

Richard T. Lovelace, Ph.D., MSW

Dear Potential Program Participant:

The primary aim of this free access service is to make available—as invitingly as possible—a new self-help edition of **Stress and Moods Mastery**.

This program's **Facts Track** teaches uncommon and rapid self-calming skills. (Only one of them is obvious.) Those enable you to more easily avoid and unload the damaging physical byproducts of mental stress. The audio offers positively stated **Confidence-Freeing Facts**. Listening to and/or reading them safely releases confidence by neutralizing some not-your-fault earlier learning and “politically correct” untruths people, especially stress management experts, tell you.

Some important points to keep in mind:

- Be sure to go ahead and read my **Author's Note**.
- **This page** tells the basics about how to benefit from the essential **Spoken Content** part of this program.
- More than anything else, the spoken content makes it work. I encourage you to listen or read one or more times most days to some of the spoken content . . . for at least three consecutive weeks.
- For the first three or four weeks, please avoid talking about this program and your use of it to anyone other than your physician or, if applicable, the professional who recommended it. Tell anyone who might ask that you are doing the “avoid talking about it” program.

Let me know about your response to **Stress and Moods Mastery**. The easiest way is email to [richard@truthforhealthyliving.org](mailto:richard@truthforhealthyliving.org). Also, be sure to go ahead and review the legal notice materials **in this e-book** and [www.truthforhealthyliving.org/legal](http://www.truthforhealthyliving.org/legal). By continuing, you confirm that you agree with all legal notice materials and qualify to use this program.

Sincerely,



Richard Terry Lovelace, Ph.D., MSW  
RTL/cl

# Stress and Moods Mastery for Confidence and Control

Richard T. Lovelace, Ph.D., MSW

In loving memory of our nephew, Michael Richard Scott.  
Mike, we love and miss you.

## **Legal Notice and Disclaimer**

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## Author's Note

Dear Reader:

There's a simple reason so many of us have chronic\* unhealthy stress and moods: Way too much of what we're told about them is wrong. For example, it's often said, "To manage their stress, people should learn and practice relaxation." That's wrong and accepting it as a fact makes matters worse. We are misled and risk becoming lost.

The solution is nearly as straightforward: Tell you and enough other adults what is and isn't true about stress and its emotions. That's exactly what I intend to do.

**Stress and Moods Mastery (S&MM)** is for adults who want to reduce and prevent most or enough stress and the uncomfortable emotions (moods) stress makes. It makes all of them: sadness, anger, fear and their offspring that become ongoing. Those include depression, anxiety, phobia, panic, rage, guilt and what's called "blunted." \*\*

The unknown cause of psychological stress surfaced from almost 40 years of work with 28,000 adults. That experience clearly says that cause is most important. Essentially everyone learns and doesn't realize it a small group of simple misunderstandings, STRESS Notions. Politically correct untruths powerfully encourage and partially sustain them. Those thoughts constantly ring-out and suppress the factor that makes possible voluntarily unloading and keeping away physically destructive stress and the exceedingly hurtful emotions it creates. Most of us call that factor "confidence." Healthcare professionals apply fancy labels like "self-concept" and "self-esteem." When those simple misunderstandings ring-out, you and all other adults are unaware of them.

Please understand. I've heard it said that in a court of law "not knowing is no excuse." In what I call the "court of life" being unaware is one of the best reasons we have for the honest errors we make. Consequently, it's inappropriate to accuse, judge and find guilty you or anyone else with unhealthy stress and its moods because you have them! Take care . . . some folks confuse that irrefutable truth with "psychobabble" or perhaps "sugar coating." It is nothing like that. It's simply a fact.

Releasing confidence is uncomplicated and for nearly all of us the only safe and sure solution. That release comes from a unique group of truthful beliefs (I call them CARING Answers) you already have and hardly ever realize are there, inside you. Until you adequately, not completely, acknowledge and apply CARING Answers, you have too little confidence. And it is the essential source of the actions that produce and keep relief from stress and the emotions it creates.

It isn't necessary for me to do what probably every author of a "stress management" or "help with emotions" book does. That's tell you what you should think. You know enough of that. It's much more that you require the considerable encouragement I'm glad to offer. With it you can and will trust your beliefs when people, including well-known authorities, and a small part of yourself say you're wrong. Let me give an example.

Do you believe or suspect there's a reasonably straightforward solution for chronic moods such as depression that most people can handle for themselves? If so, experts and others are trying to convince you that you're mistaken. They do that with politically correct untruths and to make huge amounts of money for themselves or sponsors . . . at your and your family's expense. Selling their products, services and programs depends on sabotaging self-confidence, and consequently, the value you and most adults assign to taking personal responsibility (not blame), to self-help and to self-control.

There is nothing substantially like this book and program. **Stress and Moods Mastery** tells you enough of the actual facts, politically incorrect truth, that no other publication does. It tells you, for instance, "Something other than (not) people, your surroundings, heredity or memories cause your painful moods or emotions. And that 'something' and what it causes absolutely aren't your fault!"

Because S&MM is exceedingly different and we humans understandably respond to that by putting up defenses, you may have both reactions—typical of stronger denial—to get past:

1. **"It isn't true."** Once you read enough to begin believing that S&MM is factual, you might realize you're feeling some anger and have the second response. (More likely, you'll have some anger and not recognize it.)
2. **"It isn't new."** You can readily overcome that usual reaction. Please do that by telling yourself the truth: This program takes a clinical experience-based approach. Unlike any other, it uses parts of popular theories \*\*\* to help explain discoveries gained from decades of uncommon healthcare practice. No one can accurately make comments such as, "I've seen something that takes the same or very similar approach." "This is just a theory (group of educated guesses)." "It won't work for me." The equally inaccurate, "This can't work in the real world."

\* The author uses the words "chronic," "persistent" and "ongoing" interchangeably. Those words don't necessarily mean that what he's describing is present most of someone's life and always obviously present. However, when it seems to go away, it soon returns.

\*\* Blunted emotion fuels (enables) the behaviors that you and other adults are apt to interpret as "aloof," "shallow" or "non-caring."

\*\*\* Stress and Moods Mastery is loosely framed in Eric Berne's transactional analysis or TA, cognitive-behavior, learning, gestalt and systems theories.

The following are politically correct notions that powerfully encourage the hidden (from you) honest misunderstandings you have that inhibit sufficient and persistent confidence. These political notions that interfere are widely promoted as facts but are untrue. They're false.

- "Stress is external and the sum of many possible 'life event stressors' such as the loss of a job. Any internal, unhealthy physical changes and emotions are responses to stress."
- "It's necessary to learn how to relax and practice relaxation."
- "If we don't blame factors such as past events and current situations for stress and bad moods, we must blame those who suffer with them."
- "Being depressed and stressed confirms or implies a personal flaw or weakness in someone."
- "The essential cause of chronic anxiety and depression is more likely inherited or genetic."
- "Even though they hurt us and our relationships, stress and uncomfortable emotions are the spice of life and a required part of the human experience."
- "The cause of moods such as depression is so complicated and unique to individuals that there can never be a relatively simple answer that will apply to most humans."
- "People have 'good stress' or what's often labeled as 'eustress.'"
- "Stress is required for success . . . but needs to be managed to keep it within acceptable limits."
- "Other people, the environment or memories cause our painful emotions."

Questioning the validity of dogma (like the preceding) is a fundamental principle of good scientific inquiry. But why is it necessary to so openly expose those inaccuracies and for you to know about politically correct untruths? Asked another way, why not "sugarcoat" what I'm about to tell you?



This analogy explains: You want to live in a place I call Best Wellness. When you find and travel on the actual road to that secure and fun place, you safely unload enough stress and its moods. Then you can call and give directions to Best Wellness to people you love. So they soon can follow and join you there.

Once you arrive, you will happily and safely stay sufficiently free of stress and its emotions. If never chronically stressed and upset, you can and do prevent them.

Through no fault of your own, you now drive and carefully follow signs experts and others promised would guide you to Best Wellness. Sometimes it might seem you're close or already there. But you never arrive.

The reason you get lost more than you lose stress and its moods is that nearly all the signs are wrong. They're only politically correct. Those signs direct you down gosh-awful trails that money-motivated (out to get your money) or misinformed people want you to take. After all your efforts and time spent, you still are nowhere near Best Wellness.

If you want to get there soon enough to protect yourself and someone who needs you, it's essential to know which signs to ignore. Avoid being misled! Those misdirecting signs are politically correct untruths. This book is the first to expose them. Most important, it clearly shows and explains the signs, truthful beliefs or CARING Answers, that guide you along the sure route to Best Wellness.

This program is straightforward, safe and time-tested. A leading publisher of scientific and technical books published an early version, entitled **Stress Master**. My company published **Stress and Moods Mastery** and its previous editions for my patients and workshop clients. They use it to release their confidence and tell me it works. Also, I presented the essentials of this program to colleagues. Other behavioral healthcare clinicians reviewed and agreed with it.

Stress management experts don't agree with the more important elements of what **Stress and Moods Mastery** shows and tells. A book publisher and then a journal asked authorities on psychological stress to review what I submitted for publication. Reviewers disagreed with what I wrote. The editors who requested the critiques gave me the opportunity to respond to criticisms. So far, publishers have always decided in favor of what I submitted.

Please don't confuse what **Stress and Moods Mastery** encourages you to do with "stress management." How many stress management books have you read that, as this text does, question the value of learning and practicing relaxation? None.

Mastery isn't the same as management. That statement conveys an underlying conviction and theme you'll find throughout this program: Having some psychological stress isn't good and somehow needed, what's called "eustress," but is recognized as always harmful and unnecessary—once adults sufficiently know how to master or control it. The emotional fuels for human activity such as pride, joy and love are far more healthy and satisfying than the acute or chronic moods made by stress—for instance, fear.

Reader, I urge you to take advantage of S&MM's spoken content I recorded for you. It totals only a few minutes of voice recording. If you choose to not listen (or occasionally even when you do listen), substitute with some of the list of Stress-Freeing Facts and pictures you will find on this page, <<http://www.truthforhealthyliving.org/S&MM-book-facts.pdf>>. Please begin doing that soon. You will find it's the simplest and most useful part of this very up-front program. As new editions of the free audio track become available, I'll put them on the page just given. Visit, download and listen anytime. You'll also find the most recent, free-access, online version of this book.

Be sure to go ahead and review the [legal notice materials in this book](#) and online at <http://www.legal.html>. By continuing, you confirm that you agree with the legal notice materials and qualify to use this program.

Do you have nonfiction books that you started and even liked but still didn't finish? You can avoid that with this one by doing little rereading as you go. Instead, read all the way through and then reread and study those parts you want to understand better.

**Stress and Moods Mastery** follows an orderly series of steps. Each is easy to take from the one that goes before. If you skip around in your reading, you can accidentally create misunderstandings that will reduce your opportunity for success. Because the many benefits you get build from one step to the next and so much of what helps is covered near the end, avoid expecting to recognize the progress you're making before you finish the program.

You will find a good reason for this recommendation in a later chapter: Keep from talking about this program and your use of it with anyone—except your medical doctor or the professional who encouraged you to use it—until at least three weeks after you finish reading. Tell anyone who asks that you are doing the “avoid talking about it” program. Feel free to email me [richard@truthforhealthyliving.org](mailto:richard@truthforhealthyliving.org).

Some sentences might seem unusually worded or awkwardly constructed. If so, avoid letting that interfere. You will find that I wrote that way to keep from giving you subtle conflicting messages and to be accurate. I believe that you're willing to concentrate more knowing that my aim is to make the content far more valuable.

**Stress and Moods Mastery** is the first program that identifies and offers a safe and simple solution for the essential cause of unhealthy human stress and emotions. That is inhibited confidence. It is an illustrated book and one audio track that totals 23 minutes of voice recording.

