

The StepForward Practice – overcoming childhood trauma & abuse



“Take a step forward everyday – no matter how small”

Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Questionnaire Finding your ACE Score

While you were growing up, during your first 18 years of life:

- * Did a parent, other person (in the household or at school) **often** ...
Swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you?
or
Act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?
If yes enter 1 _____
- * Did a parent, other person (in the household or at school) **often** ...
Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you?
or
Ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?
If yes enter 1 _____
- * Did an adult or person at least older than you **ever**...
Touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way?
or
Try to or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal sex with you?
If yes enter 1 _____
- * Did you **often** feel that -
No one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special?
or
Your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?
If yes enter 1 _____
- * Did you **often** feel that -
You didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you?
or
Your parents/carers were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?
If yes enter 1 _____

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- * Was an adult or sibling in your household -
Often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at them?
Sometimes or often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard?
or
repeatedly hit for at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?

If yes enter 1 _____

- * Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic or who used street drugs?

If yes enter 1 _____

- * Was a household member depressed or mentally ill or did a household member attempt suicide?

If yes enter 1 _____

- * Were you a “looked after child” by someone other than both birth parents:
By another family member, boarding school, care home, fostered or adopted?
Did either parent spend time away in prison?
- * Were your parents **ever** separated or divorced?
or
Did either parent work away from home for long periods or live in another country?

Have you lost a parent, sibling or close person through bereavement or suicide?

If yes enter 1 _____

Now add up your “Yes” answers: _____ This is your ACE Score

These questions are based on the original ACE score by Drs. Vincent Felitti and Robert Anda, co-founders of the ACE Study

Trauma comes in many forms of experience — racism, bullying, watching a sibling being abused, losing a caregiver (grandmother, mother, grandfather, etc.), homelessness, surviving and recovering from a

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severe accident, witnessing a father being abused by a mother, witnessing a grandmother abusing a father, involvement with the foster care system, involvement with the juvenile justice system, etc.

The original ACE Study included only 10 childhood traumas based on those mentioned as most common by a group of about 300 Kaiser members; those traumas were also well studied individually in the research literature and I have updated them.

The most important thing to remember is that the ACE score is meant as a guideline:

As an Adult if you experienced other types of toxic stress over months or years, then those would likely increase your risk of health consequences especially following relationship breakdowns, separation, divorce, having a stressful job, over working, depression and lack of self-care.

What are the next steps?

Looking at your physical wellbeing is important as we often self-medicate to cope with stress and to cope with physical or emotional pain such as shame or guilt. Are you -

- * using alcohol or drugs (including paracetamol or ibuprofen) regularly or excessively?
- * Over eating –or not having time to eat?
- * Not sleeping well and constantly tired – fatigued?
- * Shopping excessively?
- * Always keeping busy – feeling overwhelmed?
- * Craving sugar and sweets including chocolate?
- * Smoking?
- * Regularly feeling ill with viruses or run down?
- * Constantly wearing a mask and pleasing others before yourself?

By being aware of where we are now – you can take practical steps with coaching, to change this by understanding how your body is reacting on a day to day basis and how you can overcome this and balance your emotions and physical reactions for a balanced life, business and Wellbeing.

By setting short term and longer steps where you want to make changes – enables you to create the time for yourself and achieve the balance and feeling of overcoming the negative feelings inside and replace them with positive feelings and living with energy, freedom and adventure how you choose.

Recovery and healing is when we are able to acknowledge how we feel physically, mentally and emotionally and be able to ask ourselves what we need or want to feel loved and nurtured by ourself. Self care is an important part of self nurture and is the greatest gift that we give ourselves.

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