

## What's Your ACE Score? Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Questionnaire

Prior to your 18th birthday:

- 1 Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often... Swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you? or Act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?  
2 No \_\_\_ If Yes, enter 1 \_\_\_
- 3 Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often... Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you? or Ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?  
4 No \_\_\_ If Yes, enter 1 \_\_\_
- 5 Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever... Touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way? or Attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you?  
6 No \_\_\_ If Yes, enter 1 \_\_\_
- 7 Did you often or very often feel that ... No one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special? or Your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?  
8 No \_\_\_ If Yes, enter 1 \_\_\_
- 9 Did you often or very often feel that ... You didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you? or Your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?  
10 No \_\_\_ If Yes, enter 1 \_\_\_
- 11 Was a biological parent ever lost to you through divorce, abandonment, or other reason ?  
12 No \_\_\_ If Yes, enter 1 \_\_\_
- 13 Was your mother or stepmother:  
14 Often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her? or Sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard? or Ever repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?  
15 No \_\_\_ If Yes, enter 1 \_\_\_
- 16 Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs?  
17 No \_\_\_ If Yes, enter 1 \_\_\_
- 18 Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide? No \_\_\_ If Yes, enter 1 \_\_\_
- 19 Did a household member go to prison?  
20 No \_\_\_ If Yes, enter 1 \_\_\_
- 21

**Now add up your "Yes" answers: \_\_\_ This is your ACE Score. You get one point for each type of trauma. The higher your ACE score, the higher your risk of health and social problems.**

"...There are 10 types of childhood trauma measured in the ACE Study. Five are personal — physical abuse, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, physical neglect, and emotional neglect. Five are related to other family members: a parent who's an alcoholic, a mother who's a victim of domestic violence, a family member in jail, a family member diagnosed with a mental illness, and the disappearance of a parent through divorce, death or abandonment. Each type of trauma counts as one. So a person who's been physically abused, with one alcoholic parent, and a mother who was beaten up has an ACE score of three.

There are, of course, many other types of childhood trauma — watching a sibling being abused, losing a caregiver (grandmother, mother, grandfather, etc.), homelessness, surviving and recovering from a severe accident, witnessing a father being abused by a mother, witnessing a grandmother abusing a father, etc. The ACE Study included only those 10 childhood traumas because those were mentioned as most common by a group of about 300 Kaiser members; those traumas were also well studied individually in the research literature. The most important thing to remember is that the ACE score is meant as a guideline: If you experienced other types of toxic stress over months or years, then those would likely increase your risk of health consequences.

The study's researchers came up with an ACE score to explain a person's risk for chronic disease. Think of it as a cholesterol score for childhood toxic stress. You get one point for each type of trauma. The higher your ACE score, the higher your risk of health and social problems. (Of course, other types of trauma exist that could contribute to an ACE score, so it is conceivable that people could have ACE scores higher than 10; however, the ACE Study measured only 10 types.)

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As your ACE score increases, so does the risk of disease, social and emotional problems. With an ACE score of 4 or more, things start getting serious. The likelihood of chronic pulmonary lung disease increases 390 percent; hepatitis, 240 percent; depression 460 percent; suicide, 1,220 percent.

Fortunately, brains and lives are somewhat plastic. The appropriate integration of resilience factors born out of ACE concepts — such as asking for help, developing trusting relationships, forming a positive attitude, listening to feelings — can help people improve their lives...” (See *What's Your Resilience Score*)

The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study is one of the largest investigations ever conducted to assess associations between childhood maltreatment and later-life health and well-being. The study is a collaboration between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Kaiser Permanente's Health Appraisal Clinic in San Diego. <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/>

You have to make the decision to  
**LET GO OF THE PAST**  
if you want to move forward.  
Reliving your painful past will poison  
your heart and your tomorrow.  
If you look at today through the eyes of the past,  
you can never see what the  
present moment has to offer.  
— Bryant McGill

Simple Reminders  
SIMPLEREMINDERS.COM

“Life is ten  
percent what  
happens to you  
and ninety  
percent how  
you respond to  
it.”  
—Lou Holtz

bravoforpat

“I am not what happened to me,  
I am what I choose to become.”  
—Carl Gustav Jung

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## What's Your Resilience Score? Resilience Questionnaire

Please circle the most accurate answer under each statement:

**1. I believe that my mother loved me when I was little.**

Definitely true    Probably true    Not sure    Probably Not True    Definitely Not True

**2. I believe that my father loved me when I was little.**

Definitely true    Probably true    Not sure    Probably Not True    Definitely Not True

**3. When I was little, other people helped my mother and father take care of me and they seemed to love me.**

Definitely true    Probably true    Not sure    Probably Not True    Definitely Not True

**4. I've heard that when I was an infant someone in my family enjoyed playing with me, and I enjoyed it, too.**

Definitely true    Probably true    Not sure    Probably Not True    Definitely Not True

**5. When I was a child, there were relatives in my family who made me feel better if I was sad or worried.**

Definitely true    Probably true    Not sure    Probably Not True    Definitely Not True

**6. When I was a child, neighbors or my friends' parents seemed to like me.**

Definitely true    Probably true    Not sure    Probably Not True    Definitely Not True

**7. When I was a child, teachers, coaches, youth leaders or ministers were there to help me.**

Definitely true    Probably true    Not sure    Probably Not True    Definitely Not True

**8. Someone in my family cared about how I was doing in school.**

Definitely true    Probably true    Not sure    Probably Not True    Definitely Not True