**Stress and Moods Mastery** primarily focuses at a place in the human psychophysiological process and in a way no other approach does. It concentrates on that area within individuals where the essential cause resides and the solution must apply its influence.

This unique approach says, "An adult who has or doesn't want to have ongoing stress and its moods needs to sufficiently counter a specific group of misunderstandings (STRESS Notions) subtly begun and maintained by politically correct untruths and by a particular part of his or her personality. Those ideas are untrue and entirely unknown when they happen and suppress the confidence that most adults already know they need. They are some of his fault-free 'quick interpretive thoughts.' With repeated internal dialog and self-guided imagery—using simple statements inspired by a cluster of accurate and blame-free beliefs (CARING Answers)—he will have the confidence required to get and stay free of enough unhealthy stress or to prevent having it. He does that soon, safely and with the least amount of effort possible."

Reader, if you have trouble in any way getting into or staying with this program, listen to the Stress-Freeing Facts on the spoken content's [Facts Track](#). See <http://www.S&MM-book-facts.pdf>. Listen as often and for as long as you will. What you get from doing that builds and will get you moving along.

Should you come to feel you "paid" less than this program is worth, I hope you will visit the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation website, [www.komen.org](http://www.komen.org). Learn about the foundation and, if you want, make a donation “in honor of” Judith K. Lovelace.

Take terrific care of yourself.

R. T. L.

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## Chapter One

# Stress & Moods Mastery Starts Here



Welcome to the first part and drafts of the latest version of our wellness and health promotion program, **Stress Mastery**. Access will remain free and won't require anything of you.

Be sure to read [this Author's Note](#).

All that we experience gets filtered through the part of our self-confidence that's known and the part we have none of us realize is present. In fact and understandably, we would swear it isn't there, inside us. The result of that filtering determines what we think. That's also unknown. When the thoughts often and persistently say, "there's a threat," we have the health-risky stress that eventually disables and destroys us. Uncomfortable and most-often unperceived moods (emotions) are simply by-products of that stress. Those emotions serve to fuel our behaviors. When the moods are hurtful, our behaviors also are hurtful . . . damaging to ourselves and inaccurately influencing our families, friends, employers, communities and society.

The essential key to real relief is to sufficiently "clean the filter" that's confidence or self-esteem. Sooner or later, that involves reprogramming. Longtime experience-, research-based self-reprogramming is the solution this, and only this, program will offer you.

**Self-reprogramming:** The facts you find here to "reprogram" (release confidence) are yours rather than mine. They are truthful beliefs (CARING Answers) you already have and hardly ever realize are present. Until you adequately, not completely, acknowledge and apply CARING Answers with repeated spoken content and guided imagery and combined with self-calming\* you have unhealthy stress and moods.

\* Why calming and not relaxing? You will soon find the answer.

As many as two-thirds of office visits to family physicians are due to stress-related health problems. Psychological stress is a major contributor, directly or indirectly, to six of the leading causes of death in the U.S.:

1. coronary heart disease,
2. cancer,
3. lung disease,
4. cirrhosis,
5. accidental injury,
6. suicide.



Healthcare professionals know that there's a sometimes subtle but powerful association between mental stress and maintaining physical well-being. Ongoing moderate and high levels contribute to

- headaches,
- back pain,
- stomach problems,
- addiction,
- much more.

Frequent stress with anger fosters high blood pressure and stroke. Stress associated with depression encourages physical fatigue and lowers our resistance to common illnesses.

Enough preliminaries . . . let's get to the point: Do you have happiness-blocking and health-threatening stress? To better judge that, complete and score the Lovelace Stress Scale. Do that before reading further.

**Note:** Dr. Lovelace created, used and refined his lifestyle health risk assessments (tests) with thousands of adults around the world. Consequently, they do not apply to children. The author and publisher offer all tests for educational purposes only. No lifestyle health risk test tells absolute facts. They suggest possibilities to consider. When the results make sense to you, use them to your benefit. Avoid making significant changes in your life based on the results. Instead, use what you learn combined with appropriate professional support.

**Lovelace Stress Scale**

**Directions:**

1. Read the 10 statements (items), below.
2. As you go, decide how well each statement describes you in recent times. (The last six weeks.)
3. Respond to each statement with a number from one to seven. The more you believe the statement describes you, the higher the number you give.

Not at all like me..... So-so like me.....Just like me

**1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7**

4. Be sure to write your numbers as you go and avoid skipping items.

<b>1.</b>	<b>I believe that I have too much stress. (Write numbers, 1 to 7, in the boxes to the right.)</b>	
<b>2.</b>	<b>I worry about people or about things.</b>	
<b>3.</b>	<b>I have a concern or fear that interferes. You might relate it to activities such as asserting yourself, calling or meeting with relatives or customers/clients, being rejected, handling objections, dealing with criticism, driving or maybe flying.</b>	
<b>4.</b>	<b>I believe that one or more of my relationships at work or elsewhere suffers because of my irritability or sadness.</b>	
<b>5.</b>	<b>I doubt that I'm as successful as I should be in my work or at home.</b>	
<b>6.</b>	<b>The way I eat and drink is nutritionally poor or I eat too much fattening food—so my body shows it. I'm not lean enough. (Still use the 1 to 7 scale.)</b>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>I have a physical problem that I suspect, or someone tells me, comes from pressures in my life. The problem could be headaches, stomach upsets, high or low blood pressure, back or neck pain, difficulty sleeping, teeth grinding, bitten finger nails, sweating, excess body fat, decreased romantic interest, skin problems or cold hands. (Note that factors other than stress can cause some of these physical concerns. If you haven't, check with your physician.)</b>	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Most days . . . there are too many tasks that I should or must complete.</b>	
<b>9.</b>	<b>I use something to calm or relax me. Or I use something to pep me up or to give me energy/excitement. You might, for example, use nicotine, caffeine, medicine, dietary supplement, alcohol, forbidden drug, gambling, risky relationship or maybe watching too much television.</b>	
<b>10.</b>	<b>I exercise—not activity done at work, yard or house work—too little or the exercise I do doesn't help enough.</b>	

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Now, add your numbers. **Write your Obvious Stress (initial) Score here:** \_\_\_\_\_.

