

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?
No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___
- 2 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?
No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___
- 3 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?
No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___
- 4 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?
No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___
- 5 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?
No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___
- 6 Was a biological parent ever lost to you through divorce, abandonment, or other reason?
No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___
- 7 Was your mother or stepmother:
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?
No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___
- 8 Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs?
No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___
- 9 Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide? No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___
- 10 Did a household member go to prison?
No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___
- 11
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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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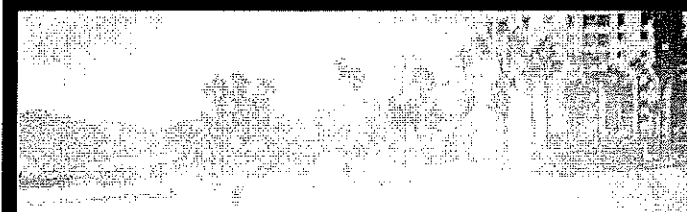
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As your ACE score increases, so does the risk of disease, social and emotional problems. With an ACE score of 4 or more, things start getting serious. The likelihood of chronic pulmonary lung disease increases 390 percent; hepatitis, 240 percent; depression 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

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

—Lou Holtz

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“I am not what happened to me,
 I am what I choose to become.”

— Carl Gustav Jung