**Scoring the Satisfaction with Life Scale**

**Ed Diener**

* Add all your scores from the 5 questions into an aggregate score

**30 – 35 Very high score; highly satisfied**

Respondents who score in this range love their lives and feel that things are going

very well. Their lives are not perfect, but they feel that things are about as good as lives

get. Furthermore, just because the person is satisfied does not mean she or he is

complacent. In fact, growth and challenge might be part of the reason the respondent is

satisfied. For most people in this high-scoring range, life is enjoyable, and the major

domains of life are going well – work or school, family, friends, leisure, and personal

development.

**25- 29 High score**

Individuals who score in this range like their lives and feel that things are going

well. Of course their lives are not perfect, but they feel that things are mostly good.

Furthermore, just because the person is satisfied does not mean she or he is complacent.

In fact, growth and challenge might be part of the reason the respondent is satisfied. For

most people in this high-scoring range, life is enjoyable, and the major domains of life

are going well – work or school, family, friends, leisure, and personal development. The

person may draw motivation from the areas of dissatisfaction.

**20 – 24 Average score**

The average of life satisfaction in economically developed nations is in this range

– the majority of people are generally satisfied, but have some areas where they very

much would like some improvement. Some individuals score in this range because they

are mostly satisfied with most areas of their lives but see the need for some improvement

in each area. Other respondents score in this range because they are satisfied with most

domains of their lives, but have one or two areas where they would like to see large

improvements. A person scoring in this range is normal in that they have areas of their

lives that need improvement. However, an individual in this range would usually like to

move to a higher level by making some life changes.

**15 – 19 Slightly below average in life satisfaction**

People who score in this range usually have small but significant problems in

several areas of their lives, or have many areas that are doing fine but one area that

represents a substantial problem for them. If a person has moved temporarily into this

level of life satisfaction from a higher level because of some recent event, things will

usually improve over time and satisfaction will generally move back up. On the other

hand, if a person is chronically slightly dissatisfied with many areas of life, some changes

might be in order. Sometimes the person is simply expecting too much, and sometimes

life changes are needed. Thus, although temporary dissatisfaction is common and

normal, a chronic level of dissatisfaction across a number of areas of life calls for

reflection. Some people can gain motivation from a small level of dissatisfaction, but

often dissatisfaction across a number of life domains is a distraction, and unpleasant as

well.

**10 – 14 Dissatisfied**

People who score in this range are substantially dissatisfied with their lives. People

in this range may have a number of domains that are not going well, or one or two

domains that are going very badly. If life dissatisfaction is a response to a recent event

such as bereavement, divorce, or a significant problem at work, the person will probably

return over time to his or her former level of higher satisfaction. However, if low levels

of life satisfaction have been chronic for the person, some changes are in order – both in

attitudes and patterns of thinking, and probably in life activities as well. Low levels of

life satisfaction in this range, if they persist, can indicate that things are going badly and

life alterations are needed. Furthermore, a person with low life satisfaction in this range

is sometimes not functioning well because their unhappiness serves as a distraction.

Talking to a friend, member of the clergy, counselor, or other specialist can often help the

person get moving in the right direction, although positive change will be up the person.

**5 – 9 Extremely Dissatisfied**

Individuals who score in this range are usually extremely unhappy with their

current life. In some cases this is in reaction to some recent bad event such as widowhood

or unemployment. In other cases, it is a response to a chronic problem such as alcoholism

or addiction. In yet other cases the extreme dissatisfaction is a reaction due to something

bad in life such as recently having lost a loved one. However, dissatisfaction at this level

is often due to dissatisfaction in multiple areas of life. Whatever the reason for the low

level of life satisfaction, it may be that the help of others are needed – a friend or family

member, counseling with a member of the clergy, or help from a psychologist or other

counselor. If the dissatisfaction is chronic, the person needs to change, and often others

can help.