**Overstating Stress**

The total presence of something so infrequently happens that it's reasonable to consider such a response to be an unrealized attempt to overstate it. If your "Obvious Stress Score" (above) was 58 or higher, check to see how often you gave a response of seven (7).

Deduct three (3) points from your Obvious Stress Score for each response of seven (7). If, for example, your Obvious Stress Score was 61, and you gave seven responses of seven (7), then subtract 21 points from your Obvious Stress Score for an "adjusted score" of 40.

**Put your adjusted score for overstating here:** \_\_\_\_\_.

**What your Obvious Stress Score (obvious or adjusted) means:**

- If you got an Obvious Stress Score of 33 or less, you are using subconscious denial of how much you have of the emotional and physical by-products. Don't take this as criticism. Instead, see it as a possibility you need to consider. Also with an Obvious Stress Score that low (33 or less), you may have misunderstood how to respond to this inventory. Check to see if the more you believed a statement described you, the higher the number you gave.
- If your Obvious Stress Score was 34 to 39, that suggests that you have a low level of mental stress. See "Please note," below.
- If you scored 40 to 45, that indicates that you have a moderate level of stress. Your score clearly points to a need to reduce the needless strain.
- Scores of 46 and higher suggest a high level of stress. Doing something soon that safely works to lower your stress is easily justified.



**Please note:** If you scored 39 or less, read below to see if you have some Hidden Stress. Obvious Stress is harmful enough. Hidden Stress is much worse! It can be difficult to get yourself to work on what, understandably, you don't realize is there.

### Identifying Hidden Stress

If you got an Obvious Stress Score of 39 or less, you still might have some "Hidden Stress." Three key items will tell you if you have this concealed, particularly menacing, internal strain.

1. Worrying (test item # 2)
2. hurtful eating (# 6)
3. using "home remedy" or prescribed "painkillers" (# 9)  
are common behaviors that block an awareness of mental stress.

**Write your Obvious Stress Score(your initial score above) here:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. If you scored 39 or less and still rated yourself with a five (5) or higher on item two (2), six (6) or nine (9), add seven (7) points to your Obvious Stress Score for each statement. That means, for example, if your Obvious Stress Score totaled 37 and you rated yourself with a five (5) or higher on statement number two (2) and item nine (9), then add 14 (two statements times seven) to your 37 for a new total of 51.
2. Did you respond to any of the 10 items by rating yourself with a number one (1)? If so, add three (3) points to your score for each. It infrequently happens that there is a total absence of something. Consequently, it's appropriate to consider such a response to be an attempt to reduce awareness of by-products of the internal strain. For instance, if you answered two of the statements with a number one (1), you would add another six (6) points to the 51 (example, above paragraph) for an adjusted score of 57. The difference between the 37 started with and 57 represents Hidden Stress.

**Put your Adjusted Score for Hidden Stress here:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### What your new score means:

- If 34 to 39, that suggests that you have a low level of mental stress.
- If you scored 40 to 45, that indicates that you have a moderate level of stress. Your score clearly points to a need to reduce the strain.
- Scores of 46 and higher suggest a high level of stress. Doing something soon that safely works to lower stress is easily justified.

### Inaccurate Definitions Make It Hidden - Far More Dangerous

Chronic stress is the internal (entirely inside of us) biochemical response to our nearly constant unknown notions that there are, might or will be threats we must or should deal with.

A friend took the latest version of the Lovelace (Chronic) Stress Inventory. Her numbers reflected a common occurrence well worth explaining to you.

I didn't tell her what I found. She has made it clear she wasn't willing to make the required change in the politically correct way others told her to define stress.

On the first item, she rated herself as having a high level of stress—a six (6). However, her initial or Obvious Stress Score was relatively low—a 36.

Once I made the adjustments needed to investigate for Hidden Stress, her final score was in the high stress range. Her final (adjusted) score matched her initial score.

My friend suffered with mild to moderate depression along with several obvious and particularly threatening physical symptoms of persistently high stress. **My question:** you would think that her scores would start out matching, wouldn't you? Having a high self-rating of stress, her score on obvious stress would be high.

The reason that didn't happen was because of how she defined stress. She honestly but inaccurately defined it as a combination of the many demands she believed were unfairly put on her at work, inadequate support from her exhusband, health problems of her daughter and her teenage son's unwillingness to help out more at home.

I very much care about her and hope she reads this, changes her definition and more. Her children need for her to be healthier and happier.

### Better Test for Stress and Moods Mastery

The very popular "life events" way to measure psychological stress doesn't work well enough. The more recent version of that less-accurate test asks you which life events (serious illness, divorce, loss of a job, move to another home, marriage, etc.) you've experienced during the past year. The test assigns points – ranging from 18 to 123 – to those you've experienced . . . again, in the past year. If when you add your numbers, you get a score between 250 and 500 then you're supposed to have a "moderate level" of stress. That test doesn't identify a high level.

That's like trying to find out if someone is cold by asking her questions such as, "How many snows did you get last year?" Or asking her, "Did you sleep with a blanket on your bed last winter?"

The better way to gauge stress is to ask people how much they believe they have; find out if they have symptoms of chronic stress and see if they exhibit behaviors (nicotine use, etc.) fueled by uncomfortable emotions.

"Life events" measures of stress discourage a sense of competence. They discourage having self-confidence! People can easily hear the message: "There is nothing much you can do to avoid stress. After all, there is little you would want to do to sidestep many life events."

Another negative is that the "life events stress tests" at least imply that people deserve blame and to feel guilty. For example, "You made yourself stressed by getting married and moving into a new home."

