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Normative and Nonnormative Events

Marriage:

Today is my lucky day! At the age of twenty-seven, I'm marrying my college sweetheart. We always planned a wedding after we graduated and got jobs.

Normative:

Marriage at the age of twenty-seven is a common experience that would be considered a normative life event. On the other hand, marriage of an older couple could be considered a nonnormative life event.

Job Security:

I start a new job tomorrow. Although this is my fourth job since graduation, I have a feeling that I'll finally be able to use my skills in this one. I'm looking forward to starting.

Normative:

For someone new to the job market, it is common for him or her to change jobs until the level of experience and skills match the job choice. This would be considered a **normative life event**. On the other hand, job loss for someone who has twenty or more years of experience in the same job may leave the person with significant job skills but limited flexibility to adapt to a new career. This would be considered a nonnormative life event.

Divorce:

I always believed that marriage was forever. I guess I was wrong. I never expected my husband to leave me after twenty-seven years of marriage.

Nonnormative:

Divorce is much more common within the first few years of a couple's marriage but much more uncommon when a couple has been together for several years or beyond the retirement age. Therefore, divorce of an older couple can be considered a nonnormative life event.

Graduate:

When I was thirteen, I left school to work at the mill because my family needed the money. I always dreamed that, someday, I would receive my high school diploma. I can't believe it! After all these years, I finally made my dream come true by graduating high school.

Nonnormative:

For people aged between seventeen and nineteen years, it is common for them to graduate high school. This would be considered a normative life event. On the other hand, this event would be considered a nonnormative life event for people much older.



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