

Social cognition and object relations scale

Listed below are various nuances in the spectrum of human personality and what concerns us. May this article provide you with the insight you need to be fully present for those you know and love as you listen with compassion and hope, according to their needs.

SOCIAL COGNITION AND OBJECT RELATIONS SCALE

Categories:

1. Cognitive structure of representations (complexity, differentiation, and integration)
2. Affect-tone of relationship schemas
3. Capacity for emotional investment in relationships
4. Capacity for emotional investment in values and moral standards
5. Understanding of social causality
6. Experience and Management of Aggressive Impulses
7. Self-esteem
8. Identity and Coherence of Sense of Self
9. Dominant Interpersonal Concerns
10. Social Skills and Interpersonal Behavior

1. Complexity of representation of people: 1 = is egocentric, or sometimes confuses thoughts, feelings, or attributes of the self and others; 3 = tends to describe people's personalities and internal states in minimally elaborated, relatively simplistic ways, or splits representations into good and bad; 5 = representations of the self and others are stereotypical or conventional, is able to integrate both good and bad characteristics of self and others, has awareness of impact on others; 7 = is psychologically minded, insight into self and others, differentiated and shows considerable complexity

2. Affective quality of representations: (i.e., what the person expects from relationships, and how s/he tends to experience significant others and describe significant relationships): 1 = malevolent, abusive, caustic; 3 = largely negative or unpleasant, but not abusive; 5 = mixed, neither primarily positive nor primarily negative, (needs to have some positive to be scored 5); 7 = generally positive expectations of relationships (but not pollyannaish), a favorable and affirmative view of relationships Note: where affective quality is absent, bland, or limited, code 4

3. Emotional investment in relationships: 1 = tends to focus primarily on his/her own needs in relationships, has tumultuous relationships, or has few if any relationships; 3 = somewhat shallow relationships, or only alludes to others; 5 = demonstrates conventional sentiments of friendship, caring, love, and empathy; 7 = tends to have deep, committed relationships with mutual sharing, emotional intimacy, interdependence, and respect, positive connectedness and appreciation of others Note: where only one character is described and no relationship is depicted, code 2

4. Emotional investment in values and moral standards: 1 = behaves in selfish, inconsiderate, self-indulgent or aggressive ways without any sense of remorse or guilt; 3 = shows signs of some internalization of standards (e.g., avoids doing "bad" things because knows will be punished for them, thinks in relatively childlike ways about right and wrong, etc.), or is morally harsh and rigid toward self or others; 5 = is invested in moral values and tries to live up to them; 7 = thinks about moral questions in a way that combines abstract thought, a willingness to challenge or question convention, and genuine compassion and thoughtfulness in actions (i.e., not just intellectualized)

Note: where no moral concerns are raised in a particular story, code 4

5. Understanding of social causality: 1 = narrative accounts of interpersonal experiences are confused, distorted, extremely sparse, or difficult to follow, limited awareness and coherence; 3 = understands people in relatively simple, but sensible ways, or describes interpersonal events in ways that largely make sense but may have a few gaps or incongruities; 5 = tends to provide straightforward narrative accounts of interpersonal events in which people's actions result from the way they experience or interpret situations; 7 = tends to provide particularly coherent narrative accounts of interpersonal events, and to understand people very well, understands the impact of their behavior on others and others behavior on them. Note: where subject describes interpersonal events as if

they just happen, with little sense of why people behave the way they do (i.e., allogical rather than illogical

stories that seem to lack any causal understanding), code 2

6. Experience and management of aggressive impulses: 1 = physically assaultive, destructive, sadistic, or in poor

control of aggression, impulsive; 3 = angry, passive-aggressive, denigrating, or physically abusive to self (or fails to

protect self from abuse); 5 = avoids dealing with anger by denying it, defending against it, or avoiding

confrontations; 7 = can express anger and aggression and assert self appropriately Note: if no anger content in the story, code 4

7. Self-esteem: 1 = views self as loathsome, evil, rotten, contaminating, or globally bad; 3 = has low self-esteem (e.g.,

feels inadequate, inferior, self-critical, etc.) or is unrealistically grandiose; 5 = displays a range of positive and

negative feelings toward the self; 7 = tends to have realistically positive feelings about him/herself

Note: needs to have some positive to be scored a 5 or above

8. Identity and coherence of self: 1 = fragmented sense of self, has multiple personalities; 3 = views of , or feelings

about, the self fluctuate widely and unpredictably; unstable sense of self; 5 = identity and self-definition are not a

major concern or preoccupation; 7 = feels like an integrated person with long-term ambitions and goals

Note: ambiguity about a goal is still considered a goal and may be scored in the higher range

9. Dominant Interpersonal Concerns: 1 Probably present, but not entirely clear. 3 Clearly present but neither particularly central to the story or subject nor idiosyncratic (e.g., authority conflicts on Card 1). 5 Clearly present and central to the action of the story. 7 Clearly central to understanding who the subject is or what s/he is struggling with; theme is unusual for the card, idiosyncratically elaborated, or obviously highly charged emotionally.

