

 PRACTICE 1

You are going to read an extract from an article. For questions 1 to 8, circle the correct answer A, B, C or D.

Learning how to cope with stress is truly an art, a skill that one needs to develop over time and constantly enhance to meet the demands of life today. Although you cannot completely eliminate stress, you can always learn to cope and make it work for you. It has been acknowledged that there are two forms of stress: positive and negative. The positive aspect would be that it increases strength, energy, alertness and concentration. In contrast, if not managed carefully, it can decrease the level of energy, weaken the immune system and cause serious illnesses. There are certain ways to reduce stress.

First, you must be realistic and know your limitations, your strengths and weaknesses. You may not always be successful, so do not be too disappointed with yourself if you cannot achieve certain goals in life. Next is to adopt a problem-solving approach to life. This means that you should recognise that there are usually many ways to get something done, and some may simply involve more obstacles than others. So, you should try to find the best and easiest ways of overcoming your problems. Sharing your problems is another good way of overcoming stress. One should not keep their worries to themselves. You should talk to someone and you will definitely feel better after that. Plus, mutual support for each other will help you to cope better with any challenges life throws at you.

You can also reduce stress by organising your schedule. In your daily timetable, you should efficiently organise your time for work as well as for leisure. Setting priorities gives you a good idea of what is important and urgent and which to attend to first. This leaves you with less important and easier tasks to perform in the later part of the day.

Another effective way to reduce stress is to build a happy home. Make your home a place you like to return to after a day's work. It is important to spend time to talk to, play with and relax together with your family. A good way would be to organise leisure events such as going out together for dinners or the movies. These activities can make you feel relaxed. Otherwise, strains in family relationships will become an added source of stress.

Equally important is to stay healthy. You cannot enjoy life if your body is always unwell. Experts say that regular exercises such as jogging, swimming and cycling can help boost your self-confidence and well-being. **Consistent** exercising can help to reduce the tension and anxiety that leads to stress. It is also important for one to have sufficient rest and avoid late nights as well as eat an adequate and balanced diet.

Finally, you should learn to relax. Learn to brighten your day, start a hobby or do something enjoyable. You should go for short vacations and go somewhere to rest. Learn to unwind at the end of the day, and you will sleep better and feel happier. In learning these steps to control and combat stress, you will learn how to embrace stress positively. Remember that successfully coping with stress will keep you healthy, happy and productive.

- 1 In paragraph 1, the following are ways to cope with stress **except**
- A learning a form of art or a skill.
 - B learning the ability to deal with it.
 - C learning to manage negative stress.
 - D learning to work and tackle stress effectively.
- 2 In paragraph 2, among the ways to reduce stress is to
- A be successful.
 - B keep your worries to yourself.
 - C be disappointed when you fail.
 - D have a problem-solving approach to life.
- 3 In paragraph 2, what do you have to do to adopt a problem-solving approach to life?
- A You should not keep your worries to yourself.
 - B You should not be too disappointed with yourself.
 - C You should try to overcome all the obstacles life throws at you.
 - D You should acknowledge the various ways to accomplish a task.
- 4 In paragraph 3, the following are the best ways to organise a timetable **except**
- A focus on less important tasks first.
 - B plan leisure activities for later in the day.
 - C prioritise the most important and urgent tasks first.
 - D organise your time effectively for work and leisure.
- 5 In paragraph 4, how do you build a happy home?
- A Work from home when you can.
 - B Talk, play and relax with family members.
 - C Go jogging and cycling with family members.
 - D Go out for dinner or movies with your friends.
- 6 In paragraph 5, what word can best replace the word **consistent**?
- A regular
 - B reliable
 - C unusual
 - D sufficient
- 7 Which is **not** a cause of stress mentioned by the speaker?
- A Poor health
 - B Being optimistic
 - C Strained relationship
 - D Poor time management
- 8 How many ways of reducing stress are given in the article?
- A Five
 - B Six
 - C Seven
 - D Eight

[8 marks]