

Measuring Life Stress<sup>2</sup>

**Instructions:** Circle the number of any event which has occurred in your life over the past 12 months. Add up the numbers for your total score.

<b>Event</b>	<b>Scale of Impact</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Scale of Impact</b>
Death of spouse	100	Son or daughter leaving home	29
Divorce	73	Change in responsibility at work	29
Marital separation	65	Outstanding personal achievement	28
Jail term	63	Spouse begins/stops work	26
Death of close family member	63	Begin or end school	26
Personal injury or illness	53	Change in living conditions	25
Marriage	50	Revision of personal habits	24
Fired at work	47	Trouble with boss	23
Marital reconciliation	45	Change in work hours or conditions	20
Retirement	45	Change in residence	20
Change in health of family member	44	Change in schools	20
Pregnancy	39	Change in recreation	19
Sex difficulties	39	Change in church activity	19
Gain of new family member	39	Change in social activity	18
Business readjustment	39	Small mortgage or loan	17
Change in financial state	38	Change in sleep habits	16

Death of a close friend	37	Change in number of family get-togethers	15
Change to a different line of work	36	Change in eating habits	15
Change in number of arguments with spouse	35	Vacation	13
High mortgage	31	Christmas	12
Foreclosure of mortgage or loan	31	Minor violations of the law	11
Trouble with in-laws	29	<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	

<sup>2</sup> The Social Readjustment Rating Scale was designed to reflect the cumulative stress to which an individual has been exposed over a period of time (Holmes & Holmes, 1970; Holmes and Rahe, 1967, Rahe and Arthur, 1978). “Life change units” are used to measure life stress in the areas noted above.

## **Interpretation**

Score 150-199: If your current level of stress continues and/or you do not adopt effective stress management strategies, you have a 37% chance of a minor illness in the next two years.

Score 200-299: If your stress level continues and you do nothing to change your adaptive strategies, you have a 51% chance of developing a major illness in the next two years.

Score over 300: You have a 79% chance of a major health breakdown in the next two years. It is recommended that you begin adding effective coping strategies to your life style.

### **Note:**

Major life stressors may impact decision making. When an individual is in danger of suffering the ill effects of life crises, it is best to limit as much as possible any additional disruption. As an example, if someone recently lost a loved one or lost a job, it may be best to wait until some time has passed before making a major decision like looking for another job or moving to another town.

### **Questions to Consider:**

Does your score seem to accurately reflect the level of stress in your life as you see it? Why or why not?

What does your perception of life events have to do with the effects of stress on you?

Does your current level of self care enhance your stress resiliency or leave you vulnerable?