



## HOLMES STRESS POINT SCALE

This is the reference referred to in Chapter 12 of WIDOWED

Death of spouse	100	Foreclosure of mortgage or loan	25
Divorce	60	Sleep less than 8 hours per night	25
Menopause	60	Change in responsibilities at work	25
Separation from living partner	60	Trouble with in-laws or children	25
Jail term or probation	60	Outstanding personal achievement	25
Death of close family member (other than spouse)	60	Spouse begins or stops work	20
Serious personal injury or illness	45	Begin or end school	20
Marriage or establishing life partner	45	Change in living conditions (visitors in home, new roommate, remodeling)	20
Fired at work	45	Change in personal habits (diet, exercise, smoking)	20
Marital or relationship reconciliation	40	Chronic allergies	20
Retirement	40	Trouble with boss	20
Change in health of immediate family member	40	Change in work hours/conditions	15
Work more than 40 hours per week	35	Moving to new residence	15
Pregnancy or causing pregnancy	35	Presently in pre-menstrual period	15
Sex difficulties	35	Change in schools	15
Gain of new family member	35	Change in religious activities	15
Business or work role change	35	Change in social activities (more/less)	15
Change in financial state	35	Minor financial loan	10
Death of a close friend	30	Change in frequency of family gatherings	10
Change in number of arguments with spouse or life partner	30	Vacation	10
Mortgage or loan for a major purpose	25	Presently in winter holiday season	10
		Minor violation of the law	5

The following questions were developed by the Learning Center at The University of Texas at Austin to assess stress. Most of these are going to apply to the stress of widowhood as well. As you go through these, just consider how much of a factor each may be playing in your life right now.

1. Do you worry about the future?

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2. Do you sometimes have trouble falling asleep?

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3. Do you often reach for a cigarette, a snack, a glass of wine, drink or tranquilizer in order to reduce tension or depression?

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4. Do you become depressed or irritated over basically insignificant matters?

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5. Do you have less energy than you seem to need or would like to have?

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6. Do you have too many things to do and not enough time to do them?

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7. Do you have headaches or stomach problems?

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8. Do you feel pressure to accomplish or get things done?

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9. Are you very concerned about being either well-liked or successful?

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10. Do you perform well enough in life to satisfy yourself?

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11. Do you get satisfaction from the small joys or simple pleasures in life?

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12. Are you able to really relax and have fun?

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This is where writing out your thoughts about each is helpful. Just knowing what stressors are adding “units” to your day/week/month is helpful. It becomes a visual guide to know it is time to take yourself off to the beach for a day, or treat yourself to a new dress or a massage. Find a positive activity to comfort and give your spirits a boost.

This will also begin to point out areas where you can take charge to add balance back into your life. Widowhood is a time when many friends turn away, so it is up to you to get out and meet new friends. Reach out to existing friends to arrange a lunch together or an adventure. Do not cocoon at home 24/7!

Remember the WIDOWED acronym points reviewed in Chapter 12 of the book and start taking small steps to implement these points.

Lastly, reach out to me. I will do a free discovery session with you on the phone to see if you are a good candidate for coaching. I have a couple of coaching packages and will make a recommendation for you. Just go to <http://talktojoann.com> and schedule that free phone call.

# WIDOWED



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