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Project STRIDE: Stress, Identity, and Mental Health, New York City, 2004-2005

A Rater's Guide To Stressful Life Events

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A Rater's Guide to Stressful Life Events

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Manuscript prepared for use by *Project STRIDE,*

Principle Investigator: Ilan H. Meyer, Ph.D.

Based on the SEPRATE method developed by Dohrenwend, Raphael,

Schwartz, Stueve, & Skodol (1993); and Dohrenwend & Turner (2004)

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CHAPTER ONE: GETTING STARTED

Introduction

Each study participant in *Project STRIDE* is administered a semi-structured interview called the **Life Events Questionnaire,** which is designed to illicit information about the type of events individuals experience throughout their lifetime. During the interview, handwritten notes summarizing participant responses are recorded directly into the *Project STRIDE* interview packet. It is the job of the **stress raters** to analyze these brief summaries according to a revised rating protocol (described in this manual) that was developed by Turner and Dohrenwend (2004)[1]. Additionally, stress raters are responsible for attending bi-monthly consensus meetings ("Stress" Meetings) in which difficult and/or discrepant cases are discussed and amended. Raters may also be responsible for some aspects of data entry and/or analysis.

- ❖ Each Life Events Questionnaire is rated by two raters – the first rater, or the **A rater,** and the second rater, or the **B rater.**

- ❖ Rater status is determined by whoever first rates a case, not by the individual rater (i.e. any one rater can be either rater A or rater B for a given case).

- ❖ After completing a case, raters A and B make a record on the **stress log.** When a rater wants to begin rating cases, s/he must consult the stress log to see which cases need A or B ratings.

- ❖ A completely rated case contains the following documents: rater A's **Life Events Checklist (1 page)** and **Rating Sheets (up to 3 pages)** and rater B's Life Events Checklist and Rating Sheets.

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[1] Turner, J.B., & Dohrenwend, B.P. (2004) "Development of Rating Scales for the Measurement of the General and Specific Characteristics of Major Events Over the Life Course". Unpublished manuscript.

Practical Rating Guidelines[2]

<div align="center">Rater A Responsibilities</div>

❖ Analyze the interview notes and identify all events and instances of chronic strain.

❖ Record **case identification numbers, page numbers, rater identification letter,** and case ratings on the Life Events Checklist and Rating Sheets for rater A.

❖ Record instances of **chronic strain** on the Life Events Checklist and all events with **event numbers, event descriptions** and **age ranges** on the Rating Sheets for rater A.

❖ Prepare Life Event Checklist and Rating Sheets for rater B. That is, record case identification numbers, page numbers and instances of chronic strain on the Life Events Checklist and record all events – with numbers, descriptions and age ranges – on the Rating Sheets for rater B.

❖ After rating a case and preparing the documents for rater B, the A rater should initial and date the stress log. If an A rater has problems identifying and/or labeling event numbers and/or ages, s/he may make a note on the stress log and review the case with another rater outside of the Stress Meeting.

<div align="center">Rater B Responsibilities</div>

❖ Analyze the interview notes to ensure agreement with rater A's identifications of events and instances of chronic strain.

❖ If the B rater disagrees with the A rater's identification, numbering, or age ranges of any event(s), s/he may make a note on the stress log and review the case with the A rater out-side of the Stress Meeting.

❖ Enter B ratings on all forms for rater B and, if no discrepancies arise, record the B ratings as completed on the stress log.

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[2]There are several rating terms introduced in this section (e.g., chronic strain) that will be de-scribed in detail in Chapters Two and Three.

<div align="center">Responsibilities of Both Raters A and B</div>

- ❖ Record rater status (A or B), rater initials and date of rating on all forms.

- ❖ Re-rate and/or amend discrepant cases after consensus at Stress Meetings.

- ❖ Remove resolved discrepancies from the stress log to ensure timely data entry following Stress Meetings.

Example:

  David checks the stress log and sees that case #1234 has no A or B ratings. He then pulls the file for case #1234. He then fills out the case identification number, rater status, event numbers, event descriptions, and age ranges on the Life Events Checklist and Rating Sheet(s) for rater A. Then David rates the case and records the ratings on the Life Events Checklist and Rating Sheet(s) for rater A. He then fills out the case identification number, rater status, event numbers, event descriptions, and age ranges on the Life Events Checklist and Rating Sheet(s) for rater B. After completing the A ratings for case #1234 and preparing the rating forms for rater B, David marks his initials and the date on the stress log. Next, David sees on the stress log that case #1567 has A ratings but no B ratings. David then pulls the file for case #1567 and finds the prepared Life Events Checklist and Rating Sheet(s) for rater B. He then rates the case, and records his ratings on the Life Events Checklist and Rating Sheets as the B ratings. After completing these ratings, he records his initials and the date on the stress log.

<div align="center">General Issues</div>

Filling in the blanks: On the whole, raters should try and code all events as completely as possible in order to avoid coding for missing data. If there is a dearth of information in the write-up of particular event description, raters should use all the tools at their disposal to code a case completely. For example, raters can examine the responses to other life events, or try and construct a timeline of events in order to make an educated-guess style rating.

Missing Data: If a rater is unable to provide a rating for a category, due to lack of information, he or she can use the code of **"999."**

Participant Refusal: If a participant acknowledges the occurrence of an event but refuses to share any information regarding this event, raters can use the code **"998".**

Storing of Rating Forms: All completed rating forms (Life Events Checklist, and up to three Rating Sheets) are stored along with the other interview materials in the case folder. All rater A forms should be stapled together and all rater B forms should be stapled together, and stored together in the case file with a paper clip.

Changing Event Numbers on Forms: If a rater needs to make a handwritten change to an event number on the Life Events Questionnaire form, s/he must cross out the event number with one line (without obliterating the number being changed) and record his or her initials next to the change that has been made. Likewise, if a rater needs to make a change to an event number on a Rating Form, s/he must cross out the number with one line and record his or her initials next to the change that has been made.

Inter-rater Reliability: In order to ensure validity of the measure, it is essential that raters do not discuss their ratings with each other outside of the Stress Meeting. Any discrepancies or difficulties concerning the rating categories (i.e. Source, Centrality, Magnitude and Prejudice Ratings) should be discussed ONLY WITHIN STRESS MEEETINGS.

CHAPTER TWO: IDENTIFYING EVENTS

Recall

- ❖ Raters A and B are both responsible for completing two documents for each case: the Life Events Checklist and the Rating Form(s).

- ❖ The Life Events Checklist provides a record of the following: which life events were rated, how many total events were rated, and the presence or absence of chronic strain.

- ❖ The Rating Form(s) provide(s) a record of: event numbers, descriptions, and age ranges, and the A and B ratings for each of the four rating dimensions (Source, Centrality, Magnitude and Prejudice).

Event Numbers

In the notes section of the Life Events Questionnaire, along with the participant's response, inter-viewers write down the event number that prompted this response. Oftentimes, an interviewer-recorded event number does not provide the most accurate description of the event itself. It is the task of the rater to determine which event number(s) most accurately describes the participant's life experience[3].

Useful Techniques for Choosing Event Numbers:

- ❖ After you are finished identifying all rate-able events, go through the Interview Questionnaire one final time. Are there any non-categorized experiences that should be labeled with event numbers?

- ❖ Make sure you label each event with the most appropriate event number. For example, a diagnosis of breast cancer would best be described by event **#16: 'Have you ever had a life-threatening or disabling illness?' –** not by event **#20: Did anything else significant happen related to your health?**

- ❖ Make sure event numbers fit the age range. For example, a fist fight between two 15 year-olds should be coded as **event 51 'Child Physical Assault'** NOT **event 33 'Adult Physical Assault.'**

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[3]See the Appendices for a complete listing of events in the Life Events Questionnaire.

Event Description

This includes a brief (two-to-six word) description of the event. This helps raters to distinguish between events that may have the same event number and age(s). For example, suppose that a participant experienced two separate physical assaults (event # 33) at the age of 18, one taking place in a bar and another in school. By labeling one event as "bar fight" and the other as "school fight", the raters can differentiate between two events that may have otherwise been indistinguishable because of their identical event number and age.

Age Range

- ❖ The *age* range dimension is the age of the participant at the time the event took place. The **age start** and **age end** are identical for one-time events. For example, becoming homeless or becoming unemployed are one-time events, irrelevant of the length of homelessness or unemployment. Most events are one-time events and therefore will have an identical age start and age end.

- ❖ The age start and age end may be different in order to indicate when an event takes place repeatedly over a period of time. For example, an event describing a child who experienced continual physical abuse from age 7 to 16 would require an age range. Age ranges may also be appropriate in instances where a participant reports multiple one-time events within a certain age range, and is not able to provide neither specific ages nor details about each individual instance. For example, a participant may report being arrested approximately 8 times between the ages of 18 and 24, and provide no distinguishing details about them. In this instance, it may be most appropriately rated as one event, with an age range of 18 to 24.

