

Adverse Childhood Experiences versus Positive Childhood Experiences

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Adverse childhood experiences test.

- 1 Did a parent or other adult in your household swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you in front of others? __
- 2 Did a parent or other adult in your household often push, grab, slap, or throw something at you for something you did? __
- 3 Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever touch or fondle you, or have you touch their body, in a sexual way? __
- 4 Did you feel that no one in your family loved you, or they treated your goals as foolish and disparaged your successes? __
- 5 Did you often feel that you didn't have enough to eat, or had to wear dirty clothes, or your parents were too troubled to take care of you? __
- 6 Did your parents separate or divorce before you were 18? __
- 7 Was your guardian often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at them, or ever threatened with a weapon? __
- 8 Did you live with anyone who often got drunk or who used street drugs to cope with their problems? __
- 9 Was a household member depressed, mentally ill, or suicidal? __
- 10 Did a household member ever go to prison? __

Add up your "Yes" answers ____ That is your ACE score

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE test) has proven to be a good predictor of adult behavior. One can quickly estimate their ACE score by answering the ten YES or NO questions above. Adults who have low scores (0-2) generally don't have serious social problems, but those with high scores (5-10) do. Adults have had little control over their childhood experiences, but they do have some control over their adult behavior. It does require effort and intentionally maintaining a positive goal orientation by high ACE scorers to succeed, but they can become successful people. Those with low scores can be happy adults with a little effort by simply avoiding socially unpleasant situations. The lucky ones are those who have low ACE scores and high Positive Childhood Experiences (PCE). In your daily life you can suppress ACE-like activities in yourself and in others and support the positive PCE ones.

These questions are derived from - <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/>

Positive childhood experiences test.

- 1 Did a parent or other adult in your household often praise you for your real accomplishments, and sometimes in front of other people? __
- 2 Did a parent or other adult sometimes give you special gifts or other unexpected honors for things you did? __
- 3 Did an adult or other person 5 years older than you ever give you responsibility to perform important and potentially costly actions? __
- 4 Did you always feel that your family members loved you, acknowledged your efforts and successes and said that you were productive? __
- 5 Did you always feel that you had plenty to eat, clean clothes available, a safe home, and someone to protect you if necessary? __
- 6 Were your parents always eagerly supporting each other and you? __
- 7 Was your guardian always safe and secure and would they defend your rights against other people who might try to bully you? __
- 8 Did any adult you lived with purposefully solve family problems with organized discussions, where you had a personal time to speak? __
- 9 Did anyone you lived with work in volunteer programs? __
- 10 Did a household member ever receive a public-sponsored award? __

Add up your "Yes" answers ____ This is your PCE score. PCE - ACE = ____

The Positive Childhood Experience test is a flip of the Adverse Childhood Experience test. It would seem reasonable to assume the positive effects of a positive childhood would bring about a comfortable and productive adult life. It would also seem reasonable to avoid the negative ACE acts and promote the PCE ones. We may not be able to change our childhood experiences, but we can change our personal adult ones, and our children's scores. We can avoid high ACE situations and seek people who have high PCE scores and behaviors for our friends and for our children's friends. Of course many of the most successful people score poorly on these quizzes, and they may be the most valuable friends of all, because they learned how to cope with the most difficult of life's problems.

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