1. nurturance, dependence, trust, security, or mentorship, where the relationship is not between peers, and the experience is emotionally positive
2. emotional intimacy or closeness between marital partners or lovers
3. sexual intimacy, sexual desire, or romance
4. affiliation, friendship, belongingness, or closeness with friends or family
5. mastery, achievement, self-control, skill acquisition, or knowledge seeking
6. autonomy; self-assertion, independent thinking, or pleasure in behave autonomously
7. admiration, exhibition, recognition, sense of specialness, basking in acclaim, or having followers
8. identity, self-definition, or reflecting upon or searching for one's place in the world
9. dominance; striving for or struggling over power, control over others, status, or class rejection, abandonment, or being sent away
10. inferiority in comparison to others
11. victimization, gross exploitation, asymmetrical violence, severe verbal cruelty,
12. deliberate infliction of harm, gross negligence, or physical abuse
13. sexual victimization, rape, or sexual abuse
14. conflictual dependence (such as overdependence, clinginess, or fear of commitment)
15. disappointed authorities, critical parents, or characters who chronically worry about meeting high parental standards
16. loners; depicts people who seem schizoid, unrelated, or unconcerned about their lack of connection to others
17. guilt (moral guilt evoked by breaking a particular moral rule or standard)
18. self-loathing or global badness of the self; (sense of badness must be general, not tied to a particular action)
19. failure, incompetence, or inadequacy
20. rescue; depicts characters who are rescued
21. fears about safety, survival, or protection
22. competition
23. sexual competition (love triangles, competition for mates, etc.)
24. helplessness
25. feeling misunderstood; depicts people who feel that significant others misunderstand or do not respond empathically to them

26. loneliness, isolation, or lack of meaningful relationships (must be distressing to the subject)
27. fear of losing self-control, fear of one's own impulses, or disdain for others' acceptance of or submission to their own desires
28. sexual conflict (e.g., preoccupation with, or avoidance of sexual themes; notable anxiety about sexual content)
29. punishment or worry about being punished
30. crusading; depicts characters who morally crusade
31. role reversal
32. self-victimization (not to be scored for suicide unless includes self-defeating or masochistic elements)
33. aggression; depicts aggressive acts that fall short of victimization, or people struggling with aggressive impulses
34. authority conflicts
35. conflicted identification with a person or group
36. neglect; depicts characters who are physically neglected, or whose basic needs for food, shelter, or clothing are unmet
37. low self-esteem
38. shame; depicts people who feel ashamed, humiliated, dishonored, or slighted
39. stereotyped sex roles
40. concern about sexual orientation; characters are concerned or confused about orientation
41. not belonging , being an outcast, outsider, or scapegoat
42. sadism, with attitude of enjoyment or satisfaction
43. self-blaming; attributes characters' misfortunes to their own enduring psychological traits or attributes
44. loss; depicts characters who have lost, or fear losing, a significant other through death
45. suicide
46. defectiveness, handicap, or something being mentally or physically wrong
47. emptiness or meaninglessness
48. frustrated by circumstance; depicts characters who are frustrated or impeded by social circumstances that obstruct attainment of goals
49. betrayal
50. resignation; characters are resigned or fatalistic

10. Social Skills and Interpersonal Behavior:

- Is able to handle conflicts in relationships effectively
- Has close and loving relationships with family members
- Has minimal contact with multiple members of his/her family
- Seems comfortable and at ease interpersonally
- Is able to work on tasks with others without personal issues or repetitive personality patterns interfering
- Is charismatic
- Is an effective leader
- Behaves nonverbally in ways that seem peculiar or odd (keeps inappropriate personal distance, does not regulate eye contact, touches or stares inappropriately; does not seem to understand basic “grammars” of social interaction).
- Is observant of social cues during conversation, continuously adjusts verbal and nonverbal behavior according to perceived response in the listener.
- Tends to elicit boredom in others, may speak incessantly, without affect, or about inconsequential matters.
- Tends to be shy or reserved
- Has a wide network of friends
- Has a few close friendships, but is relatively content with a small social network
- Interacts primarily with family members
- Tends to rely on one person to meet all his/her interpersonal needs; is content to have only one really close relationship with a spouse or family member
- Is active in community organizations
- Tends to have satisfying and comfortable relationships with men
- Tends to have satisfying and comfortable relationships with women
- Tends to behave in highly gender-stereotypical ways
- Tends to elicit dislike from other people
- Tends to elicit positive feelings from other people
- Tends to lie when expedient
- Tends to make suicide attempts or gestures that seem primarily designed to obtain or elicit sympathy, caretaking, anger or revenge.
- Enjoys leisure activities with other people
- Is prejudiced or bigoted
- Friendships tend to be mutually satisfying, enriching, and sustained over time
- Tends to enter into unequal relationships in which s/he is dominant
- Tends to enter into unequal relationships in which s/he is subordinate
- Is able to sustain satisfying long-term relationships
- Tends to be oppositional, withholding, or stingy

- Tends to be ingratiating or sycophantic
- Seems to require constant praise, approval, or attention
- Tends to be seductive or flirtatious
- Tends to be extremely guarded interpersonally, for fear that others will use information against him/her
- Tends to take on behaviors, mannerisms, or roles typically associated with the opposite sex

From Drew Westen's Social Cognition and Object Relations Scale Q-Sort (SCORS-Q) for Interview and Narrative Data (1995)

For further research, please visit:

http://supp.apa.org/psycarticles/supplemental/pst_44_1_96/pst_pinsker-aspen0216_supp_mat.pdf

http://www.psychsystems.net/Manuals/SCORS_Manual_for_TAT_1_3_03.pdf

http://www.psychsystems.net/manuals/SCORS_Manual_for_Narratives_12_19_02.pdf