



 Happiness Assessment 10-20 min Client Yes

The Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being

Well-being is a dynamic concept that includes subjective, social, and psychological dimensions as well as health-related behaviors. The Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being is a theoretically grounded instrument that specifically focuses on measuring multiple facets of psychological well-being. The scale has been used in more than 400 studies and includes the following facets:

- self-acceptance
- the establishment of quality ties to others
- a sense of autonomy in thought and action
- the ability to manage complex environments to suit personal needs and values
- the pursuit of meaningful goals and a sense of purpose in life
- continued growth and development as a person



Goal

Well-being is a multifaceted concept. This questionnaire is a straightforward and relatively short survey that assesses the psychological components of well-being, namely autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance.



Advice

The questionnaire is an ideal intake and assessment tool. Practitioners can use the scale to see the effect of sessions and interventions on the client's psychological well-being.

- Because of the reflective process involved in completing the Ryff scale, those who administer the survey must demonstrate care and concern for the participants. It is also important that those administering the Ryff scale inform the respondents, before administration, that the completion of the instrument requires self-reflection, which may be somewhat uncomfortable. If the results of the Ryff scale are shared with the participants, it is advisable to take time to either discuss the results in-depth and/or provide resources for participants to process the experience and what they learned from it.

- One limitation of the Ryff scale is that it relies on self-reported assessments of psychological well-being. As with all self-report instruments, clients may respond in ways that are socially desirable rather than answer each statement honestly. Ryff suggests that to obtain a complete understanding of a respondent's psychological well-being, observational or survey data from others who are close to or important to the respondent is needed. A final limitation is that the validity of the instrument has not been tested on adults younger than 24 years of age.
- Internal consistency (often measured by Cronbach's alpha) refers to the probability of responses from a set of items in a scale to be the same. The short version of the Ryff instrument has low internal consistency and is not recommended for high-quality assessment of psychological well-being. See Table 2 below. In this tool, the long (84-item) and medium (54-item) versions are included.



Scoring

To compute the score, use the scoring tables provided in this assessment. Responses to each of the six categories are totaled. For each category, a high score indicates that the respondent has a mastery of that area in his/her life. Conversely, a low score shows that the respondent struggles to feel comfortable with that particular concept. See Table 1 below. This table was taken from Ryff and Keyes (1995, p.1072).

Table 1. Definitions of Theory-Guided Dimensions of Well-Being

Self-acceptance

High scorer: Possesses a positive attitude toward the self; acknowledges and accepts multiple aspects of self, including good and bad qualities; feels positive about past life.

Low scorer: Feels dissatisfied with self; is disappointed with past life; is troubled about certain personal qualities; wishes to be different than what he/she is.

Positive relations with others

High scorer: Has warm, satisfying, trusting relationships with others; is concerned about the welfare of others; capable of strong empathy, affection, and intimacy; understands the give and take of human relationships.

Low scorer: Has few close, trusting relationships with others; finds it difficult to be warm, open, and concerned about others; is isolated and frustrated in interpersonal relationships; not willing to make compromises to sustain important ties with others.

Autonomy

High scorer: Is self-determined and independent; able to resist social pressures to think and act in certain ways; regulates behavior from within; evaluates self by personal standards.

Low scorer: Is concerned about the expectations and evaluations of others; relies on judgments of others to make important decisions; conforms to social pressures to think and act in certain ways.

Environmental mastery

High scorer: Has a sense of mastery and competence in managing the environment; controls a complex array of external activities; makes effective use of surrounding opportunities; able to choose or create contexts suitable for personal needs and values.

Low scorer: Has difficulty managing everyday affairs; feels unable to change or improve surrounding context; is unaware of surrounding opportunities; lacks a sense of control over the external world.

Purpose in life

High scorer: Has goals in life and a sense of directedness; feels there is meaning to present and past life; holds beliefs that give life purpose; has aims and objectives for living.

Low scorer: Lacks a sense of meaning in life; has few goals or aims, lacks a sense of direction; does not see the purpose of a past life; has no outlook or beliefs that give life meaning.

Personal growth

High scorer: Has a feeling of continued development; sees self as growing and expanding; is open to new experiences; has a sense of realizing his or her potential; sees improvement in self and behavior over time; is changing in ways that reflect more self-knowledge and effectiveness.

Low scorer: Has a sense of personal stagnation; lacks a sense of improvement or expansion over time; feels bored and uninterested in life; feels unable to develop new attitudes or behaviors.