- ❖ Make sure that age ranges reported by the participant truly are ranges. Participants are often not sure of when an event took place, and therefore give an age range. In situations where the range provided consists of only two years (e.g. 23-24), the rater should code the age as the oldest age (e.g. 24). In situations where the range consists of more than 2 years (e.g. 23-27), the rater should code the age as the average of the youngest and oldest age (e.g. 25)

- ❖ If a participant states that an event took place "since birth", it is not an event. An event must be a *change* in the participant's life. Therefore, events reported as having occurred "since birth" are ineligible for rating. However, if there is information in the event description about when the participant first noticed "the event", or when "the event" particularly worsened, the event at those specific ages can be rated. For example, a participant may report that his mother had depression "as long as I can remember". If the participant also noted first finding out about his mother's illness at age 7, the event may be coded with a start and end age of 7. This could also apply if instead the participant could not recall when he first found out about his mother's illness, but recalled it severely worsening at age 7.

- ❖ If a participant states that an event took place "since birth" and there were no ages provided which could be used to code the event, the event may be rated as a "chronic strain".

- ❖ Sometimes there are 2 ages/age ranges provided for one event (e.g. there was separation from parents at age 7, and then again at age 12). In these instances, you should rate them as two separate events because the events occurred at different ages.

- ❖ If the age estimate provided is highly general, for example "30s" or "40s", try to use the other stressful life events listed to gauge the age at which the event occurred. If it is difficult to do so, use the middle age (e.g. 35 or 45).

- ❖ If no ages at all are provided by the participant, and you cannot make an estimate based on other information provided, code the age as "999", meaning that not enough information is provided.

Chronic Strain

A *chronic strain* rating is utilized for events that do not fit in any specific event category, and have sub-threshold ratings. Examples include: substance abusing parents (non-diagnosed/non-treated), continuous moving as a child, parental separation from birth, or being shunned by family members because of sexual orientation. This measure is found on the bottom of the Life Events Checklist and includes dimensions of prejudice.[4]

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[4] See Chapter 3: The Rating Protocol, Section D: Prejudice

This rating system was developed as a means to objectively analyze what are inherently subjective stressful life events. Stressful life event rating is based on principles of comparison and relativity. We do not rate events as they are experienced by participants in their particular life circumstances. Instead, we rate how a stressful life event would affect MOST PEOPLE who experience a particular event. Here the referent for "most people" is as follows: it can range from most people in general for events that most of us experience at one time or another in our lives, to most people in a particular group for events specific to that group's situation.

❖ The race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation of participants should not be considered when rating. This is to prevent comparison of minority group members only to other members of their group and not people of other groups. The only exception to this is in the case of events that are related to prejudice or discrimination, which will be discussed in detail below.

❖ The stressfulness of an event should be rated based upon the four dimensions (source, centrality, magnitude and prejudice) and NOT upon type of event. A break-up of a marriage that is rated as "threat to life = 0" should be understood as the same as unemployed with "threat to life = 0." For some events, there will never be a good example for each gradation of the dimension scale. For instance, being mugged at gunpoint will never receive a "threat to life = 0", as there will always be the threat of death if an assailant is pointing a gun at someone.

Stressful Life Events Rating Categories

The rating dimensions include: **Source, Centrality, Magnitude,** and **Prejudice.** With the exception of Magnitude, each dimension has been broken down into separate rating categories as follows:

❖ **Source – Prelude** and **Occurrence**
❖ **Centrality –** Threats to: **Life, Physical Integrity,** fulfillment of **Basic Needs,** and life **Goals**
❖ **Prejudice – Motivation, Involvement, Type** of Prejudice, **Environment/Context, Group/Individual** and active versus a passive **Reaction**

Section A: Source

Source is related to *the origin of the event: how the event was brought into being.* The major distinction to be made is whether the event occurred in the person's life more because of his or her state, behavior or actions; or more because of circumstances external to the individual, including the actions of other persons as well as human or natural agencies. Source includes two sub-dimensions, prelude and occurrence, that take into account the participant's behavior and circumstances[5]. Both ratings are on a five-point ordinal scale[6]:

- ❖ 0 = Completely determined by the participant's behavior
- ❖ 1 = Mostly determined by the participant's behavior
- ❖ 2 = Equally determined by the participant's behavior and external circumstances
- ❖ 3 = Mostly determined by external circumstances
- ❖ 4 = Completely determined by external circumstances

Prelude

The prelude is the proximal, pre-immediate cause of the occurrence of the event. The prelude measure refers to the degree (if any) to which the participant's behavior increased the chance of the event occurring. The rater must assess what put the participant in the situation where he or she had to act or where others or circumstances had to act on him or her in ways that induced the immediate onset (occurrence) of the event. To do this, the rater should go back in time only as far as necessary to make the case for the rating of the prelude. For example, in an event such as "being fired", if the participant had been repeatedly late to work in recent weeks and his or her job performance had been consistently poor, we would probably rate the prelude a 0, completely determined by the participant's behavior. [7]

- ❖ The higher the 'prelude' rating given for an event (i.e. 3 or 4), the higher the circumstances are deemed 'fateful'. Fateful means "the element of chance in the affairs of life; the unforeseen and unestimated conditions considered as a force shaping events; fortune." *(Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary, © 1996, 1998 MICRA, Inc.)*

- ❖ While personal mental health events are not coded as events themselves, they may be considered as 'preludes' to events. In these instances, mental health preludes are usually coded as non-fateful (prelude = 0 or 1).

[5] Turner & Dohrenwend (2004)

[6] Dohrenwend, Raphael, Schwartz, Stueve, & Skodol (1993)

[7] Dohrenwend (2004); Turner & Dohrenwend (2004)

Prelude Rating Examples

0. The participant knowingly did not pay rent which resulted in them being evicted from his or her home.

1. The participant was the main decision maker regarding the abortion, but took into consideration other influences (e.g. against the desire of her partner).

2. The participant was a fairly attractive/qualified job candidate who was fairly consistent/serious with their job search, but was still not able to find employment.

3. The participant dropped out of high school under the strong influence of people or other factors (e.g., the necessity to earn money for the family, take care of an ill relative, etc.)

4. The respondent was looking out his or her window, and witnessed someone being shot.

A prelude rating of 4 is given to events in which:

❖ **The environment placed the participant in the situation where the participant had to act, or others had to act on the participant** (i.e. *"fateful" circumstances)*. This includes events such as natural disasters, witnessing events, and illnesses. In these events, the environment, or "external circumstances" are the cause of the pre- immediate onset of the event.

❖ **The event happened to a participant's significant other.** In most situations, the participant did not place his or her significant other in the situation in which the significant other incurred the "event", such as an illness or death. Exceptions may include events involving accidents. For example, if the participant's significant other were injured in a car accident in which the participant was the driver, then the prelude would have a lower rating.

❖ **The participant was a young child, such as physical or sexual abuse or separation from parents in the case of a divorce.** Given a child's inherent limited agency, particularly in these situations, these events can be considered "fateful" circumstances on the part of the participant.

Prelude ratings for most other events are highly variable depending on the circumstances. Below are some of the most common examples of possible scenarios and corresponding prelude ratings:

Event 10: Homelessness: The participant left or was evicted from his or her housing situation

- 0   The participant knowingly did not pay rent which resulted in them being evicted from his or her home.

- 1   The participant was doing/dealing drugs and was kicked out of home by landlord/parent.

- 2   The participant had mutual conflict issues with roommate/parent/landlord, and voluntarily left or was kicked out of home.

- 3   The participant felt compelled to leave home due to prejudice/discriminatory (e.g., homo-phobia) issues.

- 4   The participant hypothetically left or was kicked out of living situation for no reason, and the situation was completely "fateful".

Event 11: Unemployment: The participant just graduated from college and could not find a job.

- 1   The participant was a highly unattractive job candidate, and the participant was not consistent/serious with his or her job search, and consequently was not hired.

- 2   The participant was a fairly attractive/qualified job candidate who was fairly consistent/serious with his or her job search, but was still not able to find employment. There-fore, a poor job market could be an assumed factor.

- 3   The participant was a strong job candidate who consistently/seriously looked for work, yet still was not able to find employment. One could assume that a poor job market played a significant role in his or her unemployment.

- 4   The participant was a highly attractive/ over-qualified job candidate and after seriously searching for work, still was not hired for any jobs. One could assume that the participant is not hired solely due to poor job market, and it would be deemed a 'fateful situation'.

Event 19: Abortion: The participant had an abortion.

   0   The participant was the sole decision maker regarding the abortion, and took no other influences (e.g. partner, family members, friends) into consideration.

   1   The participant was the main decision maker regarding the abortion, but took into consideration other influences (e.g. the participant wanted and had the abortion against the desire of her partner).

