

Challenge of Change Profile

Guidelines for Interpreting Scores

Scores range from 0 to 10, with high scores in the range 8-10 and low scores in the range 0-2. For some scales a high or a low score is definitely preferable; these are the 'one-edged' scales.

The scales measure habitual responses that can be changed by implementing the Four Steps in the training programme. © Work Skills Centre (1995, 2000, 2005, 2010)

R Rumination	Measures the tendency to ruminate about emotionally upsetting events that have occurred in the past or might occur in the future. The lower the score the better.
E-I Emotional Inhibition	Measures inhibiting or bottling up emotion. Low scores are better, although expressing emotion needs to be in an appropriate context.
TA Toxic Achieving	Characterized by wanting everything done yesterday and operation with impatience, hostility, and demand. The lower the score the better.
AV Avoidance Coping	Trying to ignore the problem and hoping it will just go away. Low scores are preferable
PC Perfect Control	Measures the desire for perfectionism and control. High scores indicate a perfectionist, controlling tendency; low scores are preferable.
DET Detached Coping	Describes disengaging and being able to see things in perspective. High scores are preferable.
SENS Sensitivity	Sensitivity to others' emotional feelings. High scores are preferable, but a high score needs to be accompanied by a high score on detached coping.
F Flexibility	Measures how rigidly or flexibly we behave. The higher the score the better.

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1. Rumination (R) measures the tendency to ruminate about emotionally upsetting events that have occurred in the past or might occur in the future. Ruminating compromises performance and maintains physiological arousal inappropriately; this is a one-edged scale where the lower the score the better. Since rumination is the definition of stress used in the CoC Resilience programme, this is the most important scale. Waking sleep is attention snatched away, but rumination ensues when negative emotion is added and the dream becomes a nightmare of ‘what-ifs’ and ‘if-onlys’. To counter waking sleep or rumination, wake up and to stay awake for as long as possible, which reinforces the habit of waking up rather than just going back to sleep.

2. Emotional Inhibition (E-I) measures inhibiting or bottling up emotion. Low scores are better, although expressing emotion needs to be in an appropriate context. The appropriate expression of emotion facilitates resolution, but endlessly complaining about issues is simply verbal rumination. A useful first step is to involve someone you can trust and to take opportunities to express to them how you felt about the work you did that day (as opposed to just what you did that day).

3. Toxic Achieving (TA) is characterized by wanting everything done yesterday and operating with impatience, hostility and demand. This leads to cardiovascular strain, and TA is one-edged with the lower the score the better. If you have a high score, why are you always angry, and why do you justify the anger to yourself and others? The reason is that the world isn’t the way you want it to be. And why should everything be delivered yesterday, at whatever cost? Toxic achieving is the cornerstone of blaming cultures.

4. Avoidance Coping (AV) is trying to ignore the problem and hoping it will just go away, illustrated by piling up the furniture against the door in the house analogy in the training programme. Low scores are preferable. Check your in-tray, if you have one: how many of the jobs at the bottom have been there for weeks? Are you realistically ever going to do them? Procrastination is indeed the thief of time, so evaluate them with detachment and either do them or bin them.

5. Perfect Control (PC) measures the desire for perfectionism and control. High scores indicate a perfectionist, controlling tendency, and low scores are preferable. PC is driven by anxiety over not delivering the perfect outcome, but everything can be improved upon. Perfectionists fail to see the threshold of added value, beyond which no further effort will add anything, and they also tend to be control freaks. Start by checking with your manager or team leader what is actually required, and working to a more realistic time-frame. This isn’t about compromising quality, but rather about recognizing the limits to time and effort.

6. Detached Coping (DET) describes disengaging and being able to see things in perspective: high scorers don’t turn molehills into mountains. This is one-edged and is the third step in the training programme. Practicing detachment maintains a balanced perspective from which the negative preoccupations of rumination can be seen for what they are. Being detached doesn’t mean not doing anything, but rather freeing the mind from the distracting thoughts so that you can function more efficiently.

7. Sensitivity (SENS) is sensitivity to others’ emotional feelings. High scores are preferable, but a high score needs to be accompanied by a high score on detached coping – if not, the emotion can’t be kept in perspective. The programme emphasizes the importance of having high scores on both detached coping and sensitivity, which is called detached compassion and is equivalent to empathy.

8. Flexibility (F) measures how rigidly or flexibly we behave. Being rigid and inflexible may mean clinging to redundant aims and missing opportunities that change may bring, and the higher the score the better. Being in love with change for its own sake isn’t helpful either, so before steaming ahead, first decide, in as detached a frame of mind as possible, whether the changes really are needed.