



## PERSONAL STRESS PROFILE

*"Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; the courage to change the things I can; and the wisdom to know the difference."* —Reinhold Niebuhr

### IDENTIFYING MOST CRITICAL ISSUES

#### Do you control stress in your life or does stress control you?

Stressors are events that cause an emotional and/or physical reaction. Stress can be positive (wedding, job promotion) or negative (loss of job, car accident, major illness). But what is important is to be able to manage the many stressors in your life.

One way to manage stress is to prioritize the issues that are most important to you. Another is to decide what issues can be changed or resolved and which ones cannot. This exercise will help you focus on the high priority issues and those that can be changed (Box 1).

#### Couple Exercise:

1. You will each select **four issues** that are the most stressful for each of you from the Computer Report.
2. Review each issue and put it into one of the four cells below.
3. Box 1 contains the "Most Critical Issues."

	Able to Change	Difficult to Change
High Priority	<p><b>Box 1: Most Critical Issues</b></p> <p><i>What changes can you each make?</i></p>	<p><b>Box 2</b></p> <p><i>How do you plan to cope?</i></p>
Low Priority	<p><b>Box 3</b></p> <p><i>Are you spending too much time on low priority issues?</i></p>	<p><b>Box 4: Least Critical Issues</b></p> <p><i>Can you accept or forget about these issues?</i></p>

#### COUPLE DISCUSSION:

Select one issue from Box 1 that you will work on together as a couple.

Work together as a team to achieve your goals.

1. Communicate about the issue.
2. Use good conflict resolution skills.
3. Be flexible with one another.