   2   The participant equally shared the decision regarding the abortion with someone else.

   3   The participant made the decision regarding the abortion under heavy influence from someone else.

   4   The participant had no say in her decision regarding the abortion, and was literally 'forced' to have the abortion (e.g. under threat of harm/death to the participant or child). This would be the case if the abortion was medically necessary and the participant had wanted the child. This would also be the case if a partner threatened to kill/harm the participant or the child if the participant did not have the abortion.

<div align="center">Occurrence</div>

Occurrence refers to the causes of, or control over, the *immediate onset* of the event. This measure is rated on a scale of 0 to 4.[8] A rating of 0 indicates that the participant completely caused, or had control over the *immediate onset* of the event (i.e. the event was entirely brought on by the participant). A rating of 4 indicates that the participant had no causal influence, or control over the immediate onset of the event. This measure, unlike the prelude measure, tends to be highly polarized. Given the objective nature of the measure, an occurrence rating is more often a 0 or 4, rather than a 2. However, as with the prelude rating, occurrence ratings may vary widely de-pending on circumstances.

   Occurrence Rating Examples

      0   The participant dropped out of high school; the participant had an abortion.

      1   The participant cheated on his or her partner and then ended the relationship.

      2   The participant slipped and fell on black ice.

      3   The participant was left by his or her partner.

      4   The participant's town was struck by a tornado; the participant's mother was diagnosed with breast cancer.

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[8] Dohrenwend, Raphael, Schwartz, Stueve, & Skodol (1993)

Below are some examples of possible scenarios and corresponding occurrence ratings:

Event 16: Physical illness: The participant was diagnosed with breast cancer.

    4   The participant did not cause cancerous cells to arise in her body

Event 21: The ending of a romantic relationship: The participant got divorced.

    0-1 The participant left his or her partner for someone else

    2   The participant and his/her partner mutually broke up

    3-4 The participant's partner broke up with him or her

Event 24: A significant other was the victim of a serious crime: The participant's mother was physically abused by the participant's father.

    4   The participant did not immediately cause his or her father to abuse his or her mother.

Section B: Centrality

This category attempts to capture how greatly an event impacts the core aspects of a participant's life. It is divided into four dimensions: life threat, physical integrity threat, basic needs, and goals. It is important to note that the first two dimensions concern the threat to life and physical integrity that a certain event posed, e.g., being mugged while being threatened with a knife. These dimensions do not, however, take into consideration the results of the event, e.g., being stabbed during the armed mugging. You can think of these two threat ratings as "probability" ratings – how high is the probability that a person would die during an armed mugging? How high is the probability that a person would be seriously incapacitated due to an armed mugging? Scores for basic needs and goals should be based upon the severity of the threat to life and physical Integrity ratings. All dimensions are rated on a scale of 0-5.

- ❖ 0 = No chance of threat
- ❖ 1 = Threat not likely, but possible
- ❖ 2 = Threat possible
- ❖ 3 = Probability of serious threat is at least 50%.
- ❖ 4 = Substantial probability of serious threat
- ❖ 5 = Threat is certain and great.

Life Threat

This sub-category assesses the probability that a person would die as a direct result of the given event, with 0 indicating no chance of death and 5 indicating a certain chance of death. Other gradations in rating can be thought of using this framework as an example:[9]

0   The participant was involved in a "fender bender" – a minor car accident.

1   The participant was a victim of rape with coercive but not deadly force.

2   The participant was diagnosed with HIV/AIDS or was within moderate proximity to a natural disaster (i.e. within 50 miles of the Chernobyl explosion).

3   The participant was a victim of rape without the use of a weapon but with coercive and deadly force.

4   The participant was involved in an assault brandishing a deadly weapon during the case of a robbery or rape.

5   The participant was involved in a head-on highway collusion or was diagnosed with a lethal illness.

[9] Life threat gradation framework cited directly from original text by Turner and Dohrenwend (2004)

<u>Physical Integrity Threat</u>

This sub-category assesses the probability that a person would be seriously physically injured as a direct result of the given event, with 0 indicating no chance of serious injury and 5 indicating a certain chance of serious injury. Remember that we are rating the probability of this injury occur-ring, NOT what actually did transpire in the participant's experience. Being fired on in combat is a good example. The injury that actually occurs is not representative of the physical threat that being fired upon represents. It could result in death, limb loss, facial disfigurement, a flesh wound, or nothing at all. The "threat" it represents is the same. Other gradations in rating can be thought of using this framework as an example:[10]

- 0   The participant was slapped during a fight.

- 1   The participant experienced temporary and limited loss of mobility or was involved in an accident leaving superficial bruises.

- 2   The participant was involved in a sporting accident that led to a concussion.

- 3   The participant underwent invasive surgical treatment.

- 4   The participant was mugged by an assailant wielding a knife.

- 5   The participant was involved in an accident threatening loss of sight or physical mobility.

<u>Basic Needs</u>

This sub-category attempts to measure how much an event impacts the participant's ability to pro-vide for his or her basic life needs food, water and shelter. High ratings in this dimension will occur very infrequently, as most individuals in modern societies experience minimal threats to basic needs as conceptualized herein. A score of 0 indicates that the event did not threaten the participant's basic needs at all, and 5 represents an event that completely compromises the participant's ability to provide for his or her basic needs, but DOES NOT pose an additional life threat. Other gradations in rating can be thought of using this framework as an example:[11]

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[10] Physical threat gradation framework cited directly from original text by Turner & Dohrenwend (2004)

0   The participant lost a job that did not affect his/her ability to access basic needs.

1   The primary household wage earner abandoned participant or lost his/her job.

2   The participant was living in a shelter or was homeless but could still access food.

3   The participant was living in a shelter or was homeless and had no way of accessing food.

4   The participant was living near a large natural or man-made disaster that compromised food or shelter (but not both).

5   The participant was living near a large natural or man-made disaster that destroyed the participant's home and compromised food and water leaving no alternative options.

<u>Goals</u>

This sub-category attempts to assess the degree to which an event impacts the ability of the participant to fulfill a set of life goals, specifically goals concerned relationships and career. In other words, any event that acts as an impediment to self-actualization may be rated as a threat to life goals. According to this rating scheme, 0 signifying no threat to goals and 5 representing a major threat to life goals. Please note that being a target of discrimination may prove a significant threat to life goals and oftentimes warrants a rating higher than 0. The following framework serves as a useful example when considering goal rating[12]:

0   The participant lost his or her job as part of a generally transient employment history.

1   A close friend or family member of the participant moves away.

2   A friend or family member of the participant, other than spouse, child, or parent, died.

3   The participant agreed to a romantic/marital separation or divorce.

4   The participant's parents were divorced, leaving a single custodial parent prior to age 16.

5   The participant's spouse or child dies prematurely; the participant was sentenced to 25+ years in prison.

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[11] Basic needs threat gradation framework cited directly from original text by Turner & Dohrenwend (2004)

[12] Goals threat gradation framework cited directly from original text by Turner & Dohrenwend (2004)

Section C: Magnitude

Magnitude involves the amount of change typically experienced by MOST PEOPLE who experience a particular event. The magnitude rating captures how much change occurs in a person's *daily or regular activities* as a direct result of experiencing an event. Daily activities refer to individual behaviors (e.g., sleeping, eating), family relations, work and non-work related social and leisure activities. Change consists of new things done as well as things no longer done.

- ❖ 0 = No change lasting a week or more
- ❖ 1 = A little change lasting a week or more
- ❖ 2 = A moderate amount of change lasting a week or more
- ❖ 3 = A large amount of change lasting a week or more
- ❖ 4 = An extreme amount of change lasting a week or more

Magnitude Rating Examples

0   The participant lost an uncle whom he or she did not know well.

1   The participant was over 18 and was living alone when parents divorced; the participant was finishing a job and starting a new one soon after.

2   The participant had to stay home from work for 1 month because of an injury; the participant parents divorced when he or she was over 18 but still living near them; the participant experienced financial loss of less than 50% of assets.

3   The participant divorced spouse; the participant's parents divorced when participant was under 18; the participant experienced financial loss of over 50% of assets.

4   The participant's intimate partner, parent, child, or significant other died.

- ❖ Magnitude is not a symptom for severity as traditionally conceived. For the purposes of this measure, severity is reflected by the magnitude rating in that severity is operationalized as the magnitude of change that an event produces in a participant's daily life activities.

- ❖ Emotional/psychological reactions of participants should not be taken into account when rating the magnitude of an event. For example, if a participant indicates that they experienced depression as a result of losing his or her job, raters should not consider depression as an indicator of magnitude.

❖ Events that are the natural result of another event should not be rated separately. Instead, the second event should be considered in the magnitude rating of the first event. If the second event is not a natural product of the first, rate it as a separate event. HOWEVER, if the events are rated separately, the second event cannot be considered in the magnitude of the first.

