

# The Childhood Emotional Responsibilities Scale (CERS)

## Did you become an emotional expert to survive childhood?

If you're here, you probably already know you have C-PTSD symptoms. But traditional trauma assessments might have missed something crucial about your childhood experiences.

This assessment measures the sophisticated emotional responsibilities you may have developed as a child - not just what happened TO you, *but what you learned to DO to keep yourself safe.*

### What this assessment reveals:

- The advanced emotional skills you developed for survival
- Why you're so good at reading others but struggle with your own needs
- How your childhood emotional training affects your adult relationships
- Why you might feel "different" from other trauma survivors

### How it works:

1. Answer 24 questions about your childhood experiences (takes 10 minutes)
2. Also complete the brief ACE questionnaire (2 minutes)
3. Email your completed assessment to [becky@rebeccatdickson.com](mailto:becky@rebeccatdickson.com)
4. Receive your detailed interpretation within 48 hours

**This assessment is being used for research validation. Your participation helps advance understanding of complex trauma.**

## Part 1: Managing Your Parents' Emotions

*Rate each statement 0-10 based on how often this happened in your childhood (0 = never, 10 = constantly) prior to age 18.*

1. I was responsible for helping my parent/caregiver feel better when they were upset or distressed \_\_\_\_
2. I learned to calm my parent/caregiver when they were angry or overwhelmed \_\_\_\_
3. I had to manage my parent/caregiver's emotions to keep peace in the house \_\_\_\_
4. I became skilled at soothing my parent/caregiver during their difficult moments \_\_\_\_

5. My parent/caregiver relied on me to help them feel emotionally stable \_\_\_\_
6. I felt responsible for my parent/caregiver's emotional well-being \_\_\_\_

**Part 1 Score:** \_\_\_\_ / 60

## **Part 2: Scanning for Emotional Safety**

*Rate each statement 0-10 based on how often this happened in your childhood (prior to age 18).*

7. I constantly watched my parent/caregiver's facial expressions to predict their mood \_\_\_\_
8. I could tell from small signs when my parent/caregiver was about to get upset \_\_\_\_
9. I changed my behavior based on my parent/caregiver's emotional state \_\_\_\_
10. I felt responsible for preventing my parent/caregiver from getting angry or stressed \_\_\_\_
11. I walked on eggshells around my parent/caregiver to avoid setting them off \_\_\_\_
12. I monitored the emotional atmosphere in my home to keep myself or others safe \_\_\_\_

**Part 2 Score:** \_\_\_\_ / 60

## **Part 3: Handling Adult Responsibilities**

*Rate each statement 0-10 based on how often this happened in your childhood (prior to age 18).*

13. I was expected to keep family secrets or problems from outsiders \_\_\_\_
14. I handled adult responsibilities that were inappropriate for my age \_\_\_\_
15. I was involved in adult decisions that should not have involved a child \_\_\_\_
16. I had to protect my family's image by managing what others knew about us \_\_\_\_
17. I was given information about adult problems that I was too young to handle \_\_\_\_
18. I managed household crises or emergencies that adults should have handled \_\_\_\_

**Part 3 Score:** \_\_\_\_ / 60

## Part 4: Being the Family Counselor

*Rate each statement 0-10 based on how often this happened in your childhood (prior to age 18).*

- 19. I served as a counselor or therapist for my parent/caregiver \_\_\_\_
- 20. Family members came to me to solve their emotional problems \_\_\_\_
- 21. I mediated conflicts between adults in my family \_\_\_\_
- 22. I was the one who listened to my parent/caregiver's relationship or personal problems \_\_\_\_
- 23. I helped other family members understand or cope with each other's emotions \_\_\_\_
- 24. I was treated as the emotional expert or advisor in my family \_\_\_\_

**Part 4 Score:** \_\_\_\_ / 60

## Your Assessment Scores

Part 1 - Managing Parents' Emotions: \_\_\_\_ / 60

Part 2 - Scanning for Emotional Safety: \_\_\_\_ / 60

Part 3 - Handling Adult Responsibilities: \_\_\_\_ / 60

Part 4 - Being the Family Counselor: \_\_\_\_ / 60

**Total Parts 1-4 (CERS Score):** \_\_\_\_ / 240

## ACE Questionnaire (Adverse Childhood Experiences)

*Answer Yes or No for experiences prior to age 18:*

- 1. Did a parent or other adult often swear at, insult, or humiliate you? \_\_\_\_
- 2. Did a parent or other adult often push, grab, slap, or hit you? \_\_\_\_
- 3. Did an adult or older person touch you sexually? \_\_\_\_
- 4. Did you often feel unloved, unimportant, or unsupported by your family? \_\_\_\_
- 5. Did you often feel neglected - not enough food, dirty clothes, no protection? \_\_\_\_
- 6. Were your parents separated or divorced? \_\_\_\_

7. Was your mother treated violently? \_\_\_\_
8. Did you live with someone who was an alcoholic or used drugs? \_\_\_\_
9. Was a household member depressed, mentally ill, or suicidal? \_\_\_\_
10. Did a household member go to prison? \_\_\_\_

**ACE Score:** \_\_\_\_ / 10

## Next Steps

Email your completed scores to [becky@rebeccatdickson.com](mailto:becky@rebeccatdickson.com)

### Include in your email:

- Your name
- All scores listed above (4 different CERS scores + ACE score). It's even better if you can email back this pdf with your answers in it.
- Optional: Brief description of what brought you to this assessment

### You'll receive:

- Detailed interpretation of your CERS score
- How your specific pattern affects your adult life
- Understanding of your developed emotional expertise
- Insights into your C-PTSD symptoms

*Your participation contributes to research that could change how emotional trauma is understood and treated.*

**Developed by Rebecca L. McKinnon (aka Rebecca T. Dickson), trauma-informed coach and creator of The Impact Method™**

*This assessment measures childhood emotional responsibilities that traditional trauma tools often miss.*