

INTERNAL CHAOS QUIZ

Identifying the Root Causes of Your Overwhelm

When overwhelm strikes, it's easy to feel like every little thing has been placed in your path to make you even more out of balance. When you wake up feeling anxious about a busy day at work, things like hitting traffic on your commute and walking into a disorganized office can push you to your breaking point. In this state of overwhelm, it can be difficult to discern which of the pieces of your life are causing the most stress.

This quiz is designed to help you identify which areas of your life may be contributing to your internal chaos and overwhelm, and how to best remedy them.

Work/Career

Select one answer for each question.

Questions	Answers		
On average, how many hours per day do you work?	Less than 8 1 POINT <input type="radio"/>	Around 8 3 POINTS <input type="radio"/>	More than 8 5 POINTS <input type="radio"/>
How often do you feel passionate, interested, and excited about the work you do?	Often 1 POINT <input type="radio"/>	Sometimes 3 POINTS <input type="radio"/>	Rarely/Never 5 POINTS <input type="radio"/>
How often do you feel in control, organized, and on top of things at work?	Often 1 POINT <input type="radio"/>	Sometimes 3 POINTS <input type="radio"/>	Rarely/Never 5 POINTS <input type="radio"/>
Do you feel like the people you work with are capable, reliable, and good team players?	Definitely 1 POINT <input type="radio"/>	Somewhat 3 POINTS <input type="radio"/>	Not at all 5 POINTS <input type="radio"/>
On average, how much time do you spend commuting to and from work per day?	Less than 30 minutes 1 POINT <input type="radio"/>	30 minutes to 1 hour 3 POINTS <input type="radio"/>	More than 1 hour 5 POINTS <input type="radio"/>
How often are you connected to your job via phone or email after your normal workday has ended, or on your days off?	Rarely/Never 1 POINT <input type="radio"/>	Sometimes 3 POINTS <input type="radio"/>	Always 5 POINTS <input type="radio"/>
Do you feel your job/work provides the financial compensation you need to live the life you want to live?	Definitely 1 POINT <input type="radio"/>	Somewhat 3 POINTS <input type="radio"/>	Not at all 5 POINTS <input type="radio"/>

TOTAL SCORE:

(Add up all the points in the answers you selected: 1, 3, or 5 points)

Work/Career Scoring

SCORE OF 19 TO 35

Overworked and Out of Balance

Work-life balance can seem like an impossible feat, and maintaining your composure and sense of optimism throughout an entire workday can be challenging. Technology makes workers accessible 24/7, and fears of job loss push us to work longer hours at careers we may not even find fulfilling. Try the following tips to regain a sense of balance—both in the workplace and outside of it.

- **Strike a Healthy Work-Life Balance**

It can be easy to fall into a rut and assume your habits are set in stone. Take some time to assess what is actually necessary, and what you truly value. Do you really need to be connected around the clock, or could you designate 20 minutes of undisturbed time after dinner to answer emails? When making lifestyle changes, start small and build from there. For example, if you'd like to make it home in time for dinner with your family more often, commit to once a week at first, and move up from there. If you commit to being there five days per week right off the bat, you have a greater chance of breaking your commitment and becoming discouraged.

- **Avoid Multitasking and Schedule Breaks in Your Day**

Multitasking is over-stimulating for the brain—which contributes to feeling inundated or experiencing racing thoughts—and can even damage your neural networks. It's important to focus on only one task at a time, as well as to schedule breaks in your workday to give your brain a rest. Try cutting your day like a pizza into several slices—sleep time, focused work time, break time, recreation time, etc.—and give your full attention to everything you do. You'll find yourself more productive and less stressed in the long run.

- **Learn to Say No**

Saying "yes" to everyone and everything is a recipe for feelings of overwhelm and chaos. When "no" is the appropriate response, be honest and say it without guilt. "No" doesn't have to be an absolute decline—it can also be an invitation to negotiate. For example, if you feel the task is your responsibility but know you're too busy at the moment, your "no" can be, "I can't do that now, but I can get to it next week."

- **Reevaluate**

If striking a healthy work-life balance and finding fulfillment in your career seems absolutely unthinkable, it may be time to reevaluate. While the thought of leaving a job is certainly scary, the prospect of spending years stressed out over a career you find meaningless is even scarier. Start by asking yourself what unique skills and talents you have, and explore how you could put them to use in a job that would bring you a sense of purpose.

SCORE OF 18 OR LESS

Calm and Collected

In our often overworked society, you manage to maintain a healthy work-life balance and feel mostly calm and in control throughout your workday. Your job is not a major source of overwhelm in your life.

Relationships

Select one answer for each question.