Our ancestors got to be our ancestors by surviving. When a dangerous animal, for instance, attacked they didn't stand around that long scratching whatever and trying to decide what to do. Anyone who did get "chomped" and didn't get to be a progenitor. What those who survived did have were thoughts that happened so quickly they didn't know they were there.

Those "fast thoughts" caused the stress (the biochemical response to subconscious perceptions/thoughts of threat) that created the uncomfortable emotions that fueled their defensive behaviors. They fought, ran away or hid from what their super-quick thoughts identified as dangerous.

We have inherited that "fast thinking" ability. Those so quick they're unknown thoughts, not life events, cause our stress. Since we don't know the thoughts are present when they happen, they are not our fault.

Tell a traffic court judge you didn't know what you did was against the "rules of the road," and he or she will tell you, "Ignorance of the law is no excuse." In what I call the "court of life," not knowing is one of the best reasons we have. If it doesn't work, we all get "sent up the river."

We need to sense the presence and question the accuracy of those unknown-to-us, confidence-destructive ideas. Then we can learn to counter them to avoid most stress and its painful moods. We do that by regularly telling ourselves what's more likely going on and true. Just as its important to discover which germ is causing a disease, it's crucial to acknowledge and answer those honest but mistaken thoughts enabling stress: STRESS Notions.

**Some of what makes the Lovelace Stress Scale better:**

- It is compatible with the essential cause of mental or psychological stress and doesn't mislead.
- It asks test-takers to estimate their level of Obvious Stress.
- It encourages identifying present symptoms and uses those to check for stress.
- It recognizes the existence of Hidden Stress and brings it to light.
- It helps to gauge and identify a higher than moderate level of chronic stress.
- It doesn't subtly blame and consequently encourage guilt.
- It promotes prevention of stress and its moods as well as relief.
- It helps release personal confidence or self-esteem.

\* In addition to politically correct untrue definitions, acclimation conceals stress. We have it so long that we no longer recognize it.

**Here is another assessment for you. Go ahead and complete it before reading further.**

**Lovelace Self Confidence Test – Investigate Hidden and Surface Levels**

**Directions:**

1. Respond to each of the first 20 items by writing in the boxes provided the letter (A, B or C) of the statement that best describes you.
2. Sometimes, more than one statement will be true. Pick the one that comes the closest to describing you.
3. Avoid responding with what you believe are the "right" answers. (All answers are correct when you give the most accurate responses you can.)
4. Write only one letter (A, B, or C).
5. Don't skip any items—including the last, number 21.

<b>1.</b>	A. When someone criticizes what I do or say, it rarely upsets me. I might like or need it when someone seems bothered. B. Someone's obvious disapproval of what I do or say hurts my feelings. C. Someone criticizing me increases my caring about (or understanding of) that person.	<b>1.</b> _____
<b>2.</b>	A. I feel in control of what someone does or how he or she feels. I seem to need that. B. Too often, I feel out of control or powerless. C. I understand that I am in control of myself. I have little interest in trying to control anyone else.	<b>2.</b> _____
<b>3.</b>	A. I think of myself as better than other people. B. I think of myself as less important than other people. C. I think I'm no better than or inferior to other people.	<b>3.</b> _____
<b>4.</b>	A. How I look is very important to me. If possible, I want to always look my best. B. I don't care that much how I look as long as I'm comfortable and clean. C. How I look is important to the degree I want it to reflect how I feel about myself. My body is now lean and fit.	<b>4.</b> _____
<b>5.</b>	A. I don't mind a good argument. It helps to relieve the tension or makes life more interesting. B. I dislike arguments. I do what I can to avoid them. C. I don't avoid arguments. They are all right with me. Yet, I don't compete to win them at another person's expense.	<b>5.</b> _____
<b>6.</b>	A. I don't care about helping people. I turn down nearly all requests for it. B. It's nearly impossible for me to refuse a genuine plea for help. C. I help others and I help myself. However, I rarely help when it would mean doing harm to myself.	<b>6.</b> _____
<b>7.</b>	A. I believe or other people tell me that I'm a perfectionist. I'm not likely to be satisfied until most things are done and done very well. B. I don't care if most tasks are completed or how well they are done. It isn't that important to me. C. I do well because it better reflects my value. If I don't perform well, I'm rarely bothered.	<b>7.</b> _____
<b>8.</b>	A. I dislike making mistakes and avoid them whenever possible. B. Too often, life seems filled with my mistakes. C. I don't make many mistakes, but when I do I'm rarely upset.	<b>8.</b> _____

