

Mindful Self-Care Scale

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The Mindful Self-Care Scale (MSCS, 2018) is a 33-item scale that measures the self-reported frequency of behaviors that measure self-care behavior. Note, there are an additional three general questions for a total of 36 items.

Self-care is defined as the daily process of being aware of and attending to one's basic physiological and emotional needs including the shaping of one's daily routine, relationships, and environment as needed to promote self-care. Mindful self-care addresses self-care and adds the component of mindful awareness.

Mindful self-care is seen as the foundational work required for physical and emotional well-being. Self-care is associated with positive physical health, emotional well-being, and mental health. Steady and intentional practice of mindful self-care is seen as protective by preventing the onset of mental health symptoms, job/school burnout, and improving work and school productivity.

This scale is intended to help individuals identify areas of strength and weakness in mindful self-care behavior as well as assess interventions that serve to improve self-care. The scale addresses 6 domains of self-care: mindful relaxation, physical care, self-compassion and purpose, supportive relationships, supportive structure, and mindful awareness. There are also three general items assessing the individual's general or more global practices of self-care: engaging in a variety of self-care activities, planning self-care, and exploring new ways of bringing self-care into the individual's life.

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Circle the number that reflects the frequency of your behavior (how much or how often) within past week (7 days):

Never (0 days)	Rarely (1 day)	Sometimes (2 to 3 days)	Often (4 to 5 days)	Regularly (6 to 7 days)
1	2	3	4	5

Reverse-Scored:

Never (0 days)	Rarely (1 day)	Sometimes (2 to 3 days)	Often (4 to 5 days)	Regularly (6 to 7 days)
5	4	3	2	1

The questions on the scale follow.

Mindful Self-Care Scale

Mindful Relaxation (6 items)

I did something intellectual (using my mind) to help me relax (e.g., read a book, wrote)	1	2	3	4	5
I did something interpersonal to relax (e.g., connected with friends)	1	2	3	4	5
I did something creative to relax (e.g., drew, played instrument, wrote creatively, sang, organized)	1	2	3	4	5
I listened to relax (e.g., to music, a podcast, radio show, rainforest sounds)	1	2	3	4	5
I sought out images to relax (e.g., art, film, window shopping, nature)	1	2	3	4	5
I sought out smells to relax (lotions, nature, candles/incense, smells of baking)	1	2	3	4	5

Total _____

Average for Subscale = Total/# of items _____

Physical Care (8 items)

I drank at least 6 to 8 cups of water	1	2	3	4	5
I ate a variety of nutritious foods (e.g., vegetables, protein, fruits, and grains)	1	2	3	4	5
I planned my meals and snacks	1	2	3	4	5
I exercised at least 30 to 60 minutes	1	2	3	4	5
I took part in sports, dance or other scheduled physical activities (e.g., sports teams, dance classes)	1	2	3	4	5
I did sedentary activities instead of exercising (e.g., watched tv, worked on the computer) <i>*reverse scored*</i>	5	4	3	2	1
I planned/scheduled my exercise for the day	1	2	3	4	5
I practiced yoga or another mind/body practice (e.g., Tae Kwon Do, Tai Chi)	1	2	3	4	5

Total _____

Average for Subscale = Total/# of items _____

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Self-Compassion and Purpose (6 items)

I kindly acknowledged my own challenges and difficulties	1	2	3	4	5
I engaged in supportive and comforting self-talk (e.g., "My effort is valuable and meaningful")	1	2	3	4	5
I reminded myself that failure and challenge are part of the human experience	1	2	3	4	5
I gave myself permission to feel my feelings (e.g., allowed myself to cry)	1	2	3	4	5
I experienced meaning and/or a larger purpose in my <u>work/school</u> life (e.g., for a cause)	1	2	3	4	5
I experienced meaning and/or a larger purpose in my <u>private/personal</u> life (e.g., for a cause)	1	2	3	4	5

Total _____

Average for Subscale = Total/# of items _____

Supportive Relationships (5 items)

I spent time with people who are good to me (e.g., support, encourage, and believe in me)	1	2	3	4	5
I scheduled/planned time to be with people who are special to me	1	2	3	4	5
I felt supported by people in my life	1	2	3	4	5
I felt confident that people in my life would respect my choice if I said "no"	1	2	3	4	5
I felt that I had someone who would listen to me if I became upset (e.g., friend, counselor, group)	1	2	3	4	5

Total _____

Average for Subscale = Total/# of items _____

Supportive Structure (4 items)

I maintained a manageable schedule	1	2	3	4	5
I kept my work/schoolwork area organized to support my work/school tasks	1	2	3	4	5

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I maintained balance between the demands of others and what is important to me 1 2 3 4 5

I maintained a comforting and pleasing living environment 1 2 3 4 5

Total _____

Average for Subscale = Total/# of items _____

Mindful Awareness (4 items)

I had a calm awareness of my thoughts 1 2 3 4 5

I had a calm awareness of my feelings 1 2 3 4 5

I had a calm awareness of my body 1 2 3 4 5

I carefully selected which of my thoughts and feelings I used to guide my actions 1 2 3 4 5

Total _____

Average for Subscale = Total/# of items _____

General (3 items – not to be averaged)

I engaged in a variety of self-care activities 1 2 3 4 5

I planned my self-care 1 2 3 4 5

I explored new ways to bring self-care into my life 1 2 3 4 5

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Total Score Summary

Be sure you have correctly scored your reversed-scored item

Averaged Subscale Score

- _____ Mindful Relaxation
- _____ Physical Care
- _____ Self-Compassion and Purpose
- _____ Supportive Relationships
- _____ Supportive Structure
- _____ Mindful Awareness

- General – 3 separate scores:
- _____ Variety
- _____ Planning
- _____ Exploring

Shade in your average score for each subscale below:

5						
4						
3						
2						
1						
Scale	Mindful Relaxation	Physical Care	Self-Compassion & Purpose	Supportive Relationships	Supportive Structure	Mindful Awareness

For a long version of the scale and a detailed description of the source scale see:

Cook-Cottone, C. P. (2015). *Mindfulness and yoga for embodied self-regulation: A primer for mental health professionals*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing.