pandemic
- Precarious financial situation
- Uncertainty of the conclusion of an important situation in the person's life
- Deadline to complete a task

- **Environmental stressors:**

Would you recommend your work environment? This category refers to any external and circumstantial factor in your physical environment that puts pressure on your organism and drives you away from your personal wellness:

- Pollution (air, ventilation)
- Sound pollution (ex: constant or irritating noises, living close to a busy street, studying in a noisy place, etc.)
- Overcrowding, clutter (ex: messy or cramped physical environment)
- Unsanitary environment
- Unsafe environment
- Overstimulating environment due to addition of external sources soliciting our attention. As an example, imagine you are working on your computer at night in the middle of the tv's background noises and children screaming while trying to manage multiple people trying to communicate with you using different platforms such as Skype, phone, e-mail, Messenger, other phone applications and in person.

- **Organisational stressors:**

This category refers to any stress experiences related to your work, your implication in an association, a club or group. This can manifest in different ways, such as:

- Pressure from superiors or managers
- Work performance requirements
- Job insecurity
- Large workload or high responsibilities
- Lack of acknowledgments

Traduit par Emilie Labrie, formatrice en intervention psychosociale, à partir de l'exercice « Quels types de stress affectent votre corps et votre état psychologique » : Isabelle Soucy, Ph.D. (2021). *Calme au cœur du chaos : Stratégies et exercices pour cultiver l'équilibre au quotidien*. Montréal : Les Éditions de l'Homme, p. 19.

- Being considered as a number
- Low advancement possibilities or of professional growth
- Feelings of powerlessness or unfairness in the organization
- Conflict of opinions, values with the organization or its managers

- **Stressors related to personal relationships and culture:**

These stressors connect to your personal relationships, to any communication issue with those close to you, on the impact of society's values and people's culture. In sum, it relates to any interactions with other human beings and can impact a variety of life contexts:

- Low quality of social relationships
- Absence or lack of social support
- Conflicts or *non satisfying* relationships
- Pressure put on by our social network
- Local and world news seen on medias and internet
- Cultural actuality
- Family conflicts (ex: parental alienation, custody battles, separation, or divorce instances)
- Being a helper for a peer or someone ill
- Stressors related to important politic decisions
- Social propaganda of fear

Chart

