

Marriage Stress Indicator

According to John Gottman, author of *Ten Lessons to Transform Your Marriage*, couples often suppress or deny the feelings caused by stressful situations or crises in their relationship. The result is emotional distance, loss of intimacy, lack of passion and low-level depression, all of which endanger the long-term health of the relationship. Use this checklist to determine what situations are causing stress in your relationship and what kind of feelings they are generating.

Directions: In the column at the left use a scale of **0 (none) to 5 (a lot)** to indicate how much stress you experience from the situation. In the column at the right, check the feelings which this situation produces in you.

_____ partner's infidelity	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ sexual, physical or emotional abuse	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ pending separation or divorce	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ family member's legal jeopardy or imprisonment	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ death or suicide of a family member	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ personal physical, mental or emotional health	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ partner's physical, mental or emotional health	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ child's physical, mental or emotional health	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ child's relationship issues	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ child's problems in school or with the law	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ loss of employment or new job	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ pending retirement	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ parent's declining health	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ pregnancy	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ sexual problems	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ new family member (baby, adoption, elderly moving in)	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ major adjustment at work (merger, reorganization, new management)	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression

_____ financial problems	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ death or suicide of a close friend	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ alcohol or drug abuse by a family member	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ new mortgage/loan or foreclosure on existing mortgage/loan.	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ child leaving home	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ trouble with in-laws	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ conflicts with church, parents or partner over religion	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ beginning or ending formal education	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ change in living conditions/location	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ change in personal habits or routine	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ trouble with boss or co-workers	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ change in residence/new home	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ major change in social, church or recreational habits or routines	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ major change in sleeping habits	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ vacation	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ Christmas/holidays	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression
_____ (total score)	__fear __regret __anger __sorrow __depression

- Directions:** 1. Add the numbers in the left hand column to indicate your overall stress level. Under 55 indicates a relatively low level of stress; 55-110 a medium amount of stress; over 110 a great deal of stress. *Whatever your overall level, you should be concerned about any item where you marked 4 or 5.*
2. Add the numbers for each of the feelings in the right-hand column. This will give you an idea of the kinds of predominant feelings you are dealing with at the present time.
3. Share these results with your partner. Be aware that recognizing each other's feelings is the first step to living more constructively with stressful situations and crises. There is a risk to your relationship if you resolve problems without acknowledging one another's feelings.