**Stress Tests**

**Feeling the Strain**

This activity is designed to help you become aware of your response to the stress of losing your job or having your income shrink. Using the following scale, mark each item according to how often it is true of your current behavior or feelings.

0 = Never  
1 = Infrequently  
2 = Frequently  
3 = Regularly

___ 1. Eat too much  
___ 2. Drink too much alcohol  
___ 3. Smoke more than usual  
___ 4. Feel tense, uptight, fidgety  
___ 5. Feel depressed or sad  
___ 6. Like myself less  
___ 7. Feel restless and unable to concentrate  
___ 8. Have decreased or increased interest in sex  
___ 9. Loss of appetite  
___ 10. Feel tired, have little energy  
___ 11. Have difficulty going to sleep or sleeping  
___ 12. Feel irritable  
___ 13. Become less communicative  
___ 14. Become overly critical of others  
___ 15. Impatient with delays, interruptions  
___ 16. Become angry or irritable with others  
___ 17. Think about suicide  
___ 18. Feel disoriented or overwhelmed  
___ 19. Difficulty getting up in the morning  
___ 20. Frequent headaches  
___ 21. Upset stomach  
___ 22. Sweaty and/or trembling hands  
___ 23. Shortness of breath and sighing  
___ 24. Letting things slide  
___ 25. Emotional outbursts  
___ 26. Feel “below par”  
___ 27. Tendency to talk fast  
___ 28. Never enjoy life

How do you rate? A personal score over 35 suggests that you are experiencing stress to the point that it may affect your well-being. You should review how you are dealing with the strain in your life. Learning to use coping strategies will help you lower your stress level and increase your ability to be effective in life.