

Running head: [Author Name(s), First M. Last, Omit Titles and Degrees]1

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[Author Name(s), First M. Last, Omit Titles and Degrees]

[Institutional Affiliation(s)]

Date

Author Note

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I received a cumulative score of 22 in the stress self-assessment, indicating my perceived stress levels to lie in the “moderate” category. I think the current level of stress I experience can be attributed to a number of factors including domestic, personal, and academic reasons. At the same time, I do not think stress can always be equated with negative emotions and consequences. Stress can even be useful because there can be no motivation without stress. If I did not feel stressed, I would not study for my exams or prepare for the quizzes. I would also not try to resolve conflicts with others and practice effective communication. Stress reminds me to be a better version of myself and invest in personal development. I feel that I must spend some time pursuing healthy activities because my mind and body experience a need to do so to rid themselves of stress. Stress helps me cope and become more resilient as it pushes me to seek stability, balance, and strength.

The physiological signs of stress I have experienced include increased heart rate, rapid breathing, and a motivation to get myself out of the situation that causes anxiety. I think these physiological cues can be helpful to me and have been so in the past because I can use them to increase my motivation to achieve my goals. The physiological effects of stress are a result of stress activating the sympathetic nervous system (Olpin & Hesson, 2021). This part of the nervous system regulates fight-or-flight responses. Under stress, the body and mind begin to act as they would in fight/flight situations. A lack of stress would not be productive for survival. Even with no environmental threats, I often feel emotionally or psychologically threatened. Whenever such threats come about, I find my body responding in ways similar to physical threats in the external environment. The effects motivate me to survive and find solutions to my issues. If I, for example, fear that I would fail a class, my stress and the physiological responses

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would drive me to make a greater effort. There are also times when I may react negatively to my stress. This usually happens when I have experienced increased stress sustaining for a considerable period of time. This rarely happens and fades away as the major stressor no longer exists.

My score did not surprise me as I know I do not consistently experience unhealthy stress levels. I tend to fluctuate between being moderately stressful and sometimes under immense pressure. I often do not feel negative emotions due to stress to the extent that they get out of my control. The course helps me manage stress by knowing the causes and physiological effects. By being aware of how stress can positively and negatively affect me, I can regulate it more effectively and proactively. Overall, I have begun to appreciate my ability to experience stress. Now, I feel empowered to turn stress into an opportunity for personal development. Because I believe stress to be largely positive, I tend to be able to regulate my emotions. Even when I do not communicate effectively due to stress, I can always revisit the situation from memory and, in retrospect, understand what I could have done to avoid the undesirable turn of events. Stress, for me, has become more manageable because I am more self-aware. I think the best takeaway from this course, for me, has been self-awareness.

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References

Olpin M. & Hesson M. (2021). *Stress management for life a research based experiential approach (Fifth)*. Cengage. Retrieved September 7 2022 from INSERT-MISSING-URL.