

# My Balanced Journey

Abraham Lincoln Elementary

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# Background Leading to this Inquiry

Being a 2nd year principal in a new school district is difficult. There are so many procedures to learn while developing relationships with students, parents, and staff. Last year, I was always doing school work during the day, evening and weekends. I knew that I could not keep up this pace and needed to make changes this year.

# Purpose of This Inquiry

I did not want to continue to feel stressed out this year with school and work. So I thought of things that I could do to create a balance between my school work and personal life. I kept it simple and focused on 2 things- walking(exercise) and finding hobbies that I could do daily.

# My Wondering

With this purpose, I wondered:

What if I tracked my stress levels every month?

What if I walk during my lunch break around my school campus and intentionally leave my office?

What if I explore hobbies that are simple but add joy and creativity to my day?

# My Actions

Take a stress test every month and compare levels

Track walking(exercise) per week- frequency only not intensity

Explore hobbies- something that I would look forward to doing every day

# Data Collection

Stress test were taken every month using the ProQQL- Professional Quality of Life Survey  
This survey has a series of questions and then a self score sheet. There are 3 categories:  
0-20- Compassion Satisfaction  
20-40- Burnout  
41+ - Secondary Traumatic Stress

# Data Collection

## ProQQL Questions:

PROFESSIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE SCALE (PROQOL)				
COMPASSION SATISFACTION AND COMPASSION FATIGUE				
(PROQOL) VERSION 5 (2009)				
When you [help] people you have direct contact with their lives. As you may have found, your compassion for those you [help] can affect you in positive and negative ways. Below are some questions about your experiences, both positive and negative, as a [helper]. Consider each of the following questions about you and your current work situation. Select the number that honestly reflects how frequently you experienced these things in the last 30 days.				
1=Never	2=Rarely	3=Sometimes	4=Often	5=Very Often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
1. I am happy.	2. I am preoccupied with more than one person I [help].	3. I get satisfaction from being able to [help] people.	4. I feel connected to others.	5. I jump or am startled by unexpected sounds.
6. I feel invigorated after working with those I [help].	7. I find it difficult to separate my personal life from my life as a [helper].	8. I am not as productive at work because I am losing sleep over traumatic experiences of a person I [help].	9. I think that I might have been affected by the traumatic stress of those I [help].	10. I feel trapped by my job as a [helper].
11. Because of my [helping], I have felt "on edge" about various things.	12. I like my work as a [helper].	13. I feel depressed because of the traumatic experiences of the people I [help].	14. I feel as though I am experiencing the trauma of someone I have [helped].	15. I have beliefs that sustain me.
16. I am pleased with how I am able to keep up with [helping] techniques and protocols.	17. I am the person I always wanted to be.	18. My work makes me feel satisfied.	19. I feel worn out because of my work as a [helper].	20. I have happy thoughts and feelings about those I [help] and how I could help them.
21. I feel overwhelmed because my case [work] load seems endless.	22. I believe I can make a difference through my work.	23. I avoid certain activities or situations because they remind me of frightening experiences of the people I [help].	24. I am proud of what I can do to [help].	25. As a result of my [helping], I have intrusive, frightening thoughts.
26. I feel "bogged down" by the system.	27. I have thoughts that I am a "success" as a [helper].	28. I can't recall important parts of my work with trauma victims.	29. I am a very caring person.	30. I am happy that I chose to do this work.

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# Data Collection

## ProQQL Scale:

### WHAT IS MY SCORE AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

In this section, you will score your test so you understand the interpretation for you. To find your score on **each section**, total the questions listed on the left and then find your score in the table on the right of the section.

#### Compassion Satisfaction Scale

Copy your rating on each of these questions on to this table and add them up. When you have added then up you can find your score on the table to the right.

- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_
- 12. \_\_\_\_\_
- 16. \_\_\_\_\_
- 18. \_\_\_\_\_
- 20. \_\_\_\_\_
- 22. \_\_\_\_\_
- 24. \_\_\_\_\_
- 27. \_\_\_\_\_
- 30. \_\_\_\_\_

**Total:** \_\_\_\_\_

The sum of my Compassion Satisfaction questions is	And my Compassion Satisfaction level is
22 or less	Low
Between 23 and 41	Moderate
42 or more	High

#### Burnout Scale

On the burnout scale you will need to take an extra step. Starred items are "reverse scored." If you scored the item 1, write a 5 beside it. The reason we ask you to reverse the scores is because scientifically the measure works better when these questions are asked in a positive way though they can tell us more about their negative form. For example, question 1. "I am happy" tells us more about

- \*1. \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_
- \*4. \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. \_\_\_\_\_
- \*15. \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_
- \*17. \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_
- 19. \_\_\_\_\_
- 21. \_\_\_\_\_
- 26. \_\_\_\_\_
- \*29. \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

**Total:** \_\_\_\_\_

You Wrote	Change to
1	5
2	4
3	3
4	2
5	1

the effects of helping when you are *not* happy so you reverse the score

The sum of my Burnout Questions is	And my Burnout level is
22 or less	Low
Between 23 and 41	Moderate
42 or more	High

#### Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale

Just like you did on Compassion Satisfaction, copy your rating on each of these questions on to this table and add them up. When you have added then up you can find your score on the table to the right.

- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. \_\_\_\_\_
- 9. \_\_\_\_\_
- 11. \_\_\_\_\_
- 13. \_\_\_\_\_
- 14. \_\_\_\_\_
- 23. \_\_\_\_\_
- 25. \_\_\_\_\_
- 28. \_\_\_\_\_