9.	<p>A. If at all possible, I don't ask for help. I feel I should be able to do without it.                  B. I ask for help and don't mind asking. Unfortunately, what's done to help me usually doesn't work well enough.                  C. I know when I need help and ask for it. If the help doesn't fit, I probably can get it to work.</p>	9. ____
10.	<p>A. I regularly criticize other people or situations. Maybe I shouldn't, but it helps me to let it out.                  B. Someone taught me that criticizing wasn't proper. I avoid it as much as I can. Probably I do hold it inside.                  C. I'm rarely critical but not because it isn't proper. It's more that my mind doesn't work that way.</p>	10. ____
11.	<p>A. If someone disagrees with what I believe I understand that she has a different opinion. That's okay.                  B. If someone disagrees with what I believe is true, I probably assume that I'm wrong.                  C. If someone disagrees with what I believe, I try to convince him to change his beliefs.</p>	11. ____
12.	<p>A. I'm comfortable with praise. However, I don't need it to feel okay about myself and what I do.                  B. I need praise. I welcome the recognition . . . even though I usually don't show it.                  C. I don't much care if I get praised. I'm uncomfortable being fussed over.</p>	12. ____
13.	<p>A. It rarely occurs to me to pay attention to whether or not people like me or how many friends I have.                  B. I have (hope I have) many friends and keeping those relationships is very important.                  C. Not enough people like me. Those who do . . . I don't care for, that much.</p>	13. ____
14.	<p>A. Material goods or what I consider to be success comes to me as a byproduct of living.                  B. I don't care that much about getting ahead or being successful. It's just more I have to keep up with and be concerned about.                  C. Getting ahead in life and having valuable possessions are important to me. I'm working hard to be successful.</p>	14. ____
15.	<p>A. I'm too busy enjoying or learning from what's going on now to talk about my accomplishments.                  B. There isn't that much I have to be proud of, or else there is but I keep it to myself .                  C. I'm quick to let people know about what I've accomplished or the good things that happen to me.</p>	15. ____
16.	<p>A. I'm primarily responsible for what happens in my life. Blaming others or circumstances doesn't make any more sense to me than feeling badly about the past that won't change.                  B. Many of the bad things that happen to me are my fault. I feel guilty about and regret such mistakes.                  C. If something goes wrong, it usually isn't my fault. Other people or circumstances are probably to blame.</p>	16. ____
17.	<p>A. There is a sense of positive direction to my life. That somehow comes from my worth as a person rather than goals I set and reach.                  B. There seems to be little direction to my life. It's hard to imagine my life going well.                  C. I often do or think I should set goals and evaluate my progress toward attaining them. If life gets tough, I can think about how good it can be some day.</p>	17. ____
18.	<p>A. When needed, I speak up for myself without being harsh. I confront others and do it well.                  B. I'm usually reserved and don't speak harshly to others. I try to be considerate . . . even if it means my needs go unmet.                  C. I'm outspoken. It sometimes comes across as being unkind and aggressive.</p>	18. ____
19.	<p>A. Whether it seems fair or not, people do what they believe is in their better interest. That's what human beings do.                  B. I have definite beliefs about what is and is not fair. I'm upset when I and other people are treated unfairly.                  C. Most people look out for themselves and will pretty much do whatever they think they can get away with. It's not fair for them to act that way.</p>	19. ____
20.	<p>A. I know what people say that's not true doesn't hurt me or anyone else. Still, that's not a license for me to say what isn't true.                  B. I am careful about what I say because I might hurt someone.                  C. If I'm careful about what I say, it's more likely because someone might use it against me.</p>	20. ____
21.	<p>Write the number that best describes how you now feel about yourself. The number one means entirely hating yourself. The seven (7) means entirely loving yourself. Perhaps a number between the two (2) extremes better describes how you now feel about yourself. Please write a number now.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Hate Myself ..... Love Myself                  1 ..... 2 ..... 3.....4 ..... 5 ..... 6 .... 7</p>	21. ____

**To score this test:**

1. **Beginning with item 11 above and after, change each "A" you wrote to a "C" and change each "C" response you gave to an "A."** Please do that now. **Read later about why this is done.**
2. After you make those changes, count and enter below the total number of "A's" you gave, the total number of "B's" and the total number of "C's."

Total "A's" \_\_\_\_\_ Total "B's" \_\_\_\_\_ Total "C's" \_\_\_\_\_

**Interpretation:**

- The more "C's" you recorded, the stronger (more accurate) your "hidden self confidence": what you "think of" (love, value, gauge as capable about) yourself beneath your awareness and probably the less stress and uncomfortable emotions you have. Be sure to read "some other factors," later.
- If you have fewer than 11 "C" answers, working to strengthen (make accurate) your confidence (self-esteem) is even more important.
- Fewer than 11 "C" answers indicates that how you feel about yourself beneath the surface is suffering significantly. Your confidence clearly needs and deserves your attention to help protect yourself from the physical and emotional by-products of stress and protect your relationships, work and more.

**Surface Self Confidence.** The number you wrote in response to item 21 represents your surface self confidence: what you think of and feel about yourself and realize.

- If you wrote the number four (4), your surface self confidence is about in the middle compared to how you perceive most people think of themselves.
- If the number you wrote in response to item 21 was less than four (4), thoughtful work on your surface self confidence will ensure progress in relieving risky and uncomfortable moods and stress. Still, what you believe you think of yourself can be different than what you think of yourself at a deeper level.

**Aggressive Hurt and Hidden Self Confidence.** Provided you gave fewer than 11 "C" responses, the more "A" answers you gave – particularly if higher than eight (8) – the more likely you have a hidden self confidence that's "aggressive." See if enough of the following describe you.

- You gave yourself a five (5) or more on item 21.
- You question having a moderate or higher level of stress.
- You doubt your confidence is hurting.
- You usually ignore health difficulties that are stress related or postpone reducing "bad habits" . . . for example, alcohol or nicotine use.
- Some people identify you as too assertive or "pushy."
- Without intending to, you build up anger that apparently hurts relationships or sometimes "gets out of hand."
- You are more critical of people or situations than of yourself.
- You place more than what you think is normal emphasis on achieving recognition or "getting ahead."
- You give the appearance of having better than usual self esteem. However, you have nagging doubts.
- You speak up in defense of your rights but too often in a blunt or challenging manner.
- You give other people reasons to worry rather than you doing much worrying.
- You have more than average "success" (for instance, financial) but periodically mess it up.

**Passive Hurt and Hidden Self Confidence.** With fewer than 11 "C" answers, the more "B" descriptive statements you picked - especially if seven (7) or more - the more likely you have a hidden self confidence that's "passive." See if enough of the following describe you.

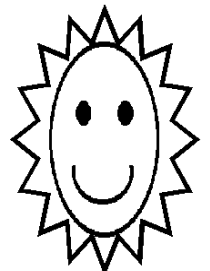
- You gave yourself no more than a four (4) on item 21.
- You are less critical of other people or circumstances than of yourself.
- You have fewer than what you believe are usual concerns with outward signs of success.
- You already realize that you don't feel confident or positive enough about yourself and you have a problem with stress.
- Rather than ignore health difficulties, you recognize and tend to "dwell on" or worry about them.
- You feel sad more than angry.
- You recognize the importance of reducing lifestyle health risks like nicotine use or excess bodyweight and occasionally make unsuccessful efforts to deal with them or substitute one "bad habit" for another.
- You will just occasionally speak up for yourself when people ignore your needs.
- You worry too much or agonize over past events and actions.
- You have less success (for instance, financial) and then periodically, when you're about to "get ahead," you "mess-up."

**Mixed A's and B's.** If you have less than 11 "C" responses and about equal numbers of "A" and "B" responses, you're neither clearly "aggressive" nor clearly "passive" with regard to hurt hidden self confidence.

- You show a mixture of characteristics typical of people with higher "A" or "B" responses.
- Your level of stress is higher and in need of relief.
- You need to strengthen (make more accurate) your self-esteem.

**Stronger Hidden Self-Confidence.** If you scored 11 to 16 "C" responses, you're among those adults identified as having a stronger, more accurate, hidden self confidence. See if enough of the following describe you.

- You gave yourself at least a four (4) on item 21.
- You're doing well avoiding chronic stress and uncomfortable moods.
- You speak-up when other people ignore your more important needs.
- You worry and agonize over the past less but not because you work at it.
- It rarely if ever occurs to you to be critical of people, organizations or situations.
- You place less emphasis on achieving public recognition or "getting ahead." They've happened (will happen) without much conscious effort.
- You're at less risk for a stress induced self-destruct or sabotage.



**More than 16 C's.** Did you notice that I didn't say what it means if someone scores more than 16 "C" responses? Almost no one has given more than 16 "C" answers. My strong impression is that anyone who scores more than 16 "C's" is telling about how he needs to (should) feel and behave rather than what's going on inside him.

**Some other factors important to understand about your scores:**

- Even if you gave no "C" responses, you aren't at all inferior to someone who gave 16 "C" responses! This inventory is anything but an assessment of your value. It indicates what you secretly think about your competence and value.
- It is what you believe your value is, rather than how valuable or capable you are, that determines how long, happy and productive your life will be.
- If you are disappointed thinking about how you did on this test, you don't yet understand its purpose. Your reaction can help you realize that you tend to believe that your value depends on how well you "Do" or what you "Have." "If I do well on the inventory and have a lot of good answers, then I am a good person. Otherwise, I'm not." That's untrue! We will talk more about this near the end of the book.
- It's entirely within your power to change your self-confidence at all levels.

The way you significantly and deeply improve what you think of yourself and your ongoing level of stress, your moods and relationships is to change what you think . . . although you don't know you have those notions at the time. Many people have done it. You can too and deserve nothing less!

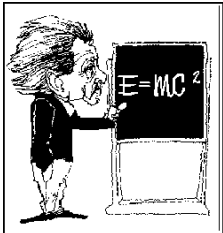
What evidence is there that self confidence relates to having and keeping unhealthy stress and moods? Read "research study" below.

**Why does the Lovelace Self-Confidence Test want test-takers to begin with item eleven (11) and change "A" responses to "C" responses and change "C" responses to "A" responses?**

**Answer:** It's done to get the most accurate and useful (to you) results. Asking you to make changes to score your responses isn't done to trick you and doesn't suggest you've done something wrong.

When answering the first few items, it's usual for test-takers to begin believing and not realize it that they know which are the "better" responses. That can hurtfully influence how they respond to later items. Switching letters helps take care of that and is a common procedure used by behavioral health professionals who create such tests.

**Research Study**  
How Psychological Stress and Self-esteem Relate and Interact



With the assistance of a large organization of healthcare management professionals, I conducted a study (mailed survey) of 330 of its members. (Stress and Self-esteem, Lovelace, RT., Clinical Laboratory Management Review, 1993.) Out of that randomized sample of subjects, 175 managers responded for an acceptable 53 percent response rate.

**That Article:**

- Explored how stress and self-esteem relate and interact;
- provided an explanation of some common misconceptions about self-confidence (example, having a "low" self-esteem puts someone in the minority);
- examined "ways of thinking" that created the strain. Examples were, "Makes me feel" Thinking; "Makes me do" Thinking; "What people say matters most" Thinking. (STRESS MASTER, Richard T. Lovelace, Ph.D., John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1990.);
- suggested means to change thoughts to avoid needless strain;
- included instruments (tests) for measuring stress and self-esteem.

**Research Perspective:**

- Psychological stress is an internal/biochemical response to perceived threats. That working definition was consistent with those of other researchers who studied and defined it. (For example, Assessment of the Human Stress Response, Everly and Sobelman, AMS Press, Inc., New York, 1987.)
- The perceptions or interpretive thoughts of the individual caused his or her having more or less distress, internal strain. Dr. Hans Selye, the father of modern endocrinology and stress research, confirmed this essential fact by saying, "It is not what happens to you that matters, but how you take it."
- If we consciously or subconsciously think that a life event is threatening, we have this internal/biochemical response.
- Our self-concept or esteem determines our subconscious thoughts or perceptions.
- Self-esteem was defined as our general opinion of ourselves as capable of coping with perceived threats. If we have "lower" (this author says, less accurate) self-concepts, we are more likely to perceive actual or imagined events in our lives (life events) as causing stress. To reduce stress, therefore, we need to increase the accuracy of our self-esteems.
- We increase the accuracy of our self-esteems by increasing the accuracy of our subconscious (quick interpretive) thoughts.

**Results:**

- Most subjects (lab managers) believed that their thoughts most often caused their stress at work. Other factors they believed created their job-related strain were insufficient staff, poor interpersonal communications and erratic workloads.
- Most respondents had similar attitudes about stress . . . thinking it was necessary and helpful, within limits. However, nearly one-third of the subjects thought it was not necessary at work. For this group, liking their jobs, liking themselves and caring about other people were sufficient to ensure their best job performance.
- Study participants self-reported more stress than their test results suggested. The overall results indicated that they had a low-moderate level of stress. Half the managers responding reported moderate or higher levels and 25 percent reported high levels.
- Overall, the self-esteem scale used suggested that on the surface (consciously) respondents felt "a little better than neutral" about themselves. The test also suggested that their self-esteems were harmed more than they realized . . . beneath the surface.
- No environmental (work-related) factors considered were significantly related to the amount of harm to self-esteems. Work site size, for example, did not affect their self-concepts.

