

**WHAT'S NEW?**

**Communication Objectives:** Ss will be able to:  
 - use expressions for minimising and the language of empathy and sympathy.  
 - use vocabulary, phrases and idioms related to stress management.

**Educational Objectives:** Ss will address sources of stress and assess techniques for coping with stress.

**Connected Topics:**

- Stressed teenagers	- Laughing clubs
- Stress reduction	- Phobias
- Post-traumatic stress disorder	- Drugs and alternative treatments
- Watching fish	- Physical symptoms

**Grammar:** Idioms

<b>Key Vocabulary:</b>	at odds with	impaired	red-eye flight
	beneficial	incentive	regime
	bid	induce	stone (weight
	chair(person)	industrial tribunal	14 pounds)
	contagious	medication	stress-busting
	creep back up	migraine	stroke
	criss-cross v	pebble	supraventricular
	dread	pet v	tachycardia
	fare better	phobia	switching off
	flutter	placebo	thyroid
	frail	post-traumatic	working out
	giggle v	stress disorder	
	immune system	pounding the treadmill	

**The BIG question: ARE WE SERIOUSLY STRESSED?****VIEWPOINT**

**Facts:** The statistics are from an annual US school survey, *The National Survey of American Attitudes Substance Abuse VIII: Teens and Parents*, conducted by The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA). The three main factors leading to teenage use of drugs and alcohol are high stress, frequent boredom and more than \$25 a week spending money.

**Source:**

<http://alcoholism.about.com/cs/teens/a/blcasa030819.htm>, [www.casa.org](http://www.casa.org)

**EQ:** *Why do you think this is the case? Based on your own observations, is this true? Do you know any high stress teens? What causes their stress? How do they cope with this stress?*

There are many factors which can trigger depression: genetic predisposition, environment, medical problems, certain thinking patterns and stressful events in life. About 80 per cent of those who try to get treatment will get better.

**EQ:** *What kinds of things make you depressed or unhappy? What do you think could cause long-term depression? What do you think life would be like if you were depressed for long periods?*

**Quotes:** Natalie Goldberg (born 1948) is an American author known for teaching writing through Zen.

**EQ:** *Why is stress an ignorant state? Do you agree with the quote? Is the stress you feel in proportion to the level of emergency?*

Charles Schulz (1922–2000) was the American cartoonist known for the Peanuts comic strip.

**EQ:** *What is the meaning of this philosophy? Is it meant to be serious or humorous? Why? What do you think of the Peanuts comic strip?*

**Cartoons:** The pictures are of:

- a patient about to receive some bad news
- a scary plane flight
- giving a speech in public

According to the *Book of Lists*, fear of public speaking ranks number one in fears, even over fear of death or disease.

## 1 WORD POWER

**A 1** is based on a CAE speaking test activity that gets students to comment on pictures.

**EQ:** *How are these situations the same or different? Have you ever experienced any of these situations? If so, what was your reaction?*

**A 2** gives students an opportunity to practise the language of empathy and sympathy in **Language Bank 19**.

### 1 WORD POWER A2

#### Sample answers

**I know exactly how you feel you feel.** I've had my appendix out. It was scary going into the operating theatre. / **I can imagine** what that flight must have been like. I've flown through rough weather too. / **I know exactly how you must feel.** I hate speaking in front of an audience.

**B** gets students to analyse the efficacy of some common stress-reducing methods.

### 1 WORD POWER C

#### Sample answers

**1** Some events which can cause post-traumatic stress disorder: military combat, natural disasters, car accident, near-death experiences or violent personal assaults like rape.

**2** When overly stressed, people become burnt out. They can develop depression over feelings of not being able to cope.

## ARTICLES

### Blair the Fitness Fan

This article discusses Tony Blair's health and stress-reducing techniques. He was diagnosed

with supraventricular tachycardia (SVT). SVT is a heart condition where the upper chambers of the heart (the atria) can be up to 250 times a minute or faster and which can be corrected by surgery or use of a pacemaker. Politics can be one of the most stressful occupations since it involves working long days, always being in the public eye and doing many public speaking engagements.

**EQ:** *How stressful do you think a politician's life is? What would a day in the life of the British Prime Minister be like? Is bad health linked to stressful occupations?*

## Watching Fish Found to Ease Human Stress

This article discusses a recent scientific study that looked at the relationship between stress and watching fish. There is the old saying that a dog is a man's best friend and in terms of stress they are just that. Petting an animal can lower blood pressure and heart rate. A New York City Hospital study found that heart patients were more likely to survive their first year after surgery if they owned a pet. The study of fish and stress-reduction is more recent. Fish have shown to calm children with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). Alzheimer patients have also found some benefit. Herbert Benson's Relaxation theory supposes four conditions for relaxation: the presence of an object to focus on, a passive attitude, a quiet environment and a comfortable position, which may be the reasons why watching fish helps reduce stress.

**EQ:** *Do you have a pet? Do you think pets reduce stress? Do you think some pets reduce stress more than others? Why / Why not?*

## 2 READING

**A** is a skimming activity that will help students with the Use of English section of the CAE exam and the Reading section of the IGCSE.