Questions	Answers		
Do you have a close network of family and/or friends that you can rely on?	Definitely 1 POINT <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat 3 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>	Not at all 5 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>
How often do you feel lonely?	Less than once per month 1 POINT <input type="checkbox"/>	About once per month 3 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>	More than once per month 5 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>
Have you recently experienced the severing of a relationship that still weighs on you emotionally—such as going through a divorce or serious breakup, or having a falling out with a family member or close friend?	No 1 POINT <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, in the past three years 3 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, within the past year 5 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have someone who you can speak openly to about your feelings—both positive and negative?	Definitely 1 POINT <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat 3 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>	Not at all 5 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like who you are and feel you are deserving of love?	Mostly 1 POINT <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat 3 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>	Not at all 5 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>
How often do you get in arguments that result in shouting or name-calling, or in saying things you later regret?	Less than once per month 1 POINT <input type="checkbox"/>	About once per month 3 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>	More than once per month 5 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>

TOTAL SCORE:

(Add up all the points in the answers you selected: 1, 3, or 5 points)

Relationships Scoring

SCORE OF 16 TO 30

Relationships in Need of Repair

Maintaining a connection that is loving and peaceful with all the people in your life, at all times, can be a challenge—especially with those who seem determined to make things difficult. Try the following tips to bring more serenity, equanimity, and understanding into your relationships.

- **Practice Conscious Communication**

Good communication is essential in relationships. By practicing conscious communication, you ensure those you love always know how much you appreciate them and avoid saying things you'll regret when it comes time to express your feelings. A useful tool in becoming more conscious of the words you choose is to remember the acronym STOP: Stop what you are doing, Take a deep breath, Observe your body and smile, and Proceed with love.

- **Express Your Feelings**

Pent-up emotions have a way of coming out sooner or later, and often in less-than-ideal situations. The free flow of emotion is essential not only for healthy relationships, but also for your overall well-being. If something's on your mind—with an irritating coworker, a frustrating family member, or even a well-meaning partner—let he or she know in a positive, conscious way before bottled-up emotions explode. If discussing your feelings face-to-face feels too overwhelming, you can achieve the same release by journaling or writing a letter, even if you never send it.

- **Spend Money on Experiences, Not Things**

While this may seem like a surprising way to improve your relationships, spending your money on experiences instead of material objects has countless benefits when it comes to connection. Making memories and enjoying new things always trumps accumulating clutter. Signing up for a class can lead to new relationships with people you otherwise never would have met; taking a much-needed vacation with family or taking a friend out to lunch can help strengthen and heal existing relationships. Plus, putting your hard-earned cash towards experiences rather than things you really don't need—like another pair of shoes—can help you avoid money woes as well, which is another common source of stress.

- **Show Yourself Some Love**

If you don't have love for yourself, it's difficult to give love to—or accept love from—others. So take steps to foster a healthy relationship with yourself. Set aside time to do the things that make you happy. Nourish your body with healthy foods and your mind with new material that keeps you learning and growing as a person. Do your best to limit self-judgment, talking to yourself as you would to a dear friend. The more loving kindness you give to yourself, the more you'll receive from everyone around you.

SCORE OF 15 OR LESS

Consciously Connected

Caring, healthy relationships—both with others and with ourselves—are an important factor when it comes to leading a life we love. Your relationships are a source of calm, comfort, and happiness, and are not a major contributor to your overwhelm.

Change

Select one answer for each question.

Questions	Answers		
Have you recently experienced a change in your work that still affects your stress level, such as switching jobs, receiving a major increase in workload, or losing your job?	No 1 POINT <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, within the past 3 years 3 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, within the past year 5 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>
Have you recently experienced a major change in your health that still negatively affects you?	No 1 POINT <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, within the past 3 years 3 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, within the past year 5 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>
Have you recently experienced the death of a close family member or friend that still weighs on you emotionally?	No 1 POINT <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, within the past 3 years 3 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, within the past year 5 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>
Have you recently experienced a change in your housing situation that still negatively affects you, such as being evicted, losing your home, or moving to an unfamiliar city in which you don't know many people?	Never, or not within the past 3 years 1 POINT <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, within the past 3 years 3 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, within the past year 5 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>
Have you recently experienced a negative shift in your financial situation, such as taking on a large amount of debt, going through a costly divorce, or experiencing a significant drop in income?	Never, or not within the past 3 years 1 POINT <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, within the past 3 years 3 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, within the past year 5 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>
Have you recently gotten divorced or had a major change in the people you live with that still negatively affects you—such as having a son or daughter leave for college, a girl/boyfriend or roommate moving out when you didn't want them to, or having an elderly parent come live with you?	Never, or not within the past 3 years 1 POINT <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, within the past 3 years 3 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, within the past year 5 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>

TOTAL SCORE:

(Add up all the points in the answers you selected: 1, 3, or 5 points)

Change Scoring

SCORE OF 16 TO 30

Rough Waters

While it's true that some people have the ability to thrive on positive change, change can cause an overwhelming amount of upheaval in our lives. It oftentimes brings uncertainty, and uncertainty can be overwhelming. Try the following tips to cope with any major changes in your life.

- **Talk It Out**

Talking candidly about your worries and fears with someone who's been there or is experiencing a similar situation is extremely therapeutic. People who understand what you're going through are likely to be sympathetic and encouraging, helping you to open up and realize you're not alone. For example, if you've recently experienced the death of a parent and feel anxious about going through life without them, this could mean expressing your concerns to a sibling or other family member or scheduling a session with a grief counselor.