❖ The race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation of participants should not be considered when rating magnitude. The *only exception* to this is in the case of events that are related to prejudice or discrimination. This is to prevent comparison of minority group members only to other members of their group and not people of other groups.

❖ The magnitude rating is not to be derived from the participant's' description of the *actual results* of experiencing an event. Instead, the rating is to be based on the amount of change the rater would expect to occur as the result of the event occurring in the *situation defined by the narrative*. However, you can use the participant's' descriptions of the events to gauge how the *average person* would have been impacted.

Section D: Prejudice

Six dimensions related to discriminatory events were added to Dohrenwend's (2004) general dimensions described above for the purposes of *Project STRIDE:* motivation, involvement, type, environment/con-text, group/individual and reaction.[13]

<u>Motivation</u>

This subcategory attempts to capture to what degree the prejudice of an individual, group or institution motivated an event to happen. Although the most common examples of prejudice-motivated events are those that include prejudicial slurs, the verbalization of an epithet is not required for an event to be deemed motivated by prejudice. Certain circumstances may suggest that an event is indeed motivated in some part by prejudice despite the absence of verbal harassment. For example, if a black teenager is physically assaulted by a group of white teenagers in an all-white neighborhood with no reported provocation, it is realistic to assume that prejudice played a role in motivating this event. Another example is the use of overly excessive violence in usually non-violent crimes. If a gay couple is beaten and their wallets stolen in an alley right after participating in a demonstration for Pride Day, it is realistic to assume that prejudice played a role in motivating this event to occur. In some instances, the strict and/or differential application of a valid rule or law is a cue that prejudice might have motivated the event. For example, a group of black men were having drinks in the early evening at a downtown bar and wanted to get some dinner. Although the bar itself sold no food, the bartender recommended that the group order a pizza from a neighboring restaurant and have it sent to the bar, saying that "customers do it all the time". When the pizza arrived, however, the white owner of the bar told the black men that ordering outside food into the bar was not allowed, and kicked them out of the establishment. In this instance, strict and differential application of an often-broken rule serves as a cue for prejudice motivation.

- ❖   0 = Not at all motivated by prejudice
- ❖   1 = A little motivated by prejudice
- ❖   2 = Dually motivated by prejudice and another factor
- ❖   3 = Mostly motivated by prejudice
- ❖   4 = Completely motivated by prejudice

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[13] Meyer (2001); Meyer (2002); Meyer (2003)

Example

After disclosing his sexual orientation to a coworker, a participant was unexpectedly fired from his job as a waiter by a manager who explained to him: "We don't employ homos." This event 11: unemployment, would receive a prejudice: motivation score of 4.

Example

A participant got a new job at an office where employees who are late to work stay after hours to make up the time. Although lateness is technically frowned upon, many of the participant's coworkers are often late and stay after. After being hired, the participant was very open about her sexuality and relationship with her girlfriend. Most of her coworkers were friendly, but one of the participant's supervisors seemed hostile. After showing up to work late several times during her first month of employment, the participant was fired by the unfriendly supervisor, who cited repeated lateness as the cause of termination. Because a valid office policy was inconsistently used to justify the firing of a homosexual employee, this event 11: unemployment, was dually motivated by prejudice and an external influence, and thus would receive a prejudice motivation score of 2.

Example

A participant was frequently late to work at a job she was newly hired for. During the course of her employee orientation, the participant disclosed to her coworker that she was a lesbian. After two weeks' of consistent lateness, the participant was fired, with the cause cited as this lateness. Because the participant's disclosure of her sexual identity did not seem to instigate the firing, this event 11: unemployment, would receive a prejudice: motivation rating of 0.

<u>Involvement</u>

This subcategory captures whether or not prejudice was involved in an event, with 0 = no and 1 = yes. If an event is rated as prejudice: motivation 1, 2, 3, or 4, the event should also receive a prejudice: involvement rating of 1. An event that is not motivated by prejudice at all, however, may nevertheless involve prejudice, and thus warrant a rating of prejudice: involvement = 1.

- ❖ 0 = Does not involve prejudice
- ❖ 1 = Involves prejudice

Raters should note that just because a prejudicial epithet is used against a participant during an event does not mean that a prejudicial sentiment motivated the event to occur. Just as we saw above that prejudice-motivated events can occur without verbal harassment, non-prejudiced events can involve prejudicial slurs. See the example below for an illustration.

Example

A participant was arrested for underage drinking. While being transported to the police station, the arresting officer continually made ridiculing remarks, such as "You sure you're a girl? You don't look like a girl." For prejudice: involvement, this event would receive a score of 1 = yes. (Note: this event 29, being placed under arrest, would NOT be rated as motivated by prejudice, and thus receive a score of prejudice: motivation 0 = not at all).

<u>Type</u>

This subcategory defines what type of prejudice was implicated in an event. Raters may code more than one type of category, which range from 1 – 1 0:

- ❖ 1: Age
- ❖ 2: Race
- ❖ 3: Ethnicity
- ❖ 4: Gender
- ❖ 5: Religion
- ❖ 6: Sexual Orientation
- ❖ 7: Disability
- ❖ 8: Physical Appearance
- ❖ 8a: Physical Appearance: Gender non-congruent
- ❖ 9: Social Class/Income
- ❖ 10: Other

There are several prejudice-type categories that are often rated simultaneously. The most common of these are:

- ❖ In events motivated by racial and/or ethnic prejudice, type 2: race and 3: ethnicity are usually rated together under prejudice: type.

- ❖ Events motivated by prejudice towards sexual orientation and physical appearance often-times warrant a rating for 8a: physical appearance: gender non-congruent. Please note, however, that for an event to be rated for prejudice: type 8a, type 8 must be rated as well.

Example

A participant is in an unfamiliar neighborhood that is predominantly inhabited by people of a different ethnic background than the participant. While walking on the sidewalk, a young man throws an empty beer bottle at the participant and yells: "Get out of here, Spic!" For prejudice: type, this event 33, physical assault, would receive a score of 2: race and 3: ethnicity.

Example

A participant is continually verbally harassed at high school because of her sexual orientation and appearance. Classmates often taunt her, telling her that she "looks like a boy." For this example of chronic strain, the prejudice: type rating would be 6: sexual orientation, 8: physical appearance, and 8a: physical appearance: gender non-congruent.

Environment/Context

This subcategory describes the social environment of the participant during the event. Raters decide whether the participant's identity characteristic that was being discriminated against was shared by the majority or the minority of the people in the setting. It does not refer to the status of the participant's identity characteristic within overall society, e.g., being Hispanic is a racial minority; being gay is a sexual minority. Instead, this subcategory captures the specific surroundings of the participant at the time the event occurred. For example, a black woman employed at a pre-dominantly black non-profit organization was verbally harassed by her coworkers because she was a lesbian. In this example of an event 37, hate crime, we would rate the participant as being in the minority because the target of the prejudice – her sexual identity – was shared by the minority of people in the setting. Note that we do not take her race into account because it was not the target of discrimination.

- ❖ 0 = Majority
- ❖ 1 = Minority

Example

A participant is physically assaulted at a gay bar while being called a "dyke." For prejudice: envi-ronment/context, the participant would be coded as 0 = in the majority. This rating is given be-cause the majority of people at a gay bar are usually gay, and the participant herself was a lesbian. However, if the same event 33, physical assault, occurred to the same participant at a non-gay bar, for prejudice: environment/context, the participant would be coded as 1 = in the minority, as most people who visit non-gay bars are usually heterosexual.

<div align="center">Group/Individual</div>

This subcategory refers to whether the participant was singled out as a target of discrimination or was one of a group of people targeted by the discrimination event.

- ❖ 0 = Group
- ❖ 1 = Individual

Example

A participant and her girlfriend were physically assaulted on the sidewalk while being called "dykes." For prejudice: group/ individual, the participant would be coded as 0 = in a group. However, if the same event 33, physical assault, occurred to the participant while she was alone on the sidewalk, for prejudice: group/ individual, the event would be coded as 1 = individual.

<div align="center">Reaction</div>

This sub-category captures the response of the participant to the prejudice she or he experienced, as either passive or active. An active response to a discriminatory event may include reporting an incident at work to Human Resources, or filing a police report following a prejudice-motivated physical assault. Passive responses invoke a sense that the participant accepted the discrimination as a fact of life that cannot be challenged or changed.

- ❖ 0 = Passive response
- ❖ 1 = Active response

Example

A participant is physically assaulted on the street by an attacker who accused him of "dressing like a fag." After the assault, the participant files a complaint along with a police report against the at-tacker for this homophobic assault. For prejudice reaction, the participant would be coded as showing a 1, or active response. However, if the participant had done nothing in response to the discriminatory event, for prejudice reaction, the event would be coded as a 0, or passive response.