Table 2. Psychometric Properties of the Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being

Scales	Internal consistency of 20-item parent scale	Test-retest reliability of 20-item parent scale	14-item scale correlation with 20-item parent scale	Internal consistency of 20-item parent scale	Internal consistency of 3-item scale
Self-acceptance	.93	.85	.99	.91	.52
Positive Relations with others	.91	.83	.98	.88	.56
Autonomy	.86	.88	.97	.83	.37
Environmental Mastery	.90	.81	.98	.86	.49
Purpose in Life	.90	.82	.98	.88	.33
Personal Growth	.87	.81	.97	.85	.40



References

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The Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being

Instructions

Long version (84 items)

The following set of questions deals with how you feel about yourself and your life. Please remember that there are no right or wrong answers.

Circle the number that best describes your present agreement or disagreement with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Slightly	Agree Slightly	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
1. Most people see me as loving and affectionate.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Sometimes I change the way I act or think to be more like those around me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I am not interested in activities that will expand my horizons.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I feel good when I think of what I've done in the past and what I hope to do in the future.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. When I look at the story of my life, I am pleased with how things have turned out.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Maintaining close relationships has been difficult and frustrating for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. I am not afraid to voice my opinions, even when they are in opposition to the opinions of most people.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. The demands of everyday life often get me down.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. In general, I feel that I continue to learn more about myself as time goes by.	1	2	3	4	5	6



	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Slightly	Agree Slightly	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
11. I live life one day at a time and don't really think about the future.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. In general, I feel confident and positive about myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. I often feel lonely because I have few close friends with whom to share my concerns.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. My decisions are not usually influenced by what everyone else is doing.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. I do not fit very well with the people and the community around me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. I am the kind of person who likes to give new things a try.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. I tend to focus on the present, because the future nearly always brings me problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. I feel like many of the people I know have gotten more out of life than I have.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. I enjoy personal and mutual conversations with family members or friends.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. I tend to worry about what other people think of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. I am quite good at managing the many responsibilities of my daily life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. I don't want to try new ways of doing things - my life is fine the way it is.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. I have a sense of direction and purpose in life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. Given the opportunity, there are many things about myself that I would change.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. It is important to me to be a good listener when close friends talk to me about their problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Slightly	Agree Slightly	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
26. Being happy with myself is more important to me than having others approve of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. I often feel overwhelmed by my responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. My daily activities often seem trivial and unimportant to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. I like most aspects of my personality.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. I don't have many people who want to listen when I need to talk.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. I tend to be influenced by people with strong opinions.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. If I were unhappy with my living situation, I would take effective steps to change it.	1	2	3	4	5	6
34. When I think about it, I haven't really improved much as a person over the years.	1	2	3	4	5	6
35. I don't have a good sense of what it is I'm trying to accomplish in life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
36. I made some mistakes in the past, but I feel that all in all everything has worked out for the best.	1	2	3	4	5	6
37. I feel like I get a lot out of my friendships.	1	2	3	4	5	6
38. People rarely talk to me into doing things I don't want to do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
39. I generally do a good job of taking care of my personal finances and affairs.	1	2	3	4	5	6
40. In my view, people of every age are able to continue growing and developing.	1	2	3	4	5	6



	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Slightly	Agree Slightly	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
41. I used to set goals for myself, but that now seems like a waste of time.	1	2	3	4	5	6
42. In many ways, I feel disappointed about my achievements in life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
43. It seems to me that most other people have more friends than I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
44. It is more important to me to “fit in” with others than to stand alone on my principles.	1	2	3	4	5	6
45. I find it stressful that I can’t keep up with all of the things I have to do each day.	1	2	3	4	5	6
46. With time, I have gained a lot of insight about life that has made me a stronger, more capable person.	1	2	3	4	5	6
47. I enjoy making plans for the future and working to make them a reality.	1	2	3	4	5	6
48. For the most part, I am proud of who I am and the life I lead.	1	2	3	4	5	6
49. People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others.	1	2	3	4	5	6
50. I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus.	1	2	3	4	5	6
51. I am good at juggling my time so that I can fit everything in that needs to be done.	1	2	3	4	5	6
52. I have a sense that I have developed a lot as a person over time.	1	2	3	4	5	6
53. I am an active person in carrying out the plans I set for myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6
54. I envy many people for the lives they lead.	1	2	3	4	5	6
55. I have not experienced many warm and trusting relationships with others.	1	2	3	4	5	6