- Statistically, only confidence (self-esteem) was consistently and significantly related to subjects' levels of psychological stress. When self-esteems were healthier (more accurate), their test scores said stress was less and vice versa.

**Might it be that higher levels of stress hurt or negatively influenced the subjects' self-esteems?** That wasn't the case. Other research stated that when investigating the causal relationship between two variables (in this instance, psychological stress and self-esteem) the one that's more stable or static changes the other. Self-esteem is the more stable variable.

**Discussion:**

What can we do that will increase the accuracy, improve the health, of our self-esteems? Increase the accuracy of our unknown-to-us (subconscious) thoughts. We need to sense the presence and question the accuracy of those unknown-to-us (at the time) confidence-inhibiting, stress-enabling notions. Then we learn to counter them to avoid most stress. We do that by regularly telling ourselves what's far more likely going on and true.

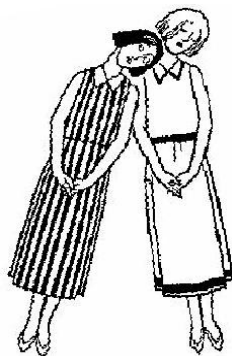
**Fundamental Key – Study's Relevance to Lasting Relief**

The key to stress and its moods mastery is to further release and increase the accuracy of your self-concept . . . by far and most importantly, your hidden self-confidence. Because it's invariably unknown or hidden, reprogramming is needed. That's the solution this program offers.

Self-reprogramming entails repeated exposure to a few simple beliefs. Doing that enables them to be and stay in control. Those beliefs, CARING Answers, are yours not mine and reside deeply in a special portion (ego-state) of your personality. An important but still too young part of your personality might doubt what I just said. When you read Chapter Two, you'll confirm for yourself that statement as practical experience-based and factual rather than theoretical or mystical.

**Efficient and effective self-reprogramming is accomplished by:**

1. Having and taking advantage of spoken content that teaches calming skills and assists to more fully learn the "heat that heals" truth you read and review in this book.
2. Having and regularly listening to and/or reading straightforward and brief statements of fact.
3. Add imagining scenes that confirm the essential truths underlying those facts.

**Stress and Moods Mastery means avoiding relaxation.**

"Please stay calm." "Calm down." Those are common ways we hear that word, "calm," used. Hearing and seeing the word encourages self-confidence in you and most adults.

- The ways we're apt to hear and see "calm" applied imply we already have it . . . as in, "stay calm."
- Calmness exists in degrees and goes in the easier direction: "calm down."
- We're less likely to have failed attempting to do it.
- It's unlikely we will have fear-producing thoughts associated with becoming "calm."
- We do what produces increased calming to gain awareness, become more alert and to solve problems.

"Just relax." "Now, try to relax." You've heard those statements. Stress management experts tell you to learn and practice relaxing – for instance, something called "progressive muscle relaxation" or a meditation technique known as "the relaxation response." Using the word, "relax," discourages self-confidence. Promoting relaxation leads to most people not doing it for the following and more reasons:

- People believe that relaxation doesn't happen in degrees. You either have it or you don't.
- Significant numbers of adults fear relaxing. What they think about it and don't realize panics them. Becoming relaxed suggests letting down their guards and practically asking to be somehow attacked.
- Becoming relaxed implies a loss of personal control. Stage show hypnotists, for example, are fond of the word, "relax," and use it often.

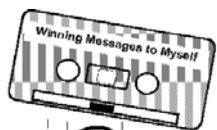
- People more likely perceive it as complicated, time-consuming and inconvenient – not something we can readily do at times it's needed the most.
- Folks relax to become less aware, prepare for sleep and avoid problems and solutions.

### Learn to Increase the Benefits of Guided Imagery with this Unique Self-Calming Exercise

I teach group participants how to use this to enhance their practice of self-guided imagery. To make it easier for them, I model what's useful to do before asking them to follow along.

1. I show how to sit comfortably with their hands and feet resting slightly apart.
2. Then they will need to find a spot on the ceiling in front of them to stare at. I tell them that once they locate a spot, it's important to keep looking at it until their eyes spontaneously close.
3. As I demonstrate, I tell them that I will want them to lower their chins until they can barely see the spot on the ceiling and do so without causing themselves any discomfort.
4. I encourage them to be as "mentally neutral" as they can muster. That means to keep from seeking to do something or trying to keep from doing something. I tell them, "Follow along . . . don't decide to close your eyes or try to keep them open."
5. I tell them they'll get their first obvious sign of successfully calming themselves when their eyes close. The reason for closing their eyes is to focus their attention more inward. Their eyes close and remain closed. I reassure them by letting them know that they can easily open their eyes any time they need or want.
6. Sometimes, I explain that at this point in the exercise that they might notice some "rapid eye movement" or REM beneath their closed eyelids. Some notice it but many group participants don't.
7. I explain how I will ask that they roll their eyes downward as far as they can and without strain. They roll their eyes fully downward instead of lowering their chins. They allow their eyelids to follow all the way down.
8. Next, they will need to look toward a place near their hearts. "That place," I explain, "is what I identify as the part of you that's most capable and caring." I note with them that "some people notice that their heads move down a bit as they continue to look downward." That's a common signal that they are doing the procedure as described to them.
9. Finally, I go back through the exercise . . . with them doing what I ask.

Those folks who learn and practice the above can then practice self-guided imagery with more benefits.



Stream of My Quick Thoughts

**When you're ready, tape record the first 8 steps of my Self-Calming Exercise and use that to help yourself practice it. Please note:** Do your practicing and use the exercise only at times and in places where you can safely close your eyes for as long as you want. Once you've learned it, occasionally do the Self-Calming Exercise as you take advantage of the spoken content provided at the end of the next chapter.