



The Mettle Stress Audit

Identify what is actually loading you, rate its weight honestly, and build a plan for the one that matters most.

Stress rarely arrives as one big thing. It accumulates as a dozen ordinary things carried at once. This audit separates them so you can see what you are dealing with.

Stress is a load, not a weakness.

Most men do not describe themselves as stressed. They describe themselves as busy, tired, short-tempered, or fine. The load still shows up – in sleep, in patience, in the drink at the end of the night, in how far away your own life can start to feel.

The problem with carrying everything at once is that it all blurs into one weight. You cannot put down “everything”. You can put down one thing, or carry it differently, once you can see it clearly.

That is what this audit does. It is not a clinical measure and it does not score you. It separates the load into named parts, asks you to rate each one honestly, and then helps you decide where to act first.

HOW TO USE IT

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|--------------------------|---|
| BE HONEST | This is for you. Nobody marks it. Underplaying the numbers only hides the picture. |
| RATE THE LOAD | For each area, score how heavily it is weighing on you right now – 0 (nothing) to 10 (crushing). |
| RATE YOUR CONTROL | Then score how much of it is actually within your influence – 0 (none) to 10 (all of it). |
| LOOK FOR THE GAP | High load with some control is where action helps. High load with no control needs a different response – support, acceptance, or help. |
| PICK ONE | The plan in Part Three deliberately works on one stressor. One moved is worth more than eight circled. |

One more thing. If the honest answer is that everything is at 8 or above and has been for months, that is not a time-management problem. That is a load worth talking to someone about – a GP, a counsellor, or the free 15-minute call at the end of this workbook.

The audit

Work through each area. Note what is actually going on there in a line or two, then score the load it puts on you and how much of it you can influence, each from 0 to 10. Skip any area that genuinely is not carrying weight right now.

Work & workload - Deadlines, hours, the job itself, people at work

Load _____ Control _____

What's going on here...

Money - Bills, debt, providing, the gap between in and out

Load _____ Control _____

What's going on here...

Relationship - Partner, conflict, distance, things unsaid

Load _____ Control _____

What's going on here...

Family & caring - Kids, parents, being needed in every direction

Load _____ Control _____

What's going on here...

Health & energy - Your body, sleep, pain, fitness, worry about either

Load _____ Control _____

What's going on here...

Habits - Drink, food, phone, anything doing more managing than you are

Load _____ Control _____

What's going on here...

Time & admin - The backlog, the life admin, the things circling unfinished

Load _____ Control _____

What's going on here...

Something else - Whatever is loading you that does not fit a box above

Load _____ Control _____

What's going on here...

Read what you wrote.

Numbers on their own change nothing. The value is in what they show you when you stand back. Answer the following using the audit on the previous page.

01 Name the top two.

Which two areas scored the highest load? Write them down, and note whether either of them surprised you.

Your two heaviest areas, and whether seeing them written down was expected or a surprise -

Write here...

02 Separate acute from chronic.

Acute stress has an end date - a house move, a deadline, a rough quarter. Chronic stress has been renamed 'normal life' - it has no end date because nothing is scheduled to change it.

Which of your top stressors is acute, and which has quietly become permanent?

Write here...

For the permanent one - how long has it actually been running?

Write here...

03 Find the workable one.

Look at the load and control scores together. The place to act first is usually high load with real control - not the heaviest thing, the most movable thing. Momentum on one stressor changes how the rest feel to carry.

Which stressor combines a heavy load with genuine control? This is your working target for Part Three.

Write here...

For the heavy ones you cannot control - who or what could help you carry them? Be specific.

Write here...

One stressor, one plan.

Take the working target from Part Two. The aim here is not to solve it. The aim is to take one step that reduces the load or increases your grip on it within the next seven days.

04 Define the step.

Small enough to be certain, concrete enough to be checkable. 'Sort the money out' is not a step. 'List every direct debit on Sunday morning' is.

The one step you will take this week -

e.g. Book the GP appointment. Tell my manager the deadline is not realistic. List every direct debit.

When exactly, and where? Give it a day and a time, not an intention.

Write here...

05 Plan for the obstacle.

Something will get in the way, because something always does. Naming it in advance is what separates a plan from a wish.

What is most likely to knock this off course, and what will you do when it shows up?

Write here...

06 Tell someone.

A step spoken out loud to one person is far more likely to happen than one kept private. It does not need to be a big conversation.

Who will you tell about this step, and when?

Write here...

A week from now, come back to this page. If the step happened, pick the next one. If it did not, that is information, not failure - look at what got in the way and make the step smaller. The audit is reusable. Run it again whenever the load blurs back into one weight.

When stress is more than stress.

Stress and burnout are related but they are not the same thing. Stress is carrying too much. Burnout is what happens when you have carried too much for too long - the flatness, the cynicism, the sense that nothing you do makes a difference. If Part One read less like a busy season and more like a description of the last two years, take that seriously.

A few things worth carrying forward -

The load is real. Naming it is not complaining, it is accuracy.

Act where you have control. Ask for help where you do not.

One moved stressor changes how the rest feel to carry.

Chronic stress that has been renamed normal life is still chronic stress.

If everything scores high and has for months, that is a conversation, not a to-do list.

If you want to talk it through before committing to anything, the free 15-minute call at Mettle is a straightforward conversation. No script. No assessment. Just an honest look at what is going on and what might actually help.

BOOK A FREE 15-MINUTE CALL

mettletherapy.co.uk/contact, 01704 660167, info@mettletherapy.co.uk

If you are in crisis, contact Samaritans on 116 123 (free, 24/7) or attend your nearest A&E.

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Have a suggestion for a new resource? Email us at info@mettletherapy.co.uk.