**9. My family, neighbors and friends talked often about making our lives better.**

Definitely true    Probably true    Not sure    Probably Not True    Definitely Not True

**10. We had rules in our house and were expected to keep them.**

Definitely true    Probably true    Not sure    Probably Not True    Definitely Not True

**11. When I felt really bad, I could almost always find someone I trusted to talk to.**

Definitely true    Probably true    Not sure    Probably Not True    Definitely Not True

**12. As a youth, people noticed that I was capable and could get things done.**

Definitely true    Probably true    Not sure    Probably Not True    Definitely Not True

**13. I was independent and a go-getter.**

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Definitely true    Probably true    Not sure    Probably Not True    Definitely Not True

**14. I believed that life is what you make it.**

Definitely true    Probably true    Not sure    Probably Not True    Definitely Not True

**How many of these 14 protective factors did I have as a child and youth? (How many of the 14 were circled "Definitely True" or "Probably True"?) \_\_\_\_\_**

**Of these circled, how many are still true for me? \_\_\_\_\_**

"...This *What's Your Resilience* questionnaire was developed by the early childhood service providers, pediatricians, psychologists, and health advocates of Southern Kennebec Healthy Start, Augusta, Maine, in 2006, and updated in February 2013. Two psychologists in the group, Mark Rains and Kate McClinn, came up with the 14 statements with editing suggestions by the other members of the group. The scoring system was modeled after the ACE Study questions. The content of the questions was based on a number of research studies from the literature over the past 40 years including that of Emmy Werner and others. Its purpose is limited to parenting education. It was not developed for research..."

*This info adapted from: [www.Acestoohigh.com](http://www.Acestoohigh.com):*

*Got Your ACE Score? What's Your ACE Score? (and, at the end, What's Your Resilience Score?)*

<http://acestoohigh.com/got-your-ace-score/>

*Landmark lawsuit filed in California to make trauma-informed practices mandatory for all public schools*

May 18, 2015    By Sylvia Paull

<http://acestoohigh.com/2015/05/18/landmark-lawsuit-filed-to-make-trauma-informed-practices-mandatory-for-all-public-schools/>

**Information on Resilience from the American Psychological Association.**

**Factors in Resilience**

A combination of factors contributes to resilience. Many studies show that the primary factor in resilience is having caring and supportive relationships within and outside the family. Relationships that create love and trust, provide role models and offer encouragement and reassurance help bolster a person's resilience.

Several additional factors are associated with resilience, including:

1. The capacity to make realistic plans and take steps to carry them out.
2. A positive view of yourself and confidence in your strengths and abilities.
3. Skills in communication and problem solving.
4. The capacity to manage strong feelings and impulses.

All of these are factors that people can develop in themselves.

**10 ways to build resilience**

1. **Make connections.** Good relationships with close family members, friends or others are important. Accepting help and support from those who care about you and will listen to you strengthens resilience. Some people find that being active in civic groups, faith-based organizations, or other local groups provides social support and can help with reclaiming hope. Assisting others in their time of need also can benefit the helper.
2. **Avoid seeing crises as insurmountable problems.** You can't change the fact that highly stressful events happen, but you can change how you interpret and respond to these events. Try looking beyond the present to how future circumstances may be a little better. Note any subtle ways in which you might already feel somewhat better as you deal with difficult situations.
3. **Accept that change is a part of living.** Certain goals may no longer be attainable as a result of adverse situations. Accepting circumstances that cannot be changed can help you focus on circumstances that you can alter.
4. **Move toward your goals.** Develop some realistic goals. Do something regularly — even if it seems like a small accomplishment — that enables you to move toward your goals. Instead of focusing on tasks that seem unachievable, ask yourself, "What's one thing I know I can accomplish today that helps me move in the direction I want to go?"
5. **Take decisive actions.** Act on adverse situations as much as you can. Take decisive actions, rather than detaching completely from problems and stresses and wishing they would just go away.

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6. **Look for opportunities for self-discovery.** People often learn something about themselves and may find that they have grown in some respect as a result of their struggle with loss. Many people who have experienced tragedies and hardship have reported better relationships, greater sense of strength even while feeling vulnerable, increased sense of self-worth, a more developed spirituality and heightened appreciation for life.
7. **Nurture a positive view of yourself.** Developing confidence in your ability to solve problems and trusting your instincts helps build resilience.
8. **Keep things in perspective.** Even when facing very painful events, try to consider the stressful situation in a broader context and keep a long-term perspective. Avoid blowing the event out of proportion.
9. **Maintain a hopeful outlook.** An optimistic outlook enables you to expect that good things will happen in your life. Try visualizing what you want, rather than worrying about what you fear.
10. **Take care of yourself.** Pay attention to your own needs and feelings. Engage in activities that you enjoy and find relaxing. Exercise regularly. Taking care of yourself helps to keep your mind and body primed to deal with situations that require resilience.
11. **Additional ways of strengthening resilience may be helpful.** For example, some people write about their deepest thoughts and feelings related to trauma or other stressful events in their life. Meditation and spiritual practices help some people build connections and restore hope.

The key is to identify ways that are likely to work well for you as part of your own personal strategy for fostering resilience.

<http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx>

When we practice  
generating compassion,  
we can expect to  
experience the fear of  
our pain. Compassion is  
daring. It involves  
learning to relax and  
allow ourselves to move  
gently towards what  
scares us.

~ Pema Chodron



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