

# Stress Reduction for Teens: Good Stress and Bad Stress

By *New Harbinger Publications*

On *Wednesday, January 20, 2010 - 16:10*

You probably think of stress as bad or negative, but there are times when stress actually helps you.

*Andrew plays soccer on his school's team. He tends to get really nervous before a game, and his stomach often feels a little queasy. At the same time, his adrenaline increases and that helps him perform better.*

If you go beyond that perfect point, the balance tips; the stress gets too great. It begins to decrease your ability to do well and starts to hurt you.

*Samantha tends to put school assignments off until the last minute. Sometimes waiting close to the deadline works in her favor; she gets her homework done, and the pressure helps her do it well. At other times, she waits too long and the stress is so great that she can't finish her homework and she gives up altogether.*

These additional examples will help you see how the balance can tip.

You get named captain of the basketball team.

**Good Stress:** You are proud of this position and work harder and do better on the team because of it.

**Bad Stress:** You get so nervous that you start to play worse.

You get a really difficult homework assignment.

**Good Stress:** You feel challenged by this assignment and spend extra effort on it because you want to do well and are interested in the topic.

**Bad Stress:** You are so overwhelmed that you give up and don't even do the assignment.

- Tell about a time when stress helped you perform better or increased your motivation.
- Can you think of a time when you passed that perfect point of stress so that it actually began to hurt you? Describe what happened.

Excerpt from *The Stress Reduction Workbook for Teens*.

## Author's Bio

Gina M. Biegel, MA, LMFT, is a psychotherapist in San Jose, CA, who works with adolescents, children, and families, both independently and for a large HMO. She adapted the mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) program for use with adolescents, creating mindfulness-based

stress reduction for teens (MBSR-T). A randomized control trial assessing the efficacy of this program showed significant results. Biegel is director of research for Mindful Schools and conducts workshops and conferences teaching MBSR to a variety of populations.

**Source URL:** [http://www.selfgrowth.com/articles/stress\\_reduction\\_for\\_teens\\_good\\_stress\\_and\\_bad\\_stress](http://www.selfgrowth.com/articles/stress_reduction_for_teens_good_stress_and_bad_stress)