

Background to the Appraisal of Life Events (ALE) Scale

This scale is designed to provide a reliable and valid index of the three primary appraisal dimensions described in Lazarus and Folkman's transactional model of stress – namely threat, challenge and loss. It is an adjective check list that can be used to assess appraisals of retrospectively recalled stressful events as well as ongoing stressful encounters.

If you think that this measure would be of use to you in your research please feel free to download it and use it. Use is free and there are no restrictions.

Some Supporting References

Ferguson, E., Matthews, G., & Cox, T. (1999). The appraisal of life events (ALE) scale: reliability, and validity. British Journal of Health Psychology, 4, 97-116

Ferguson, E., Lawrence, C., & Matthews, G. (2000). Associations between primary appraisals, life events while controlling for depression. British Journal of Clinical Psychology, 39, 143-155.

Ferguson, E., Swairbrick, R., Clare, S., Bignell, C & Anderson, C. (2000). Hypochondriacal concerns, somatosensory amplification, and primary and secondary cognitive appraisals. British Journal of Medical Psychology, 73, 355-370

Ferguson, E & Bibby PA. (2002). Predicting future blood donor returns: past behavior, intentions and observer effects. Health Psychology, 21, 513-518

ALE-Scale (Retrospective recall version)

In the space provided, please describe briefly **the most stressful event** that you experienced in the last three months.

We would like you to rate your **perceptions** of the stressful event you have just described. Use the following six point scales (where 0 = not at all to 5 = very much so) to indicate the extent to which each of the adjectives best describes your **perceptions** of the event when it occurred. Do this by circling the appropriate point on the scales. Please respond as quickly as possible as first responses are usually more accurate. Please make a response to each adjective.

AT THE TIME IT OCCURRED THE EVENT WAS:

- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) Threatening:
0 1 2 3 4 5 | (9) Painful:
0 1 2 3 4 5 |
| (2) Fearful:
0 1 2 3 4 5 | (10) Depressing:
0 1 2 3 4 5 |
| (3) Enjoyable:
0 1 2 3 4 5 | (11) Pitiful:
0 1 2 3 4 5 |
| (4) Worrying:
0 1 2 3 4 5 | (12) Informative:
0 1 2 3 4 5 |
| (5) Hostile:
0 1 2 3 4 5 | (13) Exciting:
0 1 2 3 4 5 |
| (6) Challenging:
0 1 2 3 4 5 | (14) Frightening:
0 1 2 3 4 5 |
| (7) Stimulating:
0 1 2 3 4 5 | (15) Terrifying:
0 1 2 3 4 5 |
| (8) Exhilarating:
0 1 2 3 4 5 | (16) Intolerable:
0 1 2 3 4 5 |

ALE Scale - (Situational version)

We would like you to rate your **perceptions** of your current circumstances. That is your perception of your environment **right now**. Use the following six point scales (where 0 = not at all to 5 = very much so) to indicate the extent to which each of the adjectives best describes your **perceptions** now. Do this by circling the appropriate point on the scales. Please respond as quickly as possible as first responses are usually more accurate. Please make a response to each adjective.

I FIND MY CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES:

(1) **Threatening:**

0 1 2 3 4 5

(2) **Fearful:**

0 1 2 3 4 5

(3) **Enjoyable:**

0 1 2 3 4 5

(4) **Worrying:**

0 1 2 3 4 5

(5) **Hostile:**

0 1 2 3 4 5

(6) **Challenging:**

0 1 2 3 4 5

(7) **Stimulating:**

0 1 2 3 4 5

(8) **Exhilarating:**

0 1 2 3 4 5

(9) **Painful:**

0 1 2 3 4 5

(10) **Depressing:**

0 1 2 3 4 5

(11) **Pitiful:**

0 1 2 3 4 5

(12) **Informative:**

0 1 2 3 4 5

(13) **Exciting:**

0 1 2 3 4 5

(14) **Frightening:**

0 1 2 3 4 5

(15) **Terrifying:**

0 1 2 3 4 5

(16) **Intolerable:**

0 1 2 3 4 5

Scoring -

Threat = 1 + 2 + 4 + 5 + 14 + 15,

Challenge = 3 + 6 + 7 + 8 + 12 + 13,

Loss = 9 + 10 + 11 + 16

Changes in Instructions

The instructions may be altered so that the perceptions can pertain either to the participant's current circumstances, the retrospective recall of events or some specific event.