

Perceived Stress Scale

The questions in this scale ask you about your feelings and thoughts **during the last month**. In each case, you will be asked to indicate by circling *how often* you felt or thought a certain way.

0 = Never 1 = Almost Never 2 = Sometimes 3 = Fairly Often 4 = Very Often

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| 1. In the last month, how often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. In the last month, how often have you felt nervous and stressed?..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems ?..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. In the last month, how often have you felt that things were going your way?..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. In the last month, how often have you found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do?..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. In the last month, how often have you been able to control irritations in your life?..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were on top of things?..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. In the last month, how many times have you been angered because of the things that were outside of your control?..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10. In the last month, how often have you felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |



PERMISSION FOR USE BY STUDENTS AND NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

If you are a student, a teacher, or are otherwise using the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) without making a profit on its use, you have my permission to use the PSS in your work.

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Reference: American Sociological Association, from Cohen, S., Kamarck, T., and Mermelstein, R. (1983). A global measure of perceived stress. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 24, 386-396. Cohen, S. and Williamson, G. Perceived Stress in a Probability Sample of the United States. Spacapan, S. and Oskamp, S. (Eds.) *The Social Psychology of Health*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1988.

How to Score the PSS Perceived Stress Scale

You can determine your PSS score by following these directions:

First, reverse your scores for questions 4, 5, 7, and 8. On these 4 questions, change the scores like this:

$$0 = 4 \quad 1 = 3 \quad 2 = 2 \quad 3 = 1 \quad 4 = 0$$

Now add up your scores for each item to get a total. **My total score is** _____

Individual scores on the PSS can range from 0 to 40 with higher scores indicating higher perceived stress.

- ▶ Scores ranging from 0-13 would be considered low stress.
- ▶ Scores ranging from 14-26 would be considered moderate stress.
- ▶ Scores ranging from 27-40 would be considered high perceived stress.

The Perceived Stress Scale is interesting because it highlights the fact that your perception of what is happening in your life is important. Consider the idea that two individuals could have the same experiences but end up in different stress categories

The score on this self-assessment is only meant as a tool to help assess your level of stress.