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Slightly	Agree Slightly	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
56. It's difficult for me to voice my own opinions on controversial matters.	1	2	3	4	5	6
57. My daily life is busy, but I derive a sense of satisfaction from keeping up with everything.	1	2	3	4	5	6
58. I do not enjoy being in new situations that require me to change my old familiar ways of doing things.	1	2	3	4	5	6
59. Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them.	1	2	3	4	5	6
60. My attitude about myself is probably not as positive as most people feel about themselves.	1	2	3	4	5	6
61. I often feel as if I'm on the outside looking in when it comes to friendships.	1	2	3	4	5	6
62. I often change my mind about decisions if my friends or family disagree.	1	2	3	4	5	6
63. I get frustrated when trying to plan my daily activities because I never accomplish the things I set out to do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
64. For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth.	1	2	3	4	5	6
65. I sometimes feel as if I've done all there is to do in life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
66. Many days I wake up feeling discouraged about how I have lived my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
67. I know that I can trust my friends, and they know they can trust me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
68. I am not the kind of person who gives in to social pressures to think or act in certain ways.	1	2	3	4	5	6
69. My efforts to find the kinds of activities and relationships that I need have been quite successful.	1	2	3	4	5	6



	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Slightly	Agree Slightly	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
70. I enjoy seeing how my views have changed and matured over the years.	1	2	3	4	5	6
71. My aims in life have been more a source of satisfaction than frustration to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
72. The past had its ups and downs, but in general, I wouldn't want to change it.	1	2	3	4	5	6
73. I find it difficult to really open up when I talk with others.	1	2	3	4	5	6
74. I am concerned about how other people evaluate the choices I have made in my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
75. I have difficulty arranging my life in a way that is satisfying to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
76. I gave up trying to make big improvements or changes in my life a long time ago.	1	2	3	4	5	6
77. I find it satisfying to think about what I have accomplished in life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
78. When I compare myself to friends and acquaintances, it makes me feel good about who I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6
79. My friends and I sympathize with each other's problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6
80. I judge myself by what I think is important, not by the values of what others think is important.	1	2	3	4	5	6
81. I have been able to build a home and a lifestyle for myself that is much to my liking.	1	2	3	4	5	6
82. There is truth to the saying that you can't teach an old dog new tricks.	1	2	3	4	5	6
83. In the final analysis, I'm not so sure that my life adds up too much.	1	2	3	4	5	6
84. Everyone has their weaknesses, but I seem to have more than my share.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Scoring 84-item version

The mean score of all subscales is calculated according to the scoring table below, which shows what items should be added up to form one subscale. Items marked (*) must be reverse-coded by transforming the original value of an item by the opposite value on a scale from 1 to 6, such that a score of 1 turns into a score of 6, a score of 2 turns into a 5, etc. For each category, a high score indicates that the respondent has a mastery of that area in his/her life. Conversely, a low score shows that the respondent struggles to feel comfortable with that particular concept. See Table 1 for a more detailed description.

Self-acceptance		Positive relations with others		Autonomy		Environmental mastery		Purpose in life		Personal growth	
item	score	item	score	item	score	item	score	item	score	item	score
6		1		2*		3		5		4*	
12		7*		8		9*		11*		10	
18*		13*		14		15*		17*		16	
24*		19		20*		21		23		22*	
30		25		26		27*		29*		28	
36		31*		32*		33		35*		34*	
42*		37		38		39		41*		40	
48		43*		44*		45*		47		46	
54*		49		50		51		53		52	
60*		55*		56*		57		59		58*	
66*		61*		62*		63*		65*		64	
72		67		68		69		71		70	
78		73*		74*		75*		77		76*	
84*		79		80		81		83*		82*	
Total:		Total:		Total:		Total:		Total:		Total:	
Total/14:		Total/14:		Total/14:		Total/14:		Total/14:		Total/14:	

Instructions

Medium version (54 items)

The following set of questions deals with how you feel about yourself and your life. Please remember that there are no right or wrong answers.

