

Student Stress Scale

The Student Stress Scale focuses on *events* that may occur in the life of a student to offer you a different perspective for evaluating stress. The Student Stress Scale is an adaptation for college students of the Life Events Scale developed originally by Holmes and Rahe.

This popular stress assessment measured the amount of change, using Life Change Units, a person was required to adapt to in the previous year. It was designed to predict the likelihood of disease and illness following exposure to stressful life events. Each life event is given a score that indicates the amount of readjustment a person has to make as a result of change. Some studies have found that people with serious illnesses tend to have higher scores on similar assessments.

For each event that occurred in your life within the past year, record the corresponding score. If an event occurred more than once, multiply the score for that event by the number of times the event occurred and record that score. Total all the scores.

Life Event	Mean Value
1. Death of a close family member	100
2. Death of a close friend	73
3. Divorce of parents	65
4. Jail term	63
5. Major personal injury or illness	63
6. Marriage	58
7. Getting fired from a job	50
8. Failing an important course	47
9. Change in the health of a family member	45
10. Pregnancy	45
11. Sex problems	44
12. Serious argument with a close friend	40
13. Change in financial status	39
14. Change of academic major	39
15. Trouble with parents	39
16. New girlfriend or boyfriend	37
17. Increase in workload at school	37
18. Outstanding personal achievement	36
19. First quarter/semester in college	36
20. Change in living conditions	31

21. Serious argument with an instructor	30
22. Getting lower grades than expected	29
23. Change in sleeping habits	29
24. Change in social activities	29
25. Change in eating habits	28
26. Chronic car trouble	26
27. Change in number of family get-togethers	26
28. Too many missed classes	25
29. Changing colleges	24
30. Dropping more than one class	23
31. Minor traffic violations	20

Total Stress Score _____

Score Interpretation:

Researchers determined that if your total score is:

300 or more - statistically you stand an almost 80 percent chance of getting sick in the near future.

150 to 299 - you have a 50-50 chance of experiencing a serious health change within two years.

149 or less - you have about a 30 percent chance of a serious health change.

This scale indicates that change in one's life requires an effort to adapt and then an effort to regain stability. Stress is a natural by-product of adapting and then regaining internal homeostasis. Take note that this assessment considers only the events that occur, not individual perception of these events in life. Perception is a critical part of the ultimate stress experience, so while the Student Stress Scale has value in increasing awareness of potential stress-producing events, ultimately individual perception of the event is an important variable.