**Perceived Stress Scale**

What is PSS

The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) helps to us understand how different situations affect our feelings and our perceived stress. This is an adapted instrument from assessment developed in 1983 by Sheldon Cohen. the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) is the most widely used psychological instrument for measuring the perception of stress. It is a measure of the degree to which situations in one's life are appraised as stressful. It is a classic stress assessment instrument.

Introduction

The items i.e. the questions in this scale are about your feelings and thoughts during the last month. In each case, you will be asked to indicate how often you felt or thought a certain way. Although some of the questions are similar, there are differences between them and you should treat each one as a separate question. The best approach is to answer fairly quickly and don’t second guess yourself. For each situation think about your predominant reaction.

For each question choose from the following alternatives:

0 – never

1 - almost never

2 - sometimes

3 - fairly often

4 - very often

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

Figuring Your PSS Score

You can determine your PSS score by following these directions:

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

this: 0 = 4, 1 = 3, 2 = 2, 3 = 1, 4 = 0.

• Now add up your scores for each item to get a total. My total score is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

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

stress.

► Scores ranging from 0-13 would be considered **low perceived stress.**

► Scores ranging from 14-26 would be considered **moderate perceived stress**.

► Scores ranging from 27-40 would be considered **high perceived stress**.

The Perceived Stress Scale is interesting and important because your perception of what is happening

in your life is most important. Consider the idea that two individuals could have the exact same events

and experiences in their lives for the past month. Depending on their perception, total score could put

one of those individuals in the low stress category and the total score could put the second person in

the high stress category.

Disclaimer: The scores on the following self-assessment do not reflect any particular diagnosis or course of treatment.