

## Life Events Questionnaire

The following step in the *system* to **Systematic Stress Management** is the Identification of Personal Stressors. A **stressor** is anything that produces stress. It can be a major life event, a situation, an object, or a thought that will cause the stress response to occur in the body.

Is there a connection between the number of major life events a person experiences in a year and the likelihood of illness? Drs. Thomas Holmes and Richard Rahe think so. They reached this conclusion after questioning 7,000 people about the number of life events they went through in one year. The people who scored highest on this questionnaire experienced the highest amount of physical illness in the year following the test. This would make sense if change places demand upon the body causing stress. As seen in the **stress quotient**, the body requires rest or diversion. Without it, illness or accident can result.



**Instructions:** Place a check mark in the column labeled “Happened” for those events that occurred in the past 12 months. Then record your score with the event value for each. Total the score.

Event Rank	Event Value	Happened √	Your Score	Life Event
1	100	___	___	Death of a spouse
2	73	___	___	Divorce
3	65	___	___	Marital separation
4	63	___	___	Detention in jail or other institution
5	63	___	___	Death of close family member
6	53	___	___	Major personal injury or illness
7	50	___	___	Marriage
8	47	___	___	Being fired at work
9	45	___	___	Marital reconciliation

## Understanding Stress

Event Rank	Event Value	Happened √	Your Score	Life Event
10	45	___	___	Retirement from work
11	44	___	___	Major change in the health or behavior of a family member
12	40	___	___	Pregnancy
13	40	___	___	Sex difficulty
14	39	___	___	Gaining a new family member through birth, adoption or remarriage
15	39	___	___	Major business readjustments
16	38	___	___	Major change in financial state
17	37	___	___	Death of close friend
18	36	___	___	Change to a different line of work
19	35	___	___	Major increase in the number of arguments with spouse
20	31	___	___	Taking on a mortgage
21	30	___	___	Foreclosure on a mortgage or loan
22	29	___	___	Major change in responsibilities at work (promotion, demotion, transfer)
23	29	___	___	Son or daughter leaving home
24	29	___	___	In-laws trouble
25	28	___	___	Outstanding personal achievement
26	26	___	___	Spouse beginning or ceasing work outside the home

Event Rank	Event Value	Happened √	Your Score	Life Event
27	26	___	___	Going back to school
28	25	___	___	Major change in living condition (building, remodeling or deterioration of home)
29	24	___	___	Revision of personal habits
30	23	___	___	Troubles with supervisor, boss, or superiors
31	20	___	___	Major change in working hours or conditions
32	20	___	___	Change in residence
33	20	___	___	Change to a new school
34	19	___	___	Major change in type or amount of recreation
35	19	___	___	Major change in church activities
36	18	___	___	Major change in social activities
37	17	___	___	Purchase of a car or other big purchase
38	16	___	___	Major change in sleeping habits
39	15	___	___	Major change in the number of family get-togethers
40	15	___	___	Major change in eating habits
41	13	___	___	Vacation
42	12	___	___	Christmas or holiday observances
43	11	___	___	Minor violations of the law (traffic tickets)

**Your Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Scoring

- People who score between 100-199 have a very mild risk of developing physical illness in the next year.
- People who score between 200-299 have a more moderate risk of developing physical illness in the next 12 months.
- People who score 300 or more have a strong risk of developing physical illness in the next 12 months.

**Note:** These scores only represent a likelihood and not a definitive prediction.

### Suggestions for Coping with Major Life Events

1. Think about how many life event changes are taking place within a year or less!
2. Notice the symptoms of distress from your body, mind, and behavior.
3. Practice diversion and rest.
4. Decide to limit the number of changes when indicated.

...Most life events are Eustress ... remember they still place a demand upon the body