CHAPTER FOUR: LIFE EVENTS

Events with Exceptions or Special Contingencies

1. Have you ever been in the immediate area or place where a major natural disaster occurred such as a tornado, hurricane, earthquake, flood, or a cyclone? For example, have you been in a community when it was hit by a tornado, near the epicenter of an earthquake, or in a city that was in the path of a hurricane?

> ❖ For an event #1 to be coded, the person must have been so close to the disaster that he or she could have been killed or seriously harmed. If this is not the case, this event should not be coded.

2. What about accidental exposure to fires, explosions, or hazardous materials such as radiation or toxic chemicals?

> ❖ This event is meant to elicit experiences of fires on a large scale, not personal accidents. An apartment fire, for example, would not be classified as #2, but #1 5. A building fire resulting from a gas line explosion or a forest fire, however, would be appropriate.

3 – 5. These are events that have to do with being in or around military actions or battles.

> ❖ If a person experiences more than one or all of these events, rate only the event with the highest severity.

6. Have you ever been nearby where terrorist activity occurred, such as the WTC attack, or a bomb in a street, restaurant, theater or hotel? By "nearby" I mean close enough to be hurt or even killed?

> ❖ The main issue to take in to consideration when rating this event is whether or not the participant was in immediate danger of being killed. For example, in the case of the World Trade Center attacks, the immediate area is defined by approximately 10 blocks from the WTC. There could be other events that are code-able related to the WTC, however, if they do not involve an immediate threat of death they cannot be coded as #6.

8. Did you ever see a dead body or someone being badly injured up close?

9. Did you ever see atrocities or carnage such as mutilated bodies or mass killings?

- ❖ In order for these to be rated as events, they cannot be naturally occurring products of other events. For example, in the WTC attacks, witnessing carnage is directly related to the terrorist attack and will be included in the magnitude ratings of #6.
- ❖ Funerals and wakes do not count as events 8 and 9.
- ❖ Job exposure to dead bodies and carnage (e.g., mortician, ER doctor) can be coded, but should receive a lower magnitude.
- ❖ Purposefully being in the area of the event (e.g., a reporter covering an accident) can also be coded, however, it will receive a lower prelude rating.

10. Have you ever experienced a period where you slept in a park, abandoned building, the street, a train or bus, in a shelter for homeless people or in another temporary residence or with a friend or relative because you had no money to pay for rent?

- ❖ Homelessness can only be coded when participant does not have enough money for rent. For example, staying with friends or family after college graduation for a few months before finding an apartment should not be coded. This is true of any situation if the participant could afford to or was paying rent elsewhere.
- ❖ Raters should only rate the event of becoming homeless, not the length of time the person was homeless.

11. Have you ever been unemployed for four weeks or more when you were trying to get work?

- ❖ Taking a long vacation does not count as unemployment, such as traveling for a summer in Europe.
- ❖ If a person is trying to find a job, but is able to make money through self-employment (e.g., personal consulting) while looking for a job, this is not unemployment.
- ❖ If the job lost was part of a person's career it usually receives a higher rating in goals than a job that is not part of a career.

- ❖ Not getting a job when making an attempt to join the workforce (e.g., coming out of college, prison) also can be coded as an 11.
- ❖ Raters should only rate the event of becoming unemployed, not the length of time the per-son was without work.

12. Have you ever experienced serious financial difficulties such as a loss or failure of a business you owned, foreclosure or repossession of your home or property, or a loss or failure of income that made it difficult to afford basic necessities such as rent or that put you into great debt?

- ❖ The primary issue to consider in coding this event is whether or not the financial loss was serious enough to compromise participant's ability to afford basic necessities. If not, the event may be coded as #13 (Other financial loss that does not compromise ability to afford basic needs).

15. Did you ever have any accident such as fall or fire or an accident that was so serious you could have been seriously injured or killed?

- ❖ As noted above (#2) this event code applies to personal accidents, not accidental exposure to an event. An apartment fire would appropriately be classified as #1 5, but an act of arson or gas explosion causing an apartment fire would best be coded as event #2.

16: Have you ever had a life-threatening or disabling illness?

- ❖ This does not include mental illnesses
- ❖ Ratings depend on current disease prognoses. For example: Currently, with the availability of anti-retroviral drugs, a diagnosis of HIV should only receive a life threat of 1 or 2.

17: [Women only] Have you ever had a miscarriage or a stillbirth?

- ❖ Miscarriage refers to a spontaneous abortion that occurs under 5 months of age. Stillbirth refers to a full-term fetus being born dead. In other words, miscarriages and stillbirths are unintentional terminations of pregnancies.

- ❖ Abortion is the purposeful termination of a pregnancy, either due to personal choice or medical necessity, and should be coded under Event #1 9.
- ❖ A death of a newborn should be classified under "death of significant other" (# 26)

[Men and LGB Women only] Have you been in a relationship with a woman when she had a miscarriage or a stillbirth?

- ❖ *When* is the key word. The pregnancy does not have to be the participant's baby, but the miscarriage/stillbirth must have occurred when the participant was the partner of the woman.

18: [Women only] Did you ever have an unwanted or unintended pregnancy?

[Men and LGB Women only] Have you ever been in a relationship with a woman when she had an unwanted or unintended pregnancy?

- ❖ This is for pregnancies that were carried to term and were followed by a live birth
- ❖ *When* is the key word. The pregnancy does not have to be the participant's baby, but the miscarriage/stillbirth must have occurred when the participant was the partner of the woman. For example, if the participant's partner had an unwanted pregnancy before they began dating, it should not be coded. However, if the participant was dating someone who had an unwanted pregnancy, even if the child was not the participant's, it should be coded.

19: [Women only] Have you had an abortion?

[Men and LGB Women Only] Have you been in a relationship with a woman when she had an abortion?

- ❖ *When* is the key word. The pregnancy does not have to be the participant's, but the abortion must have occurred when the participant was the partner of the pregnant woman.
- ❖ The occurrence rating for voluntary abortions is usually 0 since the participant chose to have the abortion and therefore had immediate control over it occurring. In the case of medically necessary abortions, the occurrence rating would be higher since the participant did not have immediate control over the event occurring.

20: Did anything else significant happen related to your health?

- ❖ Examples include: chronic migraines, minor surgeries, broken bones. This does not include mental illnesses.

- ❖ This does not include mental illnesses. However, while mental illnesses of the participant should not be coded, mental illnesses often lead to events that can be coded, such as break-ups, accidents, etc. In these instances, a mental illness can be considered a prelude to an event, and would most often carry a low prelude rating.

- ❖ This is anything else not already discussed in # 14 (car accidents), # 1 5 (other accidents), and #16 (life-threatening/disabling illnesses).

23: Has a significant other been a victim of a <u>mental illness?</u>

- ❖ The illness must be diagnosed and/or treated.
- ❖ This includes a substance abuse/dependency that was diagnosed and/or treated.
- ❖ The mental illness cannot have been since the participant's birth. That is, there has to have been a specific age when the participant first became aware of the illness, or when it particularly worsened.
- ❖ If a mental illness of a significant other cannot be coded for reason such as it was not diag-nosed or treated, it may be appropriately rated as a "Chronic Strain".

24: Has a significant other been a victim of a serious crime?

- ❖ This includes domestic violence between a participant's parents. e.g., if the participant's father used to hit his mother, the mother was a victim of a serious crime.

- ❖ Other examples include: mugging, burglary, and physical abuse/assault.

26: Did a significant other die?

- ❖ Death of a parent during childhood should be coded as event #26 and NOT even #40.

- ❖ If in the participant's life, the same significant other had a physical illness and died, use the following guidelines to rate the category of the event:

a) If the death was a clear result of an illness, and occurred not too long after the illness, just rate the process as one event—death of significant other (26).

b) If however, the significant other in the participant's life had a long-term illness, which had it's own effects on the participant, and then died after, then rate the two events (the illness = 22, and the death = 26) separately, because they each have their own centrality and magnitude ratings.

28: Have you ever experienced a theft, such as <u>identity theft</u> (when your credit card was used by someone who didn't have permission to use it, or <u>burglary</u> (where your house or property was broken into, or other theft of your valuable personal belongings, such as a car or expensive jewelry?

❖ This includes muggings. Note: It the participant was attacked on the street, and the attacker took, or attempted to take the participant's belongings (e.g. watch, cell phone, etc.), and it appears that the "belongings" were the attackers main motivation for the assault, the event should be rated as a #28 rather than a #33. The extent of the physical assault should be captured in the magnitude rating.

Events 29-32: If one event fits into more than one category, only code it under one event number. Always code the most severe (the highest) event #. For example, if a participant was brought before a judge, they must have been arrested and booked, but you code the event only as #31, rather than #29, 30 and 31.

29: Have you ever been arrested?

❖ The police told participant that he or she was under arrest and was read his or her rights.