### 2 READING A

#### Answers

1 frail 2 procedure 3 random 4 bid 5 proven

**B 1** This question relates to a type of question in the Trinity exam which requires students to speculate and

conclude on the unstated feelings of people. Students should provide some basis for their responses.

## 2 READING B2

### Sample answers

People were stressed by reading out loud. Then, blood pressure was measured to see if the presence of fish in an aquarium reduced stress. It did.

**C 1** You may want to help the students by pointing out other techniques covered in **Word Power**.

**C 2** This question requires students to speculate on the ethics of keeping pets for supposedly selfish reasons. You can give students some help by asking students to look at the interaction between animals and humans, and whether these might change given the circumstances suggested.

## 3 SPEAK YOUR MIND

This section covers the topics of stress as a natural function of the body, personal stress and stressful occupations, teenage stress, and owning pets.

**A EQ:** *Why do you think we are equipped to feel stress? Do you think it would be helpful or harmful to have no stress at all in your body?*

**B EQ:** *If you were overstressed, which treatments for stress would you try? Why do some people find some relaxation techniques helpful, but others do not? What would you consider the ten most stressful jobs? Would you work in these jobs? Would the benefits ever outweigh the stress?*

**C EQ:** *Is teenage stress 'just a phase' they go through? Does the cause of the stress make the stress more serious; for example, what about exam stress versus divorce?*

**D EQ:** *If animals communicate through body language, what signs would tell you an animal was stressed? What kinds of stress could animals have?*

## 4 LISTEN

DVD

This audio clip is from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC). Laughter Club International was founded by Dr Madan and Madhuri Kataria, with the aim of teaching people 'laughter yoga', a 20-minute session of exercises to make people laugh. As this is done in groups, it is difficult not to laugh when everyone around you is laughing. The

health benefits of laughter have been known for some time. Laughter can lower blood pressure, reduce stress hormones, boost the immune system and release endorphins – the body's natural painkillers.

## 4 LISTEN B, C, D

### Answers

**B** True: People's health improves; people giggle. False: People tell jokes; people talk to each other.

**C** If you see other people laughing, you start laughing yourself / too.

**D 1** 5,000 members. **2** You see other people laughing. **3** On 13 March, 1995, Madan Kataria went to a park and said she wanted to start a laughter club. **4** Laughter yoga.

## 5 TEAMWORK

This activity is designed to get students thinking about the reality of living with debilitating irrational fears. Each of these phobias are real, although some are much more common and socially acceptable than others. Try to get students to think about all the situations where the illness might have some kind of effect.

### Source:

*The Anxiety and Phobia Workbook*, Reneau J. Peurifoy

*Anxiety, Phobias, and Panic*, Edmund J. Bourne

**EQ:** *Do you know anyone with a phobia? What can be done to help phobia sufferers?*

## 6 CONTROVERSY

The pharmaceutical industry and medical community is sometimes criticised for seeming to be over dependent on drug treatments when safer alternatives are available. In one US study, 65 per cent of doctors recommended sleeping pills to patients who would have been better off taking exercise or reducing their caffeine intake in the evenings, which the doctors might have found out if they had asked the patients further questions. In several studies published by the Universities of Toronto and Harvard, doctors were found to be treating drug side effects with more drugs.

There have been examples of how over-prescribing antibiotics has led to strains of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. In the US alone, more than 1.5 million people are treated in hospital every year from adverse reactions to drugs; another 100,000 die. Many of these deaths are largely preventable. That is not to say that there is not a place for pharmaceuticals, because many illnesses can only be controlled this way. However, the debate hinges on whether prescribing drugs is the doctor's first or last line of defence.

**Sources:**

www.abpi.org.uk, www.pharmaceutical-industry.info

*Listening to Prozac*, Peter Kramer

*The Instinct To Heal*, David Servan-Schreiber

*Dangerous Drug Interactions*, Joe Gaedon

www.worstpills.org

**EQ:** *Do you think we use drugs too often for stress? Do you think alternative treatments might help stress as much?*

**7 PORTFOLIO WRITING**

See the Introduction to the Teacher's Guide.

**A Sources:**

*Work Stress*, Lorne Sulsky

*Handbook of Work Stress*, Julian Barling

<http://stress.about.com/cs/workplacestress/a/jobstress.htm>, [www.cdc.gov/niosh/stresswk.html](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/stresswk.html)

**8 BIOLOGY in English [CLIL]**

Stress has been discussed in this unit as a biological reaction triggered by external, and occasionally internal, stimulæ. Our normal state of being is homeostasis, in which our body tries to maintain this balance. It regulates our breathing, our heart rate, our temperature and our stress reactions. The body always tries to be in balance with the environment we are in. When we come under increased stress, our body compensates, and this leads to knock-on effects in other areas. The long-term effects of stress and increased cortisol levels have been linked to physical problems like hypertension, migraines, cancer, arthritis, ulcers and colic. There may also be mental problems, such as anxiety, panic attacks, alcoholism and depression.