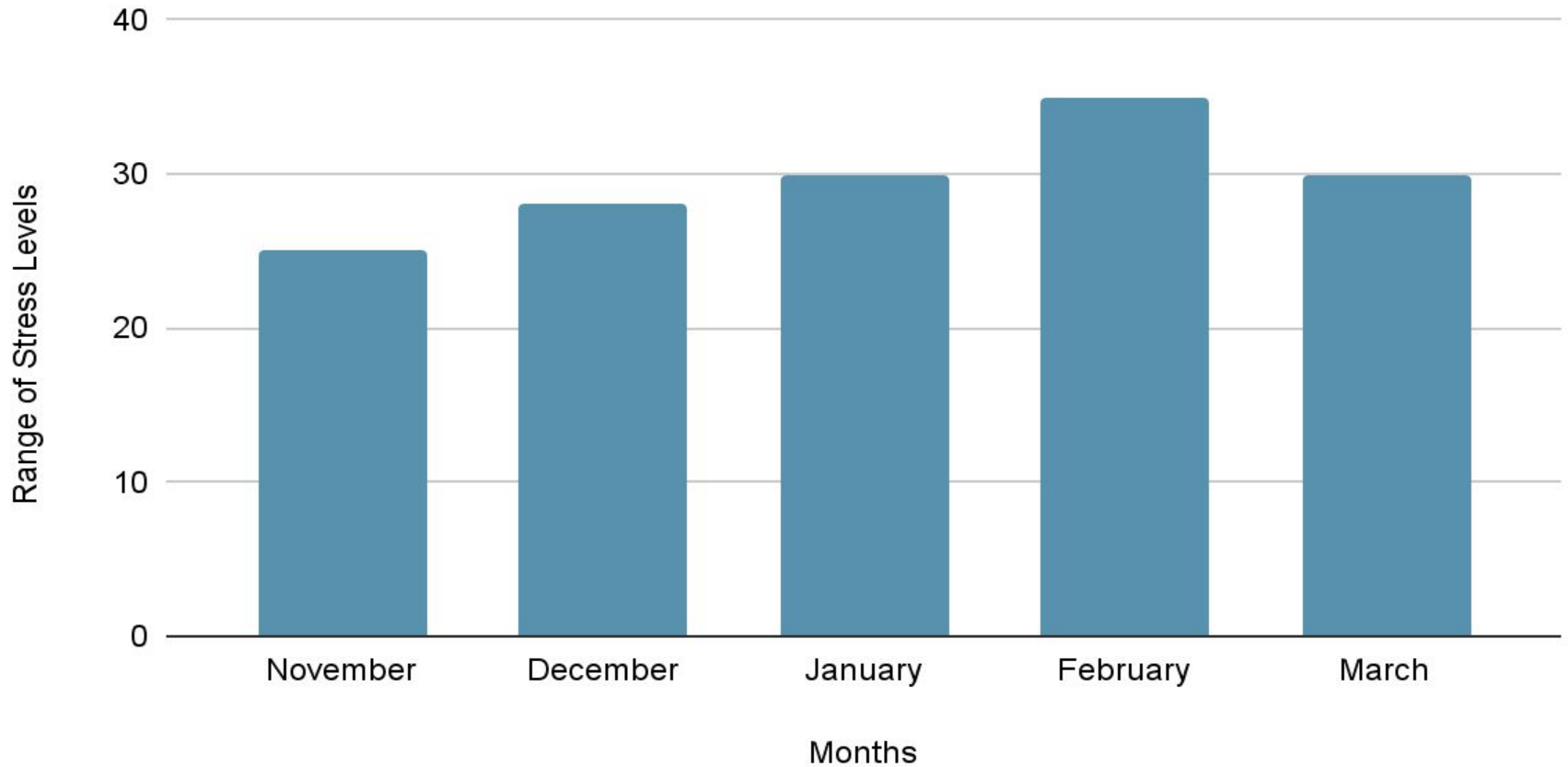
**Total:** \_\_\_\_\_

The sum of my Secondary Trauma questions is	And my Secondary Traumatic Stress level is
22 or less	Low
Between 23 and 41	Moderate
42 or more	High



# My Data

## Monthly Stress Levels



# My Data

Monthly Walking Records- I kept a calendar and circled the day that I walked. I started in November and some months were better than others.

Number of walks per month:

November- 15

December-10

January-20

February-12

March-8

# My Data

Walking  
Frequency:

November			
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
	Side By Sides →	1 Starbase Mtg 7:30-8:30  Leop' - Pre Conf 12:40 Fonseca - Pre Conf	2 <del>Starbase</del> Com mtg Jens out Eye Vis IASP mtg Fonseca - Zepeda Pre
6 310/55 Daylight Saving Time Ends	7 Smolen & O'Brien Pre PNW - 6th grade IV Week 12 Fonseca 9:30 Post Leop' - Hudson	8 311/54 Fonseca 1/2 day only Nacho Bus eLearning - P/T conferences  Kaminohy Pre? Smolen Pre?	9 312/53 Election Day MTSS - Birthd Demora Jensen Pre Marshall's 4:00 p.m. @ACC Kaminohy
13 317/48	14 Staff Mtg 7:45 IV Week 13  Hubbard Pre Conf	15 318/47 Jens out Principal Mtg 8:00am  Kaminohy 2:25 Post Smolen 11:50 Post	16 319/46 Jens out PLA Boga B Hubbard Hubbard Steele
20 324/41	21 Me out IV Thanksgiving Break → 11/21-11/27	22 325/40 me out	23 326/39
27 331/34	28 Surgey Staff 7:45 Ready Window 2 IV class resumes Week 14	29 332/33	30 333/32 Night G Side P Ferry

# My Discoveries

I discovered that my stress levels never reached traumatic levels

I discovered that walking helped me clear my mind and gave me energy

I discovered that I am interested in hobbies that give me something fun and creative to do and I look forward to doing them in the evenings and weekends.

# My Discoveries

Gardening:



# Where Am I Heading Next

I learned that being a leader requires me to “model” behavior and expectations. I want my teachers and students to come to school happy and do their best everyday. In order for them to be successful I have to be ready to help them. I need to be happy, rested and creative.

I also learned that I need to stop working so much so I can enjoy my hobbies. This will give me a good balance between work and my personal life.

I wonder if I could create an informal(simple) walking crew or gardening group at school for fun and enjoyment that our school community would like to be a part of this next school year.



# Bibliography

B. Hudnall Stamm, 2009-2012. Professional Quality of Life: Compassion Satisfaction and Fatigue Version 5 (ProQOL). [www.proqol.org](http://www.proqol.org)

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[littlestepsbighappy.com/walking-tips-for-beginners/](http://littlestepsbighappy.com/walking-tips-for-beginners/)