- **Take Care of Yourself**

When your mind-body system is feeling sluggish and worn-down, it's that much harder to muster the energy to take necessary steps to cope with change. Keep yourself functioning at peak performance by getting seven to eight hours of sleep each night, choosing whole, real foods and drinking plenty of water, and moving your body for at least 30 minutes each day. Remember that while unhealthy "comfort" food, alcohol, or other mood-altering substances may make us feel better at first, they are merely a distraction that ultimately prolongs the problem.

- **Get Perspective with Gratitude**

When you're thrown off your normal, comfortable course, it's tempting to adopt a victim mentality. Consciously reminding yourself of everything you still have to be grateful for will often make you realize that there's no good reason to feel sorry for yourself. An especially useful exercise is to think back to a major change you experienced in your past that you originally saw as scary or negative, and then make a list of all the things you're grateful for in your life now that would never have existed without it.

- **Go Within**

While your inner journey of meditation and mindfulness has countless benefits, it is especially valuable when you're hit with ungrounded feelings and chaos-inducing turbulence. Each time you go within and encounter the unshakeable core of calm, love, and joy that is your true self, you bring a little piece of it with you out into the chaos of daily life. As you travel your inner path, you come to realize that while you may never be able to calm the storm itself, it is always possible to be the calm amidst the storm.

SCORE OF 15 OR LESS

Stable and Steady

For the most part, your life is moving along in a comfortable, steady rhythm without any major chaos-inducing upheavals. Change is not a main source of your overwhelm.

Wellness

Select one answer for each question.

Questions	Answers		
Have you been struggling with an illness or injury?	No 1 POINT <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, but nothing major 3 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, for years 5 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>
Are you in the care of health care professionals that you trust?	Yes 1 POINT <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat 3 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>	Not at all 5 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>
Do you struggle with high-blood pressure, high cholesterol, or other health metrics your doctor has told you need to be addressed?	No 1 POINT <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat 3 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes 5 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>
How much time do you spend sad, angry, anxious, or stressed?	Less than 10% of my time 1 POINT <input type="checkbox"/>	10%-30% of the time 3 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>	More than 30% of my time 5 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>
How healthy is your diet?	All organic and clean 1 POINT <input type="checkbox"/>	I have good days and bad days 3 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>	Fast food is the norm 5 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>
Are you a healthy weight?	Yes 1 POINT <input type="checkbox"/>	I could improve by gaining/losing a few pounds 3 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>	No, I am very under/overweight 5 POINTS <input type="checkbox"/>

TOTAL SCORE:

(Add up all the points in the answers you selected: 1, 3, or 5 points)

Wellness Scoring

SCORE OF 16 TO 30

Your Health Needs Your Attention

Your overall health and well-being is comprised of your physical, mental, and emotional health. When one is out of balance, feelings of overwhelm and chaos can creep in. Try the following tips to get healthier in your mind, body, and spirit.

- **Eat a Balanced Diet**

It's widely known that what you eat is important to your health and well-being, but with all the new diet trends and research, it can be difficult to figure out just exactly what eating healthy means. Another complication is that each of us is unique—we each have individual tastes, dietary restrictions, and cultural influences. When it comes down to the basics, it's important to eat more fresh, organic food that is high in protein and healthy fats. It's also important to get a wide range of nutrients and fiber by eating a diet rich with fruits, veggies, beans, and whole grains.

- **Exercise Daily**

Exercise comes with a variety of benefits—from helping with maintaining a healthy weight and building strong muscles and bones, to increasing energy levels and improving your mood. Find an activity you enjoy that helps you get moving—like walking, dancing, gardening, swimming, or yoga—and schedule it every day for at least 30 minutes.

- **Sleep 7 to 8 Hours Each Night**

If you're not getting enough restful sleep each night, feelings of internal chaos and overwhelm may spiral downhill quickly. If you're having trouble falling or staying asleep, make sure your room is dark, you spend at least one hour before bed unplugged from work, your computer, and your smartphone, and you incorporate some kind of wind-down ritual before bed, like taking a warm bath, drinking warm herbal tea, light stretching, or diffusing relaxing aromas (like sandalwood, lavender, or vanilla) in your bedroom. When you're well-rested, you feel healthier, stronger, and more capable of coping with anything that comes your way.

- **Meditate**

Meditation helps to reduce feelings of overwhelm and internal chaos, decrease blood pressure, and primes you for the restful sleep your body needs. Start by finding a comfortable place to sit and setting a timer for five minutes. Gently close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. Then, begin to focus on your breath as it travels in and out through your nose. As you continue, your mind will inevitably drift away from focusing on your breath—it's human nature for the mind to wander. Whenever you become aware that your attention has drifted, simply return your focus to your breath. Start with five minutes every day and gradually increase the time as the meditations become more comfortable.

SCORE OF 15 OR LESS

Healthy and Strong

You know how important your health and well-being are to your life, and that's why you make self-care a priority. Your health is not a major source of overwhelm in your life.

What are the top three tips you would like to try to help you ground and find balance in your life?

1.

2.

3.