

What causes you stress?

Look down the following list and circle the major life events you have encountered over the last year.
The accumulation of significant life events in any one year increases your vulnerability to stress-related illness.

1.	Death of your spouse or life partner.	100	17.	Unexpected accident or trauma.	45
2.	Divorce or separation.	75	18.	Changes at work and/or increased demands.	35
3.	Major illness or injury.	70	19.	Outstanding personal achievement or promotion.	35
4.	Loss of a job.	70	20.	Caring for an elderly or sick relative or friend.	35
5.	Problems with the law and/or imprisonment.	70	21.	Problems with relatives, family, friends or neighbours.	35
6.	Death of someone close.	60	22.	Financial worries.	35
7.	Marital reconciliation.	60	23.	Examinations, extra study or having to speak in public.	30
8.	Retirement.	60	24.	Changes in social activities.	30
9.	Illness or injury in your close family.	50	25.	Changes in recreational activities.	30
10.	Marriage or moving in with partner.	50	26.	Children going or "growing" away.	30
11.	Moving house or major renovation.	50	27.	Premenstrual syndrome or menopause.	30
12.	Gaining a new family member, either through birth or adoption.	50	28.	Starting a new relationship.	30
13.	Pregnancy.	45	29.	Going on holiday.	20
14.	Increase in the number of arguments or disagreements with partner.	45	30.	Family gatherings, Christmas etc.	20
15.	Large mortgage, loan or debt.	45		TOTAL SCORE =	
16.	Changing jobs or a new job.	45			

Interpreting your score

The scores are based on research carried out by Holmes and Rahe (1967), who studies the relationship between life events and stress-related health problems.

Add up all your scores to find your total. This will give you an approximate measure of how many life changes you have experienced recently, and how vulnerable you are to stress-related problems.

Over 280 – High Vulnerability

You have suffered an unusually high number of stressful life events over the last year, which greatly increases your risk of developing stress-related illnesses. However, illness is not an inevitable result of change. Your personality and ability to cope largely determine how well you react. By improving your life skills you can be prepared to cope with difficult life events.

130 – 280 – Moderate Vulnerability

You have experienced a number of stressful events over the past year, which could increase your risk of stress-related illness. The more you know about these life events and understand the effect they are likely to have on you, the better you will be able to prepare yourself in advance for similar events in the future.

Below 130 – Low Vulnerability

You have experienced few stressful events over the past year and your life appears to be relatively settled, causing little risk of stress-related illness. However, if you are aware of how you may be affected by major life events, you can ensure that you are well prepared for future changes.

How you answered the questions

Remember, stress is not inevitable. It depends to some extent on your perception of an event, what it means to you, and your abilities to cope. It is therefore important not to take the scores too literally. It is common for people who feel stressed to search for the reason in past events but some can be the result, rather than the cause of the actual stress.

Life Events

Stress can be triggered off by events that are thought of as pleasant, such as getting married, winning money or having a baby, as well as unpleasant events such as losing a job, having an accident or the illness of someone in the family.

When we evaluate the impact of life events and social changes as a cause of stress, we also need to bear in mind that they tend to be particularly stressful when they are:

- Unpredictable.
- Unfamiliar.
- Major.
- Intense.
- Unavoidable.
- Inevitable.

Too much change too quickly can be a major cause of stress.

Hypnotherapy

Hypnotherapy could help you overcome your stress and anxiety for good. It could also help you to develop your life skills, so you can cope better and be more resilient to stress in future.