

MEANING IN LIFE QUESTIONNAIRE (MLQ)

Reference:

Steger, M. F., Frazier, P., Oishi, S., & Kaler, M. (2006). The Meaning in Life Questionnaire: Assessing the presence of and search for meaning in life. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 53*, 80-93.

Description of Measure:

A 10-item questionnaire designed to measure two dimensions of meaning in life: (1) Presence of Meaning (how much respondents feel their lives have meaning), and (2) Search for Meaning (how much respondents strive to find meaning and understanding in their lives). Respondents answer each item on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (Absolutely True) to 7 (Absolutely Untrue).

Abstracts of Selected Related Articles:

Steger, M. F., & Frazier, P. (2005). Meaning in life: One link in the chain from religion to well-being. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 52*, 574-582.

Meaning in life has been identified as a potential mediator of the link between religiousness and psychological health. The authors tested this hypothesis in 2 studies, using multiple methods and measures of religiousness and well-being. In the studies, meaning in life mediated the relation between religiousness and life satisfaction (Study 1A), as well as self-esteem and optimism (Study 1B). In addition, using an experience sampling method, the authors found that meaning in life also mediated the relation between daily religious behaviors and well-being (Study 2). The authors discuss these findings and suggest that meaning in life may be an effective conduit through which counselors and clients can discuss "ultimate" matters, even when they do not share similar perspectives on religion.

Steger, M. F. (2006). Development and validation of the Meaning in Life Questionnaire: A measure of eudaimonic well-being. *Dissertation Abstracts International: Section B: The Sciences and Engineering, 66*, pp. 4257.

This dissertation describes the development and validation of the Meaning in Life Questionnaire, a 10-item scale that assesses the Presence of, and Search for, Meaning in Life. Three studies determined the final form and factor structure of the MLQ (Study 1), confirmed its factor structure in three independent samples (Studies 2, and 3), established its convergent validity and superior discriminant validity from other measures of meaning in life (Study 3), and established the incremental validity of the presence subscale in predicting life satisfaction (Studies 1 and 3). In addition, two daily diary studies were performed in which participants provided daily ratings over two (Study 4) and three (Study 5) week periods of time. Presence of meaning in life scores were hypothesized to positively correlate with daily reports of variables derived from eudaimonic accounts of well-being, whereas they were hypothesized to be unrelated to variables derived from hedonic accounts of well-being. Search for meaning scores were hypothesized to positively relate to hedonic behaviors. In Study 4, two categories of daily events were assessed: self-appraisals were ratings of whether subjective psychological evaluations had been made on that day; behaviors were ratings of whether an objective behavior had occurred. Presence of meaning was related to eudaimonic self-appraisals and behaviors, as well as hedonic self-appraisals. Search for meaning was positively related to hedonic behaviors, as hypothesized. Study 5 focused on objective behaviors, and replicated the positive relation between presence of meaning and eudaimonic behaviors and also the non-significant relation between presence of meaning and hedonic behaviors.



Strack, K. M. (2007). A measure of interest to logotherapy researchers: The Meaning In Life Questionnaire. *The International Forum for Logotherapy, 30*, 109-111.

The Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ) is a 10-item self-report inventory designed to measure life meaning. The MLQ has good internal consistency, with coefficient alphas ranging in the low to high .80s for the Presence subscale and mid .80s to low .90s for the Search subscale. A main focus of logotherapy is the discovery of life meaning. Along these lines, logotherapy posits that: (1) there is meaning in life, (2) people are motivated by the Will to Meaning, and (3) people are free to find their own meaning. Since the MLQ is a new instrument that was developed predominantly with female, Caucasian, undergraduate student samples, further research is necessary to investigate the measure's psychometric properties with diverse populations.

Scale

Please take a moment to think about what makes your life and existence feel important and significant to you. Please respond to the following statements as truthfully and accurately as you can, and also please remember that these are very subjective questions and that there are no right or wrong answers. Please answer according to the scale below:

Absolutely Untrue 1	Mostly Untrue 2	Somewhat Untrue 3	Can't Say True or False 4	Somewhat True 5	Mostly True 6	Absolutely True 7
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- ____ 1. I understand my life's meaning.
- ____ 2. I am looking for something that makes my life feel meaningful.
- ____ 3. I am always looking to find my life's purpose.
- ____ 4. My life has a clear sense of purpose.
- ____ 5. I have a good sense of what makes my life meaningful.
- ____ 6. I have discovered a satisfying life purpose.
- ____ 7. I am always searching for something that makes my life feel significant.
- ____ 8. I am seeking a purpose or mission for my life.
- ____ 9. My life has no clear purpose.
- ____ 10. I am searching for meaning in my life.

Scoring:

Item 9 is reverse scored.

Items 1, 4, 5, 6, & 9 make up the Presence of Meaning subscale

Items 2, 3, 7, 8, & 10 make up the Search for Meaning subscale

Scoring is kept continuous.

