

Perceived Choice and Awareness of Self Scale (PCASS) – formerly known as the Self-Determination Scale (SDS)

Scale Description

This scale assesses individual differences (trait level) in *perceived choice* and *awareness of self*. Perceived choice reflects feeling a sense of choice with respect to one's behavior and awareness of self reflects being aware of one's feelings and one's sense of self. The PCASS is a short, 10-item scale, with two 5-item subscales. The first subscale is perceived choice in one's actions, and the second is awareness of oneself. The subscales can either be used separately or they can be combined into an overall score.

This scale was formerly labeled as Self-Determination Scale (SDS) and has been renamed to better capture the constructs it assesses. Those interested in measures of self-determination, please refer to the following: (1) General Causality Orientations Scale (GCOS) or (2) Autonomous Functioning Index (AFI) when assessing global individual differences in self-determination/autonomy; (3) Self-Regulation Questionnaires (SRQ) when assessing self-determination/autonomy of a specific domain/behavior (e.g., academic, exercise).

Articles in which the PCASS has been used.

Elliot, A. J., & McGregor, H. A. (2001). A 2 X 2 achievement goal framework. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 80, 501-519.

Sheldon, K. M. (1995). Creativity and self-determination in personality. *Creativity Research Journal*, 8, 61-72.

Sheldon, K. M., Ryan, R. M., & Reis, H. (1996). What makes for a good day? Competence and autonomy in the day and in the person. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 22, 1270-1279.

Thrash, T. M., & Elliot, A. J. (2002). Implicit and self-attributed achievement motives: Concordance and predictive validity. *Journal of Personality*, 70, 729-755.

The Scale

Instructions: Please read the pairs of statements, one pair at a time, and think about which statement within the pair seems more true to you at this point in your life. Indicate the degree to which statement A feels true, relative to the degree that Statement B feels true, on the 5-point scale shown after each pair of statements. If statement A feels completely true and statement B feels completely untrue, the appropriate response would be 1. If the two statements are equally true, the appropriate response would be a 3. If only statement B feels true And so on.

1. A. I always feel like I choose the things I do.

B. I sometimes feel that it's not really me choosing the things I do.

Only A feels true 1 2 3 4 5 **Only B feels true**

2. A. My emotions sometimes seem alien to me.

B. My emotions always seem to belong to me.

Only A feels true 1 2 3 4 5 **Only B feels true**

3. A. I choose to do what I have to do.

B. I do what I have to, but I don't feel like it is really my choice.

Only A feels true 1 2 3 4 5 **Only B feels true**

4. A. I feel that I am rarely myself.

B. I feel like I am always completely myself.

Only A feels true 1 2 3 4 5 **Only B feels true**

5. A. I do what I do because it interests me.

B. I do what I do because I have to.

Only A feels true 1 2 3 4 5 **Only B feels true**

6. A. When I accomplish something, I often feel it wasn't really me who did it.

B. When I accomplish something, I always feel it's me who did it.

Only A feels true 1 2 3 4 5 **Only B feels true**

7. A. I am free to do whatever I decide to do.

B. What I do is often not what I'd choose to do.

Only A feels true 1 2 3 4 5 **Only B feels true**

8. A. My body sometimes feels like a stranger to me.

B. My body always feels like me.

Only A feels true 1 2 3 4 5 **Only B feels true**

9. A. I feel pretty free to do whatever I choose to.

B. I often do things that I don't choose to do.

Only A feels true 1 2 3 4 5 **Only B feels true**

10. A. Sometimes I look into the mirror and see a stranger.

B. When I look into the mirror I see myself.

Only A feels true 1 2 3 4 5 **Only B feels true**

Scoring Information for the PCASS. First, items 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 need to be reverse scored so that higher scores on every item will indicate a higher level of self-determination. To reverse score an item, subtract the item response from 6 and use that as the item score. Then, calculate the scores for the Awareness of Self subscale and the Perceived Choice subscale by averaging the item scores for the 5 items within each subscale. The subscales are:

Awareness of Self: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10

Perceived Choice: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9