30: Were you booked?

❖ Participant was finger printed and his or her photo was taken. If the participant spent any amount of time in a jail cell, he or she was booked and finger printed.

31: Were you brought before a judge and charged with a crime?

❖ Even if the charges were dropped by the judge or they pleaded non-guilty and won.

32: Have you ever been convicted or a crime?

❖ Participant pleaded or was found guilty. Participant was given a sentence.

33. Since age 18, has anyone ever been physically violent or threatened you with physical violence, such as getting hit, shoved, kicked, choked, or hit with an object, knife or gun? *This includes domestic violence and violent behaviors between individuals in an intimate relationship. This does not include physical violence during any kind of attack, mugging, or armed robbery that was already discussed.*

❖ This rating category includes all acts of violence between individuals – including domestic violence – that occurred when the participant was age 1 8 or older, AS WELL as threats of violence.

❖ This category does NOT apply to violence that occurs during any other attack, mugging or robbery that was previously rated.

34 & 35. Since age 18, has anyone ever forced you into a sexual encounter such as oral, anal, or vaginal sex? If YES, When this happened, did the person penetrate your body with a penis, a finger, or an object such as a bottle or a broom handle?

❖ This rating category refers to a rape that occurred when the participant was age 1 8 or older.

❖ Exceptions include Events that occurred before age 18, by someone not entrusted to the participant's care.

❖ Event #35 is not a rating category, but an interviewer-prompt. If someone responds to both 34 and 35, rate it as event #34.

❖ For event #35, "force" is not necessarily physical, but may involve coercing the respondent, as in sexual coercion between a supervisor and an employee.

36. [If YES to Rape, say "Other than that . . ."] Since age 18, has anyone ever fondled or touched your sexual parts (e.g., breasts, vagina, penis, anus), or forced you to touch their sexual parts, against your will?

- ❖ Please note that this rating category is differentiated from Event 34 in that it focuses on fondling, touching and attempted rape, as opposed to rape or penetration.

37. Have you ever been the target of a crime involving destruction of your property, or trespassing such as cross burning, or other vandalism that was motivated by your race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, physical disability, gender, sexual orientation, or personal appearance?

- ❖ It does NOT refer to acts of interpersonal violence, which are captured under events 33, 41, and 51, and acts of sexual violence, which are captured under events 34, 36, and 42.
- ❖ Please note that this rating category is NOT identical to the legal definition of hate crime.

38. Have you experienced any other significant crimes aside from those we have talked about?

- ❖ Please note that this refers to other crimes *not threatening to life or physical integrity*. For example: vandalism not motivated by prejudice, "peeping tom," or being "flashed."

40. When you were growing up, at any time did you <u>not</u> live in a household with both parents?

- ❖ There is never an age range for event 40 – the age at which the participant was separated from his or her parents is the discrete age that the event took place.
- ❖ If there are multiple separations from parents spanning the course of several years, each separation should be rated as a unique event. For example, if a participant lived with both parents until age 5, when his mother and father divorced and his father moved out of the home, this would warrant a rating for event 40, separation from father, age 5. If then, five

years later, the court granted the participant's grandmother custody of the participant, and he moved out of his mother's home and into his grandmother's home, this would warrant a rating for event 40, separation from mother, age 1 0.

- ❖ Contrary to the Life Events Questionnaire, event 40 does NOT include the death of a parent. Death of a parent should always be rated under event 26, death of a significant other.

- ❖ Abandonment by one or both parents before birth does not qualify as event 40; instead, it could meet criteria for chronic strain.

- ❖ Please note that "parent" means "primary caregiver" and is not restricted to the participant's biological mother and/or father.

41. Before age 18, did anyone ever hit you so hard that it left bruises or marks, punish you with a belt, board, cord, or other hard object, or hit you so hard you had to go to see a doctor or go to the hospital?

- ❖ This category refers to abuse that occurred before the participant was age 1 8, by someone responsible for the participant's' care, such as a parent or family member.

- ❖ Even though the term "abuse" implied chronicity, this could be a one-time occurrence.

42. Before age 18, did anyone who was responsible for your care such as a parent, caregiver, or babysitter—or someone else who was at least 5 years older than you—ever touch your sexual parts (by that I mean, your [vagina], [penis], anus, or [breasts]), make you touch their sexual parts, or make you watch sexual things?

- ❖ This category refers to sexual assault that occurred before the participant was age 1 8, by someone responsible for the participant's care.

- ❖ Exceptions include events that occurred before age 18, by someone not responsible for the participant's care.

The following two categories (43 & 44) should be used as "last resort" options. In other words, they should only be coded when an event absolutely does not fit into a more descriptive event category:

43. Has anything else happened in your childhood that led to significant changes in your life?

- ❖ Includes events that occurred before the age of 1 8.

44. Were there any important events that occurred over your lifetime that led to significant changes in your life (other than the events we have already discussed)?

- ❖ Please note that this category is differentiated from event 43 by AGE. Only those events that occurred after the age of 1 8 can be rated as event 43.

51. Before age 18, has anyone under 18 ever been physically violent or threatened you with physical violence, such as getting hit, shoved, kicked, choked, or hit with an object, knife or gun? The assailant must have been less than 5 years older than the participant, and NOT responsible for that participant's care.

- ❖ Please note that this is a rating category only, and is not asked explicitly by interviewers
- ❖ Child Physical Assault is differentiated from event 41 in that the assault is by someone less than 5 years older that the participant who is NOT a caregiver.

52. Have you ever been the target of harassment including name calling, labeling, and racial or other derogatory epithets that were motivated by your race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, physical disability, gender, sexual orientation, or physical appearance?

- ❖ Please note that this event does not include physical violence or the threat of physical violence.
- ❖ In general, this event will have a magnitude of 0, except in certain circumstances.
    - o Example: "I was teased by kids in the locker room so I had to change my clothes for gym in the principal's office.

Last-Minute Tips about Teasing Apart Events

❖ How many events are there? Is there one event that would be best understood if it is separated into two events? Conversely, are there any two (or more) events that could actually be condensed into one event?

Know the rules about prelude and magnitude:

❖ An event that served as the prelude to another event can be rated separately as its own unique event.

❖ Events that occurred as the direct result of another event, however, are captured in the magnitude rating of that event.

Example

A participant was involved in a war. As a result of his military position, he experienced battles and witnessed people being injured and in some cases killed in the course of fighting. Because injury and death are "natural" outcomes of warfare, this event would be rated only as Event 3 – Have you ever fought in a war, a military action, a revolution, or other hostilities? – NOT as both Events 3 and 8 – Did you ever see a dead body or someone being badly injured up close?

Example

A 20 year-old newlywed participant had an unintended pregnancy. Although she wanted to keep the baby, her partner pressured her often about having an abortion, and claimed that he would not provide financial or emotional support for the baby. The participant ended the relationship and filed for a divorce from her spouse. Although a break-up of a relationship might seem to be a likely result of arguing about who will provide support for a baby, the dissolution of a marriage is a severe Event that should not be missed or subsumed by another Event. Therefore, this experience is best coded as two separate events: Event 18 – Unwanted or unintended pregnancy, AND Event 21 – Break-up of marriage/love affair.

What NOT to Rate

❖ **Relocating** or emigrating from another country.

❖ **Mental health events** - this includes diagnosis, hospitalization, suicide attempts, treatments, and rehabilitation. However, certain events that have a distal relationship with a mental health condition may be rated. For example, a depressed participant who was fired due to frequent absences from work would still be rated for event #11 – unemployment.

❖ **Events that occurred "since birth"** – e.g., "My mother had a teen pregnancy and I was raised from birth by my grandparents."

❖ **Positive, neutral, or general life events,** such as getting married, going to college or getting a job.

❖ **Any events that are a direct result of a job, career or employment situation** that was chosen by the participant. For example, a paramedic would not be rated for event #8- having witnessed someone getting injured or killed up close, because this is a feature of his or her chosen job.

❖ **Events that occurred to a significant other before this person was a member of the participant's social network.** For example, "My current girlfriend was raped by a stranger when she was 14" should not be rated as event #23.

Reminders

❖ Any robberies or muggings involving the use of physical force, threats, or violence should be coded under event #33 – adult physical assault. For example, being robbed in your home at gunpoint is considered an event #33.

❖ Any theft or burglaries that do not involve the use of physical force, threats, or violence should be coded under event #28. For example, coming home from work and finding that your house has been burglarized should be rated as an event #28.

❖ House or apartment fires should be rated as event #15 – NOT event #2, which is reserved for large-scale more widespread fires, such as forest fires.

❖ Age ranges are reserved for repetitive events, such as frequent childhood abuse, NOT for chronic events, such as homelessness or a diagnosis of diabetes.