Circle the number that best describes your present agreement or disagreement with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Slightly	Agree Slightly	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
1. Most people see me as loving and affectionate.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I am not afraid to voice my opinion, even when they are in opposition to the opinions of most people.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I am not interested in activities that will expand my horizons.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I live life one day at a time and don't really think about the future.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. When I look at the story of my life, I am pleased with how things have turned out.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Maintaining close relationships has been difficult and frustrating for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. My decisions are not usually influenced by what everyone else is doing.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. The demands of everyday life often get me down.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. I don't want to try new ways of doing things—my life is fine the way it is.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. I tend to focus on the present, because the future always brings me problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. In general, I feel confident and positive about myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6



	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Slightly	Agree Slightly	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
13. I often feel lonely because I have few close friends with whom to share my concerns.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. I tend to worry about what other people think of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. I do not fit very well with the people and the community around me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. My daily activities often seem trivial and unimportant to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. I feel like many of the people I know have gotten more out of life than I have.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. I enjoy personal and mutual conversations with family members or friends.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. Being happy with myself is more important to me than having others approve of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. I am quite good at managing the many responsibilities of my daily life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. When I think about it, I haven't really improved much as a person over the years.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. I don't have a good sense of what it is I'm trying to accomplish in my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. I like most aspects of my personality.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. I don't have many people who want to listen when I need to talk.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. I tend to be influenced by people with strong opinions.	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. I often feel overwhelmed by my responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5	6



	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Slightly	Agree Slightly	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
28. I have a sense that I have developed a lot as a person over time.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. I used to set goals for myself, but that now seems a waste of time.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. I made some mistakes in the past, but I feel that all in all everything has worked out for the best.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. It seems to me that most other people have more friends than I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. I generally do a good job of taking care of my personal finances and affairs.	1	2	3	4	5	6
34. I do not enjoy being in new situations that require me to change my old familiar ways of doing things.	1	2	3	4	5	6
35. I enjoy making plans for the future and working to make them a reality.	1	2	3	4	5	6
36. In many ways, I feel disappointed about my achievements in my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
37. People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others.	1	2	3	4	5	6
38. It's difficult for me to voice my own opinions on controversial matters.	1	2	3	4	5	6
39. I am good at juggling my time so that I can fit everything in that needs to be done.	1	2	3	4	5	6
40. For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth.	1	2	3	4	5	6
41. I am an active person in carrying out the plans I set for myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6



	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Slightly	Agree Slightly	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
42. My attitude about myself is probably not as positive as most people feel about themselves.	1	2	3	4	5	6
43. I have not experienced many warm and trusting relationships with others.	1	2	3	4	5	6
44. I often change my mind about decisions if my friends or family disagree.	1	2	3	4	5	6
45. I have difficulty arranging my life in a way that is satisfying to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
46. I gave up trying to make big improvements or change in my life a long time ago.	1	2	3	4	5	6
47. Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them.	1	2	3	4	5	6
48. The past has its ups and downs, but in general, I wouldn't want to change it.	1	2	3	4	5	6
49. I know that I can trust my friends, and they know they can trust me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
50. I judge myself by what I think is important, not by the values of what others think is important.	1	2	3	4	5	6
51. I have been able to build a home and a lifestyle for myself that is much to my liking.	1	2	3	4	5	6
52. There is truth to the saying that you can't teach an old dog new tricks.	1	2	3	4	5	6
53. I sometimes feel as if I've done all there is to do in life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
54. When I compare myself to friends and acquaintances, it makes me feel good about who I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6



Scoring 54-item version

The mean score of all subscales is calculated using the scoring table below, which shows what items should be added up to form one subscale. Items marked (*) must be reverse-coded by transforming the original value of an item by the opposite value on a scale from 1 to 6 such that a score of 1 turns into a score of 6, a score of 2 turns into a 5, etc. For each category, a high score indicates that the respondent has a mastery of that area in his/her life. Conversely, a low score shows that the respondent struggles to feel comfortable with that particular concept. See Table 1 for a more detailed description.

Self-acceptance		Positive relations with others		Autonomy		Environmental mastery		Purpose in life		Personal growth	
item	score	item	score	item	score	item	score	item	score	item	score
6		1		2		3		5*		4*	
12		7*		8		9*		11*		10*	
18*		13*		14*		15*		17*		16	
24		19		20		21		23*		22*	
30		25*		26*		27*		29*		28	
36*		31*		32		33		35		34*	
42*		37		38*		39		41		40	
48		43*		44*		45*		47		46*	
54		49		50		51		53*		52*	
Total:		Total:		Total:		Total:		Total:		Total:	
Total/9:		Total/9:		Total/9:		Total/9:		Total/9:		Total/9:	