**Note:** In the fight-or-flight response people have feelings of aggression or the need to run away (avoidance).

**Sources:**

*Overcoming Job Burnout*, Ellen S. Bernstein

*The Physiology Of Stress And Stress Reduction*,

Beverly A. Potter

**EQ:** *Are you aware of any health effects when you are very stressed? Have you ever felt the fight-or-flight response? What do you think burnout would feel like?*

**9 FURTHER DISCUSSION**

This section covers the way stress may change over time, school-related stress, job-related stress and time management.

**A** Try to get students to think about how stress evolves over time.

**EQ:** *Is there ever a stress-free period in anyone's life? Why? Why not?*

**B** Try to get students to consider common school-related stress.

**EQ:** *How stressful is school and learning for you? How is school fun and stressful?*

**C** Try to get students to think about reasons for increasing stress – less job security, greater workload.

**EQ:** *The Japanese have a word – karoshi – meaning death from overwork. How would stress be linked to this? What would motivate someone to work that hard? What would you consider the ten most stressful jobs? Would you work in these jobs? Would the benefits ever outweigh the stress?*

**D** Try getting students to think about how they manage their time.

**EQ:** *Do you tend to arrive for appointments or class early, on time or late? Is this common in your country? How does your culture view arriving late or on time? Is time management only a business concept? Do you manage your time effectively? If so, how? If not, why not?*

## 10 *Your answer:* ARE WE SERIOUSLY STRESSED?

This question tries to get students to address how seriously society takes the effects of stress. In many cultures, it is still not acceptable to talk about being very stressed, especially in countries where men are not allowed to show any signs of weakness.

**EQ:** *What do the types of programmes for stress reduction say about how seriously your government takes stress? Do you think men and women react to stress differently?*

### WORKBOOK

#### 1 WORD POWER

This activity will get students practising vocabulary from the unit and the phrases from **Language Bank 19**.

##### 1 WORD POWER

##### Sample answers

1 I injured my back while I was *working out* at the gym. – **You must be feeling absolutely terrible.** Have you seen the doctor? / **There's nothing to worry about.** Take some painkillers. 2 I took the *red-eye* flight to Lisbon and feel really tired and stressed today. – **I can see how difficult it must be** for you to stay awake. You look really tired. / **It's not such a big thing.** Have some coffee. 3 My doctor said I need to *watch my diet* if I want to improve my health. – **I know exactly how you must be feeling.** My doctor said I needed more exercise. / **Let's try to keep things in perspective.** Just eat smaller portions. 4 I felt better after taking those *anti-depressants*, but I didn't like the side-effects. – **That must have been very hard for you.** Is there anything I can do? / **Everything's going to be fine.** You'll soon get used to them. 5 I'm worried about my husband – he finds it difficult to switch off and gets stressed. – **I feel so sorry for** both of you. It can be hard to leave work behind. / **Try to calm down; worrying won't help.** He just needs a hobby. 6 After serving in the army, my father developed *post-traumatic stress disorder*. – **I can imagine how painful it must have been** for him. Can he get any help for that? / **There's nothing to worry about.** It's a common reaction.

## 2 WRITING

### A Sources:

*The Complete Idiot's Guide to Dealing with Stress for Teens*, Sara Jane Sluke  
*Pressure? No Problem*, Michelle Steele  
www.stress.org.uk

### B Sources:

http://health.msn.com  
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/default.stm  
www.cnn.com/HEALTH  
www.menshealth.com

## 3 SPEAKING STRATEGIES: Anticipating questions

This activity is one of the basic techniques that students should learn to give better presentations. In trying to anticipate questions, students will be better prepared for the presentation in the Trinity or CAE exams.

### 3 SPEAKING STRATEGIES

### Answers

1 f    2 c    3 d    4 b    5 a    6 e

## 4 IDIOMS

See the Introduction to the Teacher's Guide.

### 4 IDIOMS

### Answers

1 b    2 d    3 c    4 a    5 f    6 e

1 to lose the plot = to feel stressed or out of control  
2 to pay the price = to suffer the consequences 3 to compare notes = to check each other's information about something 4 just what the doctor ordered = exactly the right thing 5 to let off steam = to express strong feeling, release pent-up emotion  
6 an emotional rollercoaster = lead to very strong swings / variations in feelings / emotions

Ask students to use the idioms when answering these questions orally. This can be done as pair work or as a class.

- *What would you do if you felt your life was out of control?*  
– If I was beginning *to lose the plot*, I would seek professional help.

- I think I would need to do something *to let off steam*, like sports.
- I would say a few days off would be *just what the doctor ordered*.
- *What happens if you work too hard?*
  - You will *pay the price* with poor health and high stress.
  - I think overwork can take you on *an emotional rollercoaster*.
- I haven't *compared notes* with others, but I tend to get sick and need time off.
- *What is your number one stress-reducer?*
  - I like to go for walks *to let off steam*.
  - I begin *to lose the plot* if I can't spend a few hours by myself from time to time.
  - A weekend away from the kids is always *what the doctor ordered*.