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Additional Resources

Consensus Stress Meeting, March 3, 2005

Consensus Stress Meeting, February 3, 2005

Consensus Stress Meeting, January 6, 2005

Consensus Stress Meeting, December 2, 2004

Consensus Stress Meeting, November 18, 2004

Consensus Stress Meeting, November 4, 2004

Consensus Stress Meeting, October 12, 2004

Consensus Stress Meeting, September 10, 2004

Short Lists for the Anchors

<u>Source</u>

- ❖ 0 = Completely determined by the participant's behavior

- ❖ 1 = Mostly determined by the participant's behavior

- ❖ 2 = Equally determined by the participant's behavior and external circumstances

- ❖ 3 = Mostly determined by external circumstances

- ❖ 4 = Completely determined by external circumstances

Prelude

0   The participant knowingly did not pay rent which resulted in them being evicted from his or her home.

1   The participant was the main decision maker regarding the abortion, but took into consideration other influences (e.g. against the desire of her partner).

2   The participant was a fairly attractive/qualified job candidate who was fairly consistent/serious with their job search, but was still not able to find employment.

3   The participant dropped out of high school under the strong influence of people or other factors (e.g., the necessity to earn money for the family, take care of an ill relative, etc.)

4   The respondent was looking out his or her window, and witnessed someone being shot.

Occurrence

0   The participant dropped out of high school; the participant had an abortion.

1   The participant cheated on his or her partner and then ended the relationship.

2   The participant slipped and fell on black ice.

3   The participant was left by his or her partner.

4   The participant's town was struck by a tornado; the participant's mother was diagnosed with breast cancer.

<u>Centrality</u>

- ❖ 0 = No chance of threat

- ❖ 1 = Threat not likely, but possible

- ❖ 2 = Threat possible

- ❖ 3 = Probability of serious threat is at least 50%.

- ❖ 4 = Substantial probability of serious threat

- ❖ 5 = Threat is certain and great.

Threat to Life

0   The participant was involved in a "fender bender" – a minor car accident.

1   The participant was a victim of rape with coercive but not deadly force.

2   The participant was diagnosed with HIV/AIDS or was within moderate proximity to a natural disaster (i.e. within 50 miles of the Chernobyl explosion).

3   The participant was a victim of rape without the use of a weapon but with coercive and deadly force.

4   The participant was involved in an assault brandishing a deadly weapon during the case of a robbery or rape.

5   The participant was involved in a head-on highway collusion or was diagnosed with a lethal illness.

Threat to Physical Integrity

0   The participant was slapped during a fight.

1   The participant experienced temporary and limited loss of mobility or was involved in an accident leaving superficial bruises.

2   The participant was involved in a sporting accident that led to a concussion.

3   The participant underwent invasive surgical treatment.

4   The participant was mugged by an assailant wielding a knife.

5   The participant was involved in an accident threatening loss of sight or physical mobility.

Threat to Basic Needs

0   The participant lost a job that did not affect his/her ability to access basic needs.

1   The primary household wage earner abandoned participant or lost his/her job.

2   The participant was living in a shelter or was homeless but could still access food.

3   The participant was living in a shelter or was homeless and had no way of accessing food.

4   The participant was living near a large natural or man-made disaster that compromised food or shelter (but not both).

5   The participant was living near a large natural or man-made disaster that destroyed the participant's home and compromised food and water leaving no alternative options.

Threat to Goals

0   The participant lost his or her job as part of a generally transient employment history.

1   A close friend or family member of the participant moves away.

2   A friend or family member of the participant, other than spouse, child, or parent, died.

3   The participant agreed to a romantic/marital separation or divorce.

4   The participant's parents were divorced, leaving a single custodial parent prior to age 16.

5   The participant's spouse or child dies prematurely; the participant was sentenced to 25+ years in prison.

<div align="center">Magnitude</div>

- ❖ 0 = No change lasting a week or more

- ❖ 1 = A little change lasting a week or more

- ❖ 2 = A moderate amount of change lasting a week or more

- ❖ 3 = A large amount of change lasting a week or more

- ❖ 4 = An extreme amount of change lasting a week or more

Magnitude

0   The participant lost an uncle whom he or she did not know well.

1   The participant was over 18 and was living alone when parents divorced; the participant was finishing a job and starting a new one soon after.

2   The participant had to stay home from work for 1 month because of an injury; the participant parents divorced when he or she was over 18 but still living near them; the participant experienced financial loss of less than 50% of assets.

3   The participant divorced spouse; the participant's parents divorced when participant was under 18; the participant experienced financial loss of over 50% of assets.

4   The participant's intimate partner, parent, child, or significant other died.

Motivation

- ❖ 0 = Not at all motivated by prejudice

- ❖ 1 = A little motivated by prejudice

- ❖ 2 = Dually motivated by prejudice and another factor

- ❖ 3 = Mostly motivated by prejudice

- ❖ 4 = Completely motivated by prejudice

Involvement

- ❖ 0 = Does not involve prejudice

- ❖ 1 = Involves prejudice

Type

1	Age	6	Sexual orientation
2	Race	7	Disability
3	Ethnicity	8	Physical appearance
4	Gender	8a	Physical appearance: Gender non-congruent
5	Religion	9	Social class/income level
		10	Other

Environment/Context

- ❖ 0 = Majority

- ❖ 1 = Minority

Group/Individual

- ❖ 0 = Group

- ❖ 1 = Individual

Reaction

- ❖ 0 = Passive response

- ❖ 1 = Active response

Life Events Questionnaire

I will start with questions about extreme situations – those are events or situations that don't happen often or to everyone, such as a hurricane or a terrorist attack. I am referring to events that may have placed you at great danger of being severely hurt or injured or killed.

Natural and man-made disaster   1. Have you ever been in the immediate area or place where a major natural disaster occurred such as a tornado, hurricane, earthquake, flood, or a cyclone? For example, have you been in a community when it was hit by a tornado, near the epicenter of an earthquake, or in a city that was in the path of a hurricane?
2. What about accidental exposure to fires, explosions, or hazardous materials such as radiation or toxic chemicals?
War-zone event   3. Have you ever fought in a war, a military action, a revolution, or other hostilities?
3a. If YES to 3: Were you ever in a battle where you or your group was shot at or received fire from the enemy?
3b. If NO to 3a: Did you have any other life threatening experiences while in a war, a military action, a revolution, or other hostilities?
4. As a civilian or non-combatant, did you ever live or work in a place where a war, a military action, a revolution, or other hostilities were going on?
4a. If YES to 4: Did you have any life threatening experiences while there, such as being shot at?
5. Did you ever flee from your home to a foreign country or place to escape danger or persecution or were you kidnapped or held captive?
Terrorist attacks   6. Have you ever been nearby where terrorist activity occurred, such as the WTC attack, or a bomb in a street, restaurant, theater or hotel? By "nearby" I mean close enough to be hurt or even killed?
Other   7. Have you ever had any other situation where you were in danger of being seriously injured or being killed?
Witnessing   8. Did you ever see a dead body or someone being badly injured up close?
9. Did you ever see atrocities or carnage such as mutilated bodies or mass killings?

The next few questions talk about financial events that may have happened to you.

Homelessness   10. Have you ever experienced a period where you slept in a park, abandoned building, the street, a train or bus, in a shelter for homeless people or in another temporary residence or with a friend or relative because you had no money to pay for rent?
Job loss/unemployment   11. Have you ever been unemployed for four weeks or more when you were trying to get work?

Financial and/or business loss

12. Have you ever experienced serious financial difficulties such as a loss or failure of a business you owned, or foreclosure or repossession of your home or property, or a loss of income that made it difficult to afford basic necessities such as rent or that put you into great debt?

Other

13. Has anything else significant happened that caused you considerable financial loss?

Now I am going to ask you about issues related to health, I also include here a few questions related to childbirth.

Accident

14. Were you ever in a motor vehicle accident that was so serious that you could have been seriously injured or even killed?

15. Did you ever have any accident such as fall or fire or an accident that was so serious you could have been seriously injured or killed?

Physical Illness

16. Have you ever had a life-threatening or disabling illness?

Miscarriage

17. [Ask Women Only] Have you had a miscarriage or a stillbirth?

[Ask Men and LGB Women Only] Have you been in a relationship with a woman when she had a miscarriage or a stillbirth?

Miscarriage refers to a spontaneous abortion. Stillbirth refers to a baby being born dead. A death of a baby after birth should be classified under "death of a significant other" below #26.

Abortion

19. [Ask Women Only] Have you had an abortion?

[Ask Men and LGB Women Only] Have you been in a relationship with a women when she had an abortion?

18. [Ask Women Only] Did you ever have an unwanted or unintended pregnancy (that we haven't already discussed)?

[Ask Men and LGB Women Only] Have you ever been in a relationship with a woman when she had an unwanted or unintended pregnancy (that we haven't already discussed)?

Other

20. Did anything else significant happen related to your health (other than what was discussed)?

The next questions are about family and friends.

Marital separation/divorce, ending a love affair

21. Did you ever live with someone as a couple and that relationship ended in separation or divorce? This includes a boyfriend, girlfriend, domestic partner, spouse, or husband or wife who you lived with.

I'll now ask about events that may have happened to or in relation to a <u>significant other</u>; by that I mean your partner or spouse, boyfriend or girlfriend, an immediate family member, a very close friend with whom you had regular contact, or someone else you depended on or confided in. This also includes your child or a child you were raising.

22. Did any significant other ever have a life-threatening or a disabling <u>physical illness or injury?</u>

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23. How about a <u>mental illness</u>? Was [significant other] told by a doctor that he/she has a mental disorder, or was he/she treated for a mental disorder? *(This includes substance abuse/dependency that was diagnosed and/or treated).*

24. Has a significant other been a victim of a serious crime?

25. Has a significant other ever been <u>kidnapped, tortured or raped</u>?[other than crimes already mentioned in previous question].

26. Did a significant other <u>die</u>?

If YES
26a. Who was the person [s]?
26b. How old was she/he when died?
26c. Was this death sudden?

Other significant other
27. Did anything happen to a significant other that caused significant changes in your own life?

The next section asks about events related to crime.

Victim of theft

28. Have you ever experienced theft, such as <u>identity theft</u>, when your credit card was used by someone who didn't have permission to use it, or <u>burglary</u>, where your house or property was broken into, or other theft of your valuable <u>personal belongings</u>, such as a car or expensive jewelry?

Getting arrested
29. Have you ever been arrested? That is, you were told by the police that you are under arrest and were read your rights? [If no skip to Q. 33]

30. Were you booked? By that I mean that you were finger printed and your photo was taken.

31. Were you brought before a judge and charged with a crime?

32. Have you ever been convicted of a crime? That is you pleaded or were found guilty.

If YES:
32a. Was this a felony or a misdemeanor?

32b. What was your sentence?

The next questions are about physical assault and sexual violence.

Adult Physical Assault

33. Since age 18, has anyone ever been physically violent or threatened you with physical violence, such as getting hit, shoved, kicked, choked, or hit with an object, knife or gun?

This includes domestic violence and violent behaviors between individuals in an intimate relationship. This does not include physical violence during any kind of attack, mugging, or armed robbery that was already discussed.

Rape and attempted rape

34. Since age 18, has anyone ever forced you into a sexual encounter such as oral, anal, or vaginal sex?

If YES

35. When this happened, did the person penetrate your body with a penis, a finger, or an object such as a bottle or a broom handle?

Adult Sexual Assault

36. [If YES to Rape or Attempted Rape, say "Other than that..."] Since age 18, has anyone ever fondled or touched your sexual parts (e.g., breasts, vagina, penis, anus), or forced you to touch their sexual parts, against your will?

Child Physical Abuse

41. Before age 18, did anyone ever hit you so hard that it left bruises or marks, punish you with a belt, board, cord, or other hard object, or hit you so hard you had to go to see a doctor or go to the hospital?

Child Sexual Abuse/Child Sexual Assault

42. Before age 18, did anyone who was responsible for your care such as a parent, caregiver, or babysitter—or someone else who was at least 5 years older than you—ever touch your sexual parts (by that I mean, your [vagina], [penis], anus, or (breasts)), make you touch their sexual parts, or make you watch sexual things?

Vandalism

37. Have you ever been the target of a crime involving destruction of your property, or trespassing such as cross burning, or other vandalism that was motivated by your race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, physical disability, gender, sexual orientation, or personal appearance?

Harassment

52. Have you ever been the target of harassment including name calling, labeling, and racial or other derogatory epithets that were motivated by your race, color, religion the target of, national origin or ancestry, physical disability, gender, sexual orientation, or physical appearance?

Other crimes not threatening to life or physical integrity

38. Have you experienced any other significant crimes aside from those we have talked about?

The last section asks about events that happened when you were growing up.

Dropping out of school

39. Did you drop out of high school, by that I mean leaving school before you received your high school diploma?

"Dropping out" refers to someone who left school before getting a high school diploma, regardless of whether or not they later obtained a GED. This includes leaving school because of expulsion, dismissal, and feeling unable to complete coursework or pushed out of school. But doesn't include taking time off with the expectation of returning to school at a later time.

Separation from parents during childhood

40. When you were growing up, at any time did you not live in a household with both parents?

If YES: What happened to [Parent or Parents]?

This includes parents who separated or divorced, death of a parent, parent abandoned home, etc.

Child Physical Assault

51. Before age 18, has anyone under 18 ever been physically violent or threatened you with physical violence, such as getting hit, shoved, kicked, choked, or hit with an object, knife or gun?

Other childhood

43. Has anything else happened in your childhood that led to significant changes in your life?

Other

44. Were there any important events that occurred over your lifetime that led to significant changes in your life (other than the events we have already discussed)?

<u>Memo: Decision on Stressful life Events Coding (4/14/06)</u>

The group decided to recode the events for analysis in the following ways:

<u>FATEFULNESS:</u>

A new variable was created: *Fatefulness*

An event is *Fateful* if: *Prelude* = 3 or 4 <u>AND</u> *Occurrence* = 3 or 4
An event is *not Fateful* if: *Prelude* = 0, 1, or 2 <u>OR</u> *Occurrence* = 0, 1, or 2

Two existing variables were recoded:

Magnitude (r)

Large = 3 or 4
Medium = 2
Small = 0 or 1

Centrality (r)

Large = 4 or 5
Medium = 3
Small = 0, 1, or 2

<u>SIZE:</u>

A new variable was created from a combination of *Magnitude (r)* and *Centrality (r)*: *Size*

Three levels of the new *Size* variable were created:
Large (L)
Medium (M)
and Small (S)

The table below shows the criteria for distinguishing between the *Size* of events:

Magnitude(r)		*Centrality(r)*		
		Large	Medium	Small
	Large	L	M	S
	Medium	M	M	S
	Small	S	S	S

Stressful Life Events Data
Guide to Cleaning & Manipulation
Last Updated: April 21, 2006

Cleaning and resolving the data of any errors and discrepancies is accomplished by running two pieces of syntax. They are located in the following directory, along with this document:

PROJECT-STRIDE-DATA\LIFE EVENTS\SYNTAX for CLEANING and RESOLUTION

-------CLEANING-------

In order to clean the data of any data entry errors, it is necessary to replace errors in the original A and B rater databases with the errors tracked in the consensus database. This involves several steps completed by one piece of syntax. That syntax, located in the directory specified above, is called:

"Clean Time 1 Events.sps"

This piece of syntax accomplishes the following tasks:

(a) Merges Rater A and Rater B Original Data Sets

(b) Selects only data entry errors in the consensus database and restructures that file to multivariate format

(c) Merges the newly structured error data to the merged A and B rater data set

(d) Cleans the A and B ratings of data entry errors by matching each event on critical criteria (i.e., event type, age start, age end, a rating as entered, and b rating as entered. If the criteria match, the syntax replaces the incorrect rating with the correct rating.

(e) Re-averages the dimensions

(e) Creates and saves a new dataset called "merged raters (CLEANED)" that is free of errors in the following directory:

P:\PROJECT-STRIDE-DATA\LIFE EVENTS\Time 1\Databases\Working Files

NOTE: Although this file is created mainly as a stepping stone to the final dataset that will be cleaned of errors and discrepancies, it can be used to gauge what the data is like pre-resolution (e.g., reliability).

-------RESOLUTION-------

Now that the data have been cleaned of errors, it is possible to replace the average scores of discrepant ratings with the new ratings agreed upon at resolution meetings. This requires running the second piece of syntax in the directory mentioned above. That syntax is called:

"Resolve Time 1 Events.sps"

This syntax accomplishes the following tasks:

(a) Returns to the consensus data and selects only rating resolutions

(b) Data are restructured into multivariate format

(c) Merges discrepancies into the newly created cleaned dataset

(d) Average ratings on all of the dimensions are replaced by resolved ratings by matching each event on critical criteria (i.e., event type, age start, age end, a rating as entered or b rating as entered. If the criteria match, the syntax replaces the previous averages with the new resolved rating.

(e) Creates and saves a new data set called "FINAL T1 Stress Data (Cleaned & Resolved)" that is free of errors and reflects discrepancy resolution in the following directory:

P:\PROJECT-STRIDE-DATA\LIFE EVENTS\FINAL DATA - CLEANED & RESOLVED

NOTE: This is the file that all subsequent analyses should be run on.

Please note that it is **extremely important** that the directories in the life events data folder **are not changed**. This will prevent the syntax from running properly. Also, do not make any modifications to the syntax files themselves as they exist on the directory. If you would like to make changes, please copy them to